

# The Conservative Movement and the Vietnam War

The Vietnam War was the central political issue of the 1960s and 1970s. This study by Seth Offenbach explains how the conflict shaped modern conservatism. The war caused disputes between the pro-war right and libertarian conservatives who opposed the war. At the same time, Christian evangelicals supported the war and began forming alliances with the mainstream, anti-communist right. This enabled the formation of the New Right movement which came to dominate U.S. politics at the end of the twentieth century. *The Conservative Movement and the Vietnam War* explains the right's changes between Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan.

**Seth Offenbach** is Assistant Professor of History at Bronx Community College in the City University of New York system.

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The Other Side of Vietnam

*Seth Offenbach*

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# The Conservative Movement and the Vietnam War

The Other Side of Vietnam

Seth Offenbach

First published 2019  
by Routledge  
52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, NY 10017

and by Routledge  
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN

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*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*  
A catalog record for this title has been requested

ISBN: 978-0-367-20954-4 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-0-429-26438-2 (ebk)

Typeset in Sabon  
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To my family. I love you.



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# Acknowledgments

To write a book is an incredibly rich and rewarding experience. It also wouldn't be possible to complete the process without the help and support of colleagues, friends, and family members. Many people have helped shape this book and guided my ideas throughout the process. Without your support, this book would not have been possible.

The idea to write a book about 1960s conservatism first came to me over a decade ago while I was an undergraduate student at McGill University. That is where my true passion for thinking about history was ignited. While studying in Montreal, Leonard Moore, Edward Kohn, Gil Troy, and Gershon Hundert all demonstrated tremendous patience with me and helped inspire me to ask more questions about the past than I could have ever imagined. This is especially true of Leonard Moore, whose class on U.S. conservatism helped seed many of the ideas in this book. They helped shape my personal and professional career far more than they ever knew.

I continued working on political history at Stony Brook University, where I was guided by Michael Barnhart. Our conversations forced me to think more deeply about ideas and issues than I ever could have imagined. I would often walk into his office with one question in mind and leave with five more. It was inspiring. This project began many years ago as my doctoral dissertation, which was shaped by Themis Chronopolous and Gene Lebovics. I have also been humbled how Alan Brinkley took me in as one of his students while in graduate school. Throughout my career, he has been helpful and insightful. To my former classmates, Andrea Boffa, Christopher Mauceri, and the Elizabeths, O'Connell-Gennari, George, and Ellsmore: thank you all for standing by me in graduate school and beyond. To David Ullmann and Spencer Ross, thank you for all of your support through the years.

Over the last seven years, I have been extremely fortunate to be working at Bronx Community College, an incredibly welcoming and wonderful place, and I am truly indebted to all of my colleagues here. They have helped shape my professional development and been supportive of my efforts through various stages in the book. I am especially grateful to



Stephen Duncan and David Gordon, who took time out of their lives to offer detailed feedback on a draft of the complete manuscript. William deJong-Lambert also assisted me by reading several chapters of the book. Mara Lazda continues to be a wonderful officemate, and her dedication and integrity is an inspiration. And finally, Tamar Rothenberg is a stupendous chair of the department. She supported my work and teaching at every turn and has helped make me a better colleague, scholar, and teacher. To all of my colleagues: you have helped make Bronx Community College a wonderful place to work.

Many people at other institutions have helped shape my ideas throughout the years. Donald Critchlow and Gregory Schneider offered assistance when I was just a freshman graduate student. Nichole Hemmer, Sandra Scanlon, Michael Bowen, Jason Friedman, Michael Brenes, and Laura Jane Gifford have helped talk me through various ideas over the years, with the latter four reading at least a draft chapter or two. Diane Labrosse is undoubtedly the best copy editor a friend could ask for. Working with her at H-Diplo for the past decade has taught me so much about editing, professionalism, and life. She took time out of her intense schedule to read and edit this book. Her ideas, feedback, and edits helped make this a better project. Through the CUNY Faculty Fellowship Publication Program, I met great colleagues in Kafui Attoh, Melissa Borja, Lawrence Johnson, Stephen Steinberg, Devin Molina, Emily Tumpson Molina, and Susanna Rosenbaum. You each offered a tremendous amount of help and inspiration along the way. Finally, Max Novick at Routledge helped me get this project through to publication. He has been patient with me and quick to offer replies to my many queries. Without his support, this book would remain a dream.

This project would not be possible without the financial support of several organizations. Much of the archival research for this project was completed while I was in graduate school. That was funded through grants from Stony Brook University, including Professional Development Funds and the Graduate Student Organization's Research Access Project. The Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations provided me with both the Divine Travel Grant and Samuel Flagg Bemis Research Grant. The Lyndon Johnson Presidential Library sponsored my research to its archive, while the Institute for Humane Studies has twice awarded me the Hayek Fund for Scholars. The City University of New York and Bronx Community College have helped fund my conference travels and writing workshops through the Stewart Travel Award, the Faculty Fellowship Publication Program, the Faculty Publication Mentorship Program, and the Faculty Scholarship Support Grant. I truly appreciate all of the financial support.

To my family: this book is for you as much as it is for me. You have all stood by me in good times and bad, and I will never forget your help along the way. Though none of my grandparents witnessed the publication of

x *Acknowledgments*

this book, you are all always in my heart as you helped raise and care for me and loved me unconditionally. My siblings, Leslie and Amy: you have always been there for me whenever I needed help. You love and support me despite all of my lesser qualities. My parents, Rhona and Michael: you have given me much throughout my life. You have helped me intellectually, financially, and emotionally throughout the years. I will never be able to repay you. To my canine son Carter, you were there for me as I wrote most of this book—literally sitting on my lap during many revisions. You kept me company when I needed it and you will always be in my heart (even if you can't read this). To my children Danielle and Phillip: everything I do is for you. While I hope to teach and guide you both throughout a long and happy life, I want you to know that you have taught me more about myself than I ever could have imagined. And finally, to my wife Elizabeth: please know that you are my rock. You are the reason I am always happy. You make my life complete. Without you, I would be lost. I love you all.

Thank you everyone who has helped me on this long journey.

# Introduction

## The Other Side of Vietnam

On the evening of Monday, September 7, 1964, millions of Americans turned on their televisions to watch a rerun of *NBC Monday Night at the Movies*. In its final week of summer reruns, NBC selected the 1951 classic *David and Bathsheba*, starring Gregory Peck and Susan Hayward. At the time, NBC was competing against a heavy-hitting CBS Monday night lineup that included *The Lucy Show*, one of the most popular programs on television. Despite its comparatively lower ratings, this edition of *NBC Monday Night at the Movies* made television history, not for the movie it aired, but because of a 60-second advertisement. During a commercial break, an adorable 3-year-old girl with flowing brown hair and pale freckled skin, wearing a sleeveless white shirt and shorts, was standing in a non-descript field pulling petals from a flower. As she pulled off each petal, and with birds chirping in the background, she counts: “one, two, three, four, five.” Suddenly, without missing a beat, and in the way that only an innocent child could do, she makes a mistake but continues counting “seven, six, six, eight, nine.”<sup>1</sup> This is a beautiful moment that would make any parent smile, as surely they would have seen their children make similar mistakes. However, accurate accounting skills were not the purpose of this advertisement. Suddenly, instead of her voice saying ten, the audience hears a man speaking over a loudspeaker and beginning a familiar countdown: “ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one, zero.” As this second countdown continues, the camera violently zooms into the child’s eye, and at the end viewers witness a nuclear explosion. Following the full explosion is the familiar tagline: “Vote for President Johnson on November 3rd; the stakes are too high to stay home.” The message was unmistakably clear; voting for Lyndon Johnson’s opponent, Republican Senator Barry Goldwater, in the upcoming presidential election would mean risking nuclear Armageddon.<sup>2</sup>

Though the advertisement aired only once, during the rerun of a program that garnered middling ratings, the ‘Daisy’ ad was known by almost everyone throughout the nation. Television news programs replayed the ad. The Republican Party denounced it as blatant hysteria-inducing nonsense. However, the ad grasped the American imagination. Two and a

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half weeks after airing on NBC, *Time* put a still-frame image of the ad on the cover of its magazine. In the lead story, “Nation: The Fear & the Facts,” *Time* proclaimed that Goldwater “has, in many ways, given the impression of a man who does not really know what he is talking about, and should not, therefore, be permitted to put his atomic ignorance into effect as national policy.”<sup>3</sup> Johnson’s strategy of painting Goldwater as a warmongering, anti-communist, nuclear extremist was among the many factors that helped Johnson win the 1964 presidential election with over 90% of the electoral votes.

The ‘Daisy’ ad was a response to nationally televised comments made by Goldwater three months earlier. In May 1964, on a Sunday morning news program on ABC, Goldwater mulled the possibility of “defoliation of the forests [in Indochina] by low yield atomic weapons.” These bombs could disrupt the routes which the Vietnamese communists were using to bring supplies into South Vietnam in its fight against the anti-communist government.<sup>4</sup> Almost immediately after Goldwater made the comments, he seemed to recognize that discussing the use of a nuclear bomb as a first-strike weapon against a significantly weaker opponent to destroy ‘supply routes’ was inhumane and politically untenable to most Americans, and he began backtracking. He claimed he was merely passing along a suggestion he heard in a military briefing and that he was not advocating the use of nuclear weapons.<sup>5</sup> Goldwater’s explanation offered cold comfort. As soon as the interview aired, most of the media portrayed the comments as an endorsement of using atomic weapons in a fight against the much weaker North Vietnam.<sup>6</sup> Goldwater’s error served to underline Johnson’s overall argument—as indicated by the ‘Daisy’ campaign commercial—that Goldwater could not be trusted to control the U.S. nuclear arsenal. The media’s reaction to Goldwater’s comments, along with the ‘Daisy’ ad, helped establish a national consensus that a Goldwater presidency could lead to nuclear war. This fear resulted in Goldwater’s historic defeat that November, which injured the conservative movement.

Prior to 1964, the conservative movement was as cohesive as any national movement could be. Members of the movement agreed on basic ideas of how they would like to reshape society and the ideological disagreements (which all movements have) were discussed in a respectful tone. Part of the reason for its cohesion was its shared goal of electing Goldwater president. Though not all conservatives agreed on everything, Goldwater’s ideology and personality helped him appeal to the vast majority of conservatives and served as a point of unity among movement members. His vision for the United States was aided by the conservative intellectual elite who wrote, published, and mass distributed his book *The Conscience of a Conservative*. Despite this questionable provenance, the book left a clear and lasting impression on millions of conservatives, helping to unify the movement behind a radically different vision

of the nation than the one presented by President Johnson. With Goldwater's defeat, the right needed to regroup. As this book demonstrates, the decade following Goldwater's defeat was a time when the conservative movement fractured—and the debate surrounding the Vietnam War was at the heart of this disunity.

The Vietnam War, once labeled the United States' longest war, changed the nation's history, and yet no historian of conservatism has set out to fully understand and analyze how the multiple reactions by conservatives to the war changed the movement's identity or ideology. Sandra Scanlon's *The Pro-War Movement* demonstrates that right-wing pro-war groups supported the war by promoting patriotism. She also analyzes how Richard Nixon, while in the White House, was able to use his position to manufacture support for the war, which helped him retain support from average Americans, including members of the conservative grassroots. At the same time, Nixon engendered much opposition from conservative elites who were frustrated by his foreign policy and war plans. During the same period when conservative elites were fighting Nixon, at the start of the 1970s, as shown in Nicole Hemmer's *Messengers of the Right*, conservative intellectual leaders lost touch with the grassroots activists. Scanlon's work demonstrates that Nixon used the pro-war protests to gain support among grassroots conservatives for his war policies. *The Conservative Movement and the Vietnam War* builds upon Scanlon's and Hemmer's work by explaining how the reaction by the movement's intellectual elite to Nixon drove a wedge between various strands of conservative thought. The movement's elite, which was no longer unified, could not figure out how to get past the problems of the Vietnam War. It was not until after the war ended in 1973 that they reformulated the movement and became the more powerful and unified group known as the New Right.<sup>7</sup>

Prior to the Americanization of the Vietnam War in 1965, conservatives were working together toward the goal of nominating and then electing Goldwater as president. Conservatives succeeded in surprising the political world by taking over the Republican Party from Goldwater's moderate opponents such as New York's Governor Nelson Rockefeller and Pennsylvania's Governor William Scranton. Once the election ended with disastrous results, conservatives did not disappear, but the movement began to fissure. Conservative intellectuals tried to keep the movement alive by promoting aggressive anti-communism and pro-war advocacy. However, uniting in support of an unpopular war proved untenable as conservatism failed to act as a unified movement. Instead, libertarian anti-war advocates were marginalized within the conservative movement and Christian evangelical anti-communists started to identify more closely with the mainstream right. At the same time, a malaise set in whereby conservative intellectual leaders felt constrained by the never-ending and unpopular war. All of these changes figured in the creation of

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the New Right coalition that came to dominate U.S. politics during the last quarter of the twentieth century and beyond.

The New Right would not have been possible without the period of fracture which occurred within the conservative movement during the Vietnam War years. Historians such as Neil Young, Daniel Williams, and David Courtwright have analyzed how culture and religion helped conservatives create the New Right political movement.<sup>8</sup> But it took mainstream conservative support for the unpopular war, coupled with libertarian opposition to the war and Christian evangelical support for the war, to truly change the nature of conservatism. Additionally, Nixon's Vietnam policies set the movement back even further as the intellectual elite fell into a malaise, unable to respond to the Republican president whose policies they disapproved of. This set the stage for the movement to be reborn with a stronger focus on religion and morality once the Vietnam War ended in 1973.

All of this occurred as a result of a conflict which was started by a liberal Democratic president. In 1965, Johnson and members of his administration drove foreign policy, while Goldwater and the conservative movement were responding to events beyond their control. Certainly, conservatives backed the fighting in Vietnam, but this support came after Johnson increased the U.S. military presence there in 1965. During the presidential campaign, Johnson presented himself as a dove, while simultaneously planning for an escalated military encounter; Goldwater portrayed himself as a hawk, while expressing uncertainty about the wisdom of sending U.S. troops to Vietnam. This stereotype that Goldwater supported the war and Johnson was a reluctant commander-in-chief was reinforced by events that followed the 1964 presidential campaign. After the election, Goldwater granted *ex post facto* support for Johnson's military expedition while advocating for Johnson to fight the war more aggressively than he was. By comparison, Johnson fought the war with frequent pauses and promises that peace was around the corner. Because of their actions after 1964, it was easy to assume that conservative support for the Vietnam War was simplistic and unwavering; this view is false, as libertarian conservatives opposed the war and pro-war conservatives often recognized the limits of U.S. firepower in winning the war.

The consequences of the movement's support for the war were more far-reaching than previous historians have recognized. This book offers a new historical understanding of the relationship between the conservative movement and the Vietnam War. Whereas previous accounts focused on the right's support for the war and the troops, this book adds the voices of the anti-war right to the mix. It also explains how intellectual conservatives were dissatisfied with their decision to support the increasingly unpopular war, especially while they opposed the military strategies used to fight the war. This caused conflict between the anti-war right and the rest of the movement and between the intellectual elite and many grassroots members. By focusing on conservative intellectual leaders who

vied for the support of a fracturing movement, and by analyzing how those intellectuals understood events on the ground, historians are better able to explain the changes which took place within the movement during the decade that followed Goldwater's defeat.

For many conservatives, Vietnam was the central issue which drew them to the movement, making it an important event which must be studied. Despite the war's important role in shaping modern conservatism, only one other work, Scanlon's *The Pro-War Movement*, explains conservatives' support for the Vietnam War. Scanlon's work serves as the basis for my study, as I further her line of inquiry to better understand how support for 'America's Longest War' altered conservatism. By focusing on the conservative movement and its leaders, this book is better able to explain how the war changed U.S. politics.

Rather than chronicling the many military suggestions made by conservatives, which Scanlon covers well, this book delves into the diverse ways in which the movement fought to stay relevant in the face of rising anti-war sentiment throughout the nation. Additionally, the book inspects how the intellectual elite focused more energy on reacting to the rising liberal anti-war movement than to fomenting a renewed and unified conservative movement. Complicating matters for the right was the increasingly acrimonious dispute between pro- and anti-war conservatives. At the same time, the mainstream right's support for the war helped Christian evangelical anti-communists recognize that the two groups might have many shared interests. As conservatives fought about the war, the movement suffered through what many elites described as a 'malaise' in the late 1960s and early 1970s that temporarily stunted the growth of conservatism in the United States. Most secondary works do not address this crisis within conservatism, likely because it cannot be easily explained within the larger context of the right's ascent from Goldwater to Nixon to Reagan. But, as this book demonstrates, the ascent was not uniform, and the problems were real.<sup>9</sup> The crisis the movement encountered resulted from debates about the Vietnam War, and those debates ultimately changed the nature of conservatism in the United States.

## Defining Conservatism

The conservative movement of the late 1960s was not comprised of a monolithic group of individuals with identical beliefs. The movement was made up of a large coalition of disparate individuals who self-identified as conservatives. They understood that within the broadly accepted spectrum of political ideologies, they were on the right; for this reason, I use the terms 'conservative movement' and 'the right' interchangeably throughout my study. Though part of a shared political group, the members of the conservative movement had different guiding philosophies and different intellectual leaders who inspired each sect.

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Generally, post-World War II conservatism grew out of four groups which were guided by different ideologies:

- **Libertarians** supported small government policies to limit the amount of federal intervention in everyday life, which they understood as leading to increased individual choice and freedom. Libertarians were often inspired by writings such as Friedrich Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom* and Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead* and *Atlas Shrugged*.
- **Big business capitalists** often cared most about minimizing government regulations to maximize private profit, justified with arguments that private profit improves national economic output. This philosophy grew out of the anti-New Deal ideas of industrialists Pierre and Irénéé du Pont, and other members of the du Pont family, as well as Ohio Senator Robert Taft. This was also the branch of conservatism most closely allied with the Republican Party.
- **Traditionalists** believed that their broad understanding of community values was necessary for society and they wanted to inject a discourse of Christian religious morality about good and evil into public policy debates. Leo Strauss and Russell Kirk were two influential thinkers within traditionalist conservatism.
- **Muscular anti-communists** argued that the Soviet Union was an existential threat to liberty worldwide and called on the United States to achieve victory in the Cold War. Though many non-conservatives considered themselves muscular anti-communists, this group of conservative anti-communists did not always view liberal and Republican anti-communist activists as being strong enough to fight the communists. Because the Soviet Union represented a big government, anti-capitalist, atheistic, and expansionist power, most conservatives supported muscular anti-communism. Despite anti-communism's prevalence in U.S. society, muscular anti-communism still served as the glue which helped keep many conservatives united. Pundit James Burnham was an example of an influential muscular anti-communist.

Though not diametrically opposed to one another, each group had its own area of focus, be it government regulation, individual freedom, morality and religiosity within society, or an interventionist anti-communism. Despite their independent areas of focus, members of the right often had shared values which served to bind them together in reaction against a more liberal society. These are generalizations which help us better understand the past.

Some conservatives, such as *National Review's* Frank Meyer, made explicit efforts to unite the movement under the banner of **fusionism**. This was Meyer's way of finding common ground among all the sects of the conservative movement by highlighting their similarities. This concept was nicely articulated in his book *What is Conservatism?*<sup>10</sup> Though



fusionism's influence on the movement is debatable, elite conservatives often used the term to describe themselves in the 1960s, demonstrating that they believed there was overlap and respect among the different groups of conservatives.

To better understand the different groups and their roles in shaping the movement, this book breaks them into three basic parts: intellectual leaders, grassroots followers, and the Young Americans for Freedom (YAF), the organization whose primary aim was to connect the elite to the movement. This study focuses on the intellectual leaders whose goals were to shape the movement's ideas in a non-academic manner and to change society's culture and laws. Individuals such as William F. Buckley, Jr., William Rusher, Henry Hazlitt, Allan Ryskind, Phyllis Schlafly, Clarence Manion, Ralph de Toledano, James Burnham, and Walter Judd, all played an outsized role in the national conservative media and political organizations and fall into this category. This book then traces local and regional activists' responses to those ideas by examining the stories, anecdotes, and ideas which were bandied about by local and regional leaders whose influence was felt exclusively within that person's community. By unearthing these previously buried sources, this book demonstrates that conservative intellectual leaders were not whistling in the wind. Local papers and pamphlets, along with several oral interviews which I conducted with former activists, offer a view of the mindset of some non-national activists. Each chapter references the role played by YAF in order to supplement our understanding of the goals of the national grassroots. This youth organization aimed at politicizing the younger generation to the conservative cause. YAF never set about creating intellectual ideas for the conservative movement; instead, its goal was to galvanize individuals to big-tent conservatism as outlined by both Goldwater's *Conscience* and the intellectual standards of the *National Review*. Virtually all of the former YAFers whom I interviewed praised *Conscience* as an influential work, and the majority noted the role of Buckley and the *National Review* in shaping the organization's overall philosophy. YAF was important because it organized foot soldiers for Goldwater's 1964 campaign and its leaders eventually played a role in reshaping the conservatism which bloomed by the end of the 1970s.

One of the reasons for Barry Goldwater's popularity among conservatives is that he was the first of only two politicians of the twentieth century to transcend the different right-wing ideologies and speak to all of the segments of the movement. Aside from Goldwater, Ronald Reagan was the only other politician who inspired and united these various factions of conservatives in the twentieth century. Without Goldwater leading the way, it is doubtful that there would have been a coalition for Reagan to lead.

Goldwater's big-tent conservatism is on display in his book *Conscience of a Conservative*. Although *Conscience* was ghost-written for

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Goldwater, the Arizona senator certainly endorsed the book's arguments as they represented his political beliefs. In *Conscience*, Goldwater argues for as small of a federal government as possible. In the book's colloquial tone, he declares that the best way to achieve this is for politicians to "understand that their first duty as public officials is to divest themselves of the power they have been given."<sup>11</sup> *Conscience* wove this idea of small government ideology with libertarian ideals of individual freedom. Goldwater's first chapter also discusses the nature of man using words and ideas about good, bad, and tyranny which appeals to traditionalists. Additionally, later chapters counter integrationist and feminist arguments about the role of the federal government in promoting rights for non-white males. Finally, Goldwater's family history of owning a department store in Arizona, and his personal antagonism toward New Deal-style government intervention in his family business, made him favored by business owners and capitalists.

Goldwater's popularity also stemmed from his image as someone who was a pure political thinker and a man of principle, an image which *Conscience* furthered. The starkest example of this is his view about race and states' rights. In chapter 3 of *Conscience*, he argues that:

Not only [does states' rights] prevent the accumulation of power in a central government that is remote from the people and relatively immune from popular restraints; it also recognizes the principle that essentially local problems are best dealt with by the people most directly concerned.<sup>12</sup>

In the subsequent chapter, Goldwater applies his logic of states' rights to civil rights law by arguing that the federal government has no right to force the integration of Southern public schools. Goldwater states that racial integration should be promoted by state and local governments, even though these were the same groups maintaining the system of violent racial segregation. Despite Goldwater's belief that the federal government should not override state-based segregation laws, he still proclaims that "it is both wise and just for negro children to attend the same schools as whites."<sup>13</sup> Goldwater's stance on civil rights and states' rights allowed him to try to have it both ways; he received the Endorsement of segregationist Southerners who supported small government policies when it regarded race relations, while also publicly supporting the theoretical idea of racial desegregation which was popular among Northeastern conservatives who claimed to not be racist (a large group in the 1960s).<sup>14</sup> In short, *The Conscience of a Conservative* is a political manifesto which offered some support to virtually all conservatives and held great sway in shaping future conservative principles.

Despite Goldwater's big-tent approach to philosophical conservatism, it is the communist menace that helped him serve as a unifying figure among

conservatives. Chapter 10, a seminal chapter that takes up approximately one-third of the ten-chapter book, focuses on this topic, opening with Goldwater's declaration that the big difference between the United States and Soviet Union was that the Soviets "are determined to win the conflict, and we are not."<sup>15</sup> Goldwater firmly believed that the United States needed a clearer and more aggressive plan for victory over the Soviet Union and the international communist system. This call for the defeat of the Soviets helped unite conservatives in the early 1960s. It also helped raise Goldwater's profile within the movement; after all, libertarians, traditionalists, and capitalists all hated communism. Anti-communism in the early 1960s was a unifying force within U.S. conservatism.

Despite being a unifying force, anti-communism was not the exclusive purview of the right in the 1960s. Many Democratic, liberal, and left-wing intellectuals, politicians, and political organizations strenuously opposed communism throughout the twentieth century. These anti-communists worked in the Democratic administrations of Presidents Woodrow Wilson, Harry Truman, John Kennedy, and Lyndon Johnson, backed the liberal organization Americans for Democratic Action, and wrote for left-wing political magazines. Despite this, as political historian Donald T. Critchlow writes: "postwar conservatives turned the Communist issue against the liberals and the Democratic party, even as Democrats pursued and supported Cold War policies."<sup>16</sup> Often conservatives viewed their own anti-communist approach as superior and believed that too many on the other side of the political spectrum were unwilling to do what was necessary to achieve victory in the Cold War. To many of these muscular anti-communist conservatives, anything short of victory was unacceptable.

This anti-communist philosophy by conservatives meant that they found themselves fighting against liberal and leftist anti-communists almost as much as they opposed communists and communist sympathizers. While the majority of Americans opposed communism throughout the twentieth century, the right and left often fought about the best methods to oppose Communist International. For example, conservative muscular anti-communists supported Senator Joseph McCarthy long after he was discredited by the national media. In comparison, left-wing anti-communists such as Arthur Schlesinger and James Wechsler believed that McCarthy went too far in his anti-communist actions. As historian Kevin Mattson describes, conservatives believed that U.S. anti-communism should be "fixated and hardened," whereas liberal anti-communists thought it should be "a starting point to prompt a broader debate about the future of American politics."<sup>17</sup> The two anti-communist groups had fundamentally different ideas about how to oppose communism.

In practice, this meant that right-wing anti-communists such as James Burnham endorsed the idea that the United States needed a plan for victory which included aggressively supporting the United States'

international allies. As Goldwater wrote in his best-selling book *Why Not Victory?*:

There can no longer be any doubt about our situation in today's world: we are at war; not a cold war but a real war—we can call it the Communist War. . . . We may well be now engaged in a phase of World War III which if we lose will mean the end of freedom as we know it. . . . Victory is the key to the whole problem; the only alternative is—obviously—defeat.<sup>18</sup>

Comparatively, many Democratic, left-wing, and liberal anti-communists often endorsed ideas such as containment and a more nuanced discussion of anti-communist policies throughout the world. Most Americans opposed communism, but what that meant,—and the methods they endorsed—varied widely across the political spectrum.

Aside from opposing communism, the conservative movement was reacting to the politics and ideas of the time. Specifically, the right was in constant conversation with and reacting to the ideas promoted by the left and liberals. In the 1960s, many on the left were trying to form a national coalition which would reshape society using new ideas of economic, racial, and gender equality. The left, as described by scholars such as Terry Anderson, Van Gosse, John Andrew, and others, was focused on sharing the growing wealth in the United States with those left behind. This meant using federal government programs to support a redistribution of funds to the poor while increasing taxes on the rich. Additionally, others on the left supported amplifying the political voices of minorities, including (but not limited to) African Americans, Latinos, homosexuals, prisoners, and Native Americans. Throughout all of this, feminists, who mostly associated with the left, tried to change gender relations by promoting female equality in all facets of society. Had liberals and the left been able to unite into one powerful movement, and had it encountered no opposition, the United States would have looked radically different by the end of the 1960s compared to how it looked at the beginning of the decade.<sup>19</sup>

Conservatives regularly argued that the left's frequent critiques of the United States at times made it appear to be more critical of the United States than of the Soviet Union. In the words of *National Review* publisher William Rusher: "To the New Left arch-villain, quite simply, is the United States of America. They loathe it with a passion that disdains disguise . . . they root for an American military defeat in Vietnam."<sup>20</sup> This grim description was part of a larger view of the entire left, which included liberals, Democrats, and the New Left, all of which were being painted with the same brush. To Rusher and many conservatives like him, their political opponents could not be trusted to fully defend either the nation or the Constitution.

To conservatives, it often appeared as though left-wing Americans were looking for large-scale solutions to rectify social ills. This meant support for national civil rights legislation, federal protections for women in the workplace, more power for labor unions, and an expansion of welfare programs. Although there were serious debates and divisions between the left, liberals, Democrats, and the New Left, these were glossed over by conservatives who simply saw all four groups threatening the right's worldview. That the conservative movement was dominated by white males who came from the middle and upper income bracket is not a surprise, since they were often fighting against people who threatened their status within society. Conservatives, however, did not see their achievements as a result of a racist or sexist society; instead, they believed that it was through their hard-earned efforts. These conservatives feared that by giving up local control through federal civil rights or women's rights legislation, the nation was enabling the government to pick 'winners' at the expense of other members of society. Additionally, any change to gender relations served to threaten traditional norms and alter the nation's moral center, which frustrated traditionalist conservatives who believed that long-standing gender roles were part of the national culture. Regarding liberal unionization efforts, the right had long claimed that unions hurt businesses by making hiring and firing decisions difficult while increasing costs and limiting workplace opportunities for strong and competent workers. Finally, federal anti-poverty programs, epitomized by Johnson's Great Society programs of the era, were a central bane of many conservatives.<sup>21</sup> His programs were often described as expensive patronage projects which helped get Democrats elected but did little to get people jobs or improve their lives, thus demoralizing and infantilizing poor Americans while raising taxes on hard-working individuals. In the minds of conservatives, liberal America was a place which infringed upon personal liberty while discouraging hard work.

In addition to their social and economic agendas, a faction within the New Left began advocating for an international revolutionary struggle against the capitalist world powers. This meant that while the U.S. military was fighting communists in Vietnam—and largely as a response to the war—some New Lefters were advocating for an American revolution. Following in the footsteps of Hollywood icon Jane Fonda, some New Left leaders traveled to Hanoi to promote the causes of worldwide revolution. Scholars Judy Wu and Lien-Hang Nguyen have skillfully argued that the North Vietnamese government successfully used the destruction wrought by the U.S. bombs to create an international feeling of comradeship between members of the revolutionary Global South and the U.S. New Left.<sup>22</sup> For conservatives, the existence of these radicals and their international connections during a time of war meant that all on the left were on the side of treason. This helped unite many conservatives, but as

this book explains, it also pushed some libertarians out of the movement while limiting conservatism's ascent.

## **Divisions Over Vietnam**

Following Goldwater's 1964 defeat, there was no national leader or issue to rally around and support. The closest conservatives came to a unifying political leader was Ronald Reagan. However, he was a retired actor without any political experience in 1965, and it took another decade until he became a serious presidential candidate. At the precise moment in history when the right found it hard to unite around politics and policies, it also found itself leaderless; the movement suffered. Political activists began disagreeing with greater furor as the movement risked succumbing to infighting which could have led to a splintering of the right and historical irrelevance. During the decade which followed Goldwater's defeat, those on the right of the political spectrum failed to act as a unified movement.

Following the 1964 election, the right's intellectual leadership began searching for something which could help keep the movement united. At first, they believed that the Vietnam War could serve as a point of unification; after all, conservatives believed that victory in the Cold War meant never giving up to communist aggression. These conservatives began arguing that the United States could not afford to lose the Vietnam War. Their logic was simple: the United States was the stronger nation, and the only way to fight communism was to demonstrate strength. To them, only a lack of willpower or a poor military strategy could sabotage the U.S. effort. Transforming into a pro-war movement fell in line with the right's muscular anti-communism. Additionally, many feared that if Vietnam fell, then all of Indochina and eventually Southeast Asia would be susceptible to communist aggression.

While most of the right's leadership was pro-war, this stance was not unanimous. A growing group of conservatives opposed U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. These anti-war conservatives, who were often libertarians, were a small and silent minority at the start of the war, but as it dragged on, they became louder. Many of these libertarians, led by the political activist Karl Hess and intellectual Murray Rothbard, began sounding similar to the war's leftist opponents, decrying the draft as an anti-democratic institution and labeling the United States an imperialist nation, while also opposing the war because it increased the power of the military-industrial complex and national security state. These individuals refused to continue supporting a war which risked the lives and liberty of millions of Americans while also expanding the power of the U.S. government.

Complicating matters further, there were others on the right who opposed the war because they thought it was a distraction from the main targets of the Cold War: China and the Soviet Union. These conservatives were a minority within the movement, and are exemplified by Phyllis

Schlaflly. They believed that the United States was wasting time by fighting the Vietnamese, who were mere stooges of the Communist International menace. Instead, the United States needed to confront the Sino-Soviet threat. These conservatives argued that in order for the United States to prepare for victory in the Cold War, it needed to spend more money on the military-industrial complex to improve its offensive and defensive weaponry. The Vietnam War was a waste of resources. Once the war ended, this group effortlessly rejoined the mainstream right, but while the war was ongoing, they refused to agree that Vietnam was a logical place for the United States to spend its resources. The differences between the pro- and anti-war conservatives started to fracture the movement, which ultimately was only saved once the war ended and other issues such as culture came to dominate the movement.

Despite the problems facing conservatism, the right's shift to becoming a pro-war movement meant that it became an increasingly hospitable home for Christian evangelical anti-communists, who fought to push the United States into a more religious and anti-communist direction. As the war dragged on, they recognized that they had much in common with the pro-war, mainstream conservative movement. Prior to the war, evangelicals were not closely associated with the right, but by the time the war ended in 1973, it was clear that conservatism provided a natural political home for this group. By 1974, the New Right, which integrated Christian evangelicals, was starting to form.

### **Vietnam and the Birth of the Reagan Revolution**

Fundamental disagreements about the war altered the conservative movement and its ideology, leading to the newly reformulated conservative movement known as the New Right. One of the biggest differences between the New Right and the conservatism of the early 1960s (Goldwater's era) was the role of Christian evangelicals. The departure of many libertarians and the realization of many evangelical anti-communists that they had similar Cold War views as the mainstream right created the space for the conjoining of evangelical anti-communists into the right and the formation of the New Right. This study argues that the New Right rose as a direct response to the failure of the 1960s conservatism and the divisions concerning the Vietnam War.

The New Right was made up of politically active individuals who opposed the anti-war movement even after the war itself was over. They fought against many of the left's social values of the era, including abortion rights, gay rights, affirmative action, welfare, and feminist-endorsed government policies. These New Right activists were united by their moral values, religious beliefs, class consciousness, anti-communism, racial identity, and their feeling of 'being left behind.' In short, they disliked the changing values of the 1960s.<sup>23</sup>

Religion was not a new part of the conservative identity in the 1970s, as traditionalists were long-standing members of the right. However, religion's influence grew proportionally as the anti-war movement increased in the United States. One of the few groups which was not closely affiliated with conservatism but which staunchly supported the Vietnam War was anti-communist evangelical Christians. As this book explains, evangelical support for the war, coupled with the libertarian opposition to it, transformed the conservative ideology in a way that had serious implications for the New Right movement of the 1970s and beyond.

The Christian evangelicals who supported the war identified themselves as anti-communist. Many of these Christian evangelicals viewed the world through the teleological lens of the 'end of days,' waiting for the return of Jesus Christ. Part of this theology includes an active opposition to the Devil. These individuals saw the Soviet Union as an aggressively atheistic nation which denied freedom of religion to its citizens. Thus, they concluded that if the Devil sided with communism, then certainly the United States should work to support South Vietnam with as much gusto as possible.

The changes taking place within the national political discourse helped foster the changes within the movement. During Goldwater's two-year campaign, the welfare state redistribution programs and the Civil Rights Movement were the prominent issues in society. The libertarian philosophy which opposes large government programs and supports states' rights was a necessary component to conservatism in the early 1960s. But by the early 1970s, cultural changes were speeding up. This, coupled with the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision which legalized a woman's right to an abortion, led to a more powerful feminist movement. Religion and morality were necessary to oppose these movements. With more grassroots evangelicals involved in both politics and conservatism, and with fewer libertarians associating with conservatism, the movement needed to change. Individuals in leadership positions found the right's ideology slowly shifting as grassroots conservatives cared more and more about culture and religion.

## **The Conservative Movement and the Vietnam War**

The politics surrounding the Vietnam War can never be fully removed from the politics of the decade in question. Other issues helped to shape the future of modern conservatism and modern politics that had little to do with the Vietnam War. During this period, the Great Society was reshaping how Americans viewed the government. At the same time, and for reasons unrelated to the war, Christian evangelicals were slowly increasing their involvement in politics. However, it is crucial to understand the effects of the war and how it shaped the rise of modern conservatism. The politics surrounding the Vietnam War both divided and



united the movement, while explaining how the right was able to succeed in U.S. politics.

The six chapters which follow are divided thematically into three sections. Section I, which comprises Chapters 1–2, focuses on the specific policy proposals of the conservative movement and what various elite conservatives were saying about the Vietnam War. Section II, which comprises Chapters 3–5, focuses on major problems facing conservatism: the libertarian anti-war activists, an oppositional identity, and Nixon's retaking control of the Republican Party. Section III, which comprises Chapter 6 and the Conclusion, will examine how the movement was able to recover through an infusion of Christian anti-communism and create the New Right.

Chapter 1, 'The Long 1964,' covers the right's response to the war in Vietnam up to the point of Americanization in March 1965. Prior to this, the movement's intellectual energy was focused on other Cold War hotspots. As this chapter demonstrates, the Vietnam War was not a war of the right's choosing. Subsequent chapters demonstrate the consequences of this.

Chapter 2, 'United by Strategy,' focuses on the right's varied strategy suggestions throughout the war. Many elite conservatives argued that the United States needed to exert just a little more effort to achieve victory. Upon the election of Richard Nixon, many on the right were excited by the thought that he would follow through with his promise for peace with honor, but their hopes were soon disappointed. The chapter focuses on the 'winning' formula, as articulated by elite conservatives, who thought they had the solution to the war. This detailed analysis of these pro-war arguments grounds the rest of the book and explains why the majority of conservatives were deeply frustrated by the nation's failure in the Vietnam War.

Chapter 3, 'Dissent of the Libertarians,' highlights libertarian opposition to the war, along with the general libertarian response to the changing political culture of the late 1960s. Many grassroots libertarians believed that the war, and the draft system that supported it, was morally wrong. This set the group on a path toward a collision with the general conservative movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Chapter 4, 'Negative Conservatism,' explores how the movement's leadership created a virulent anti-Johnson and anti-left identity to compensate for the 1964 election defeat. This anti-Johnson identity kept the passions high among many grassroots supporters. It also fed into the idea that the right opposed Johnson's military strategy, even while endorsing his war. As the war continued, it became increasingly hard for the right's leaders to justify their support for the war and simultaneously oppose the strategy.

Chapter 5, 'The Problem of Richard Nixon,' explains how the right's leadership struggled to respond to Nixon's electoral victory in 1968.

Nixon, though he did not support most conservative policy ideas, was still a Republican. This created disagreement between many of the conservative leaders, who were disappointed with his policies, and the movement followers who supported the Republican president. During the Nixon years, there was frequent discussion among the right's leadership about a malaise within the movement. They were unable to fully break out from beneath the shadow of the president, while also being incapable of altering his foreign policies. This exacerbated the split between the elite and grassroots. This chapter focuses on this split.

Chapter 6, 'Christianity and Conservatism,' explains the ardent anti-communist roots of modern conservatism and the Religious Right's support for anti-communism in the 1960s. Christian language and imagery proved to be potent features of anti-communism in the 1960s. By making the right a more hospitable place for Christian anti-communism, conservatives offered a more welcoming ideology for religious groups in the future. This commixing of support for the Vietnam War, fear of the 'communist menace,' and an ever-prominent religious discourse within society, explains the crucial role of Christian evangelical anti-communism in changing the conservative movement.

This examination of conservatism's ideals, the reasons for the right's struggle with the Vietnam War, and the nature of libertarians' disagreement with the war will provide historians with a deeper and clearer picture of the turmoil and change that occurred within conservatism in the years following Goldwater's 1964 defeat. Despite the right's problems, the movement's anti-liberal identity kept it alive while Christian anti-communism revitalized the movement. When the New Right was born in the mid-1970s, it was a formidable political movement. The Vietnam War altered the conservative movement, allowing for a new political ideology to rise after the war's conclusion.

## Notes

1. The actor who played the child already knew how to count to 50 by the time the ad was filmed. She was specifically trained for the ad to make mistakes to increase the appeal she would have on the audience. Dan Nowicki, "Daisy Girl' Political Ad Still Haunting 50 Years Later," *USA Today*, September 7, 2014, [www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2014/09/07/daisy-girl-political-ad-still-haunting-50-years-later/15246667/](http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2014/09/07/daisy-girl-political-ad-still-haunting-50-years-later/15246667/).
2. Ratings from: "TV Ratings: 1963–1964," *Classic TV and Movie Hits*, [www.classictvhits.com/tvratings/1963.htm](http://www.classictvhits.com/tvratings/1963.htm).  
Episode guide from: "Broadcast Log for NBC Monday Night at the Movies, Season 2," *Television Obscurities*, August 3, 2010, [www.tvobscurities.com/2010/08/broadcast-log-nbc-monday-night-at-the-movies-season-two/](http://www.tvobscurities.com/2010/08/broadcast-log-nbc-monday-night-at-the-movies-season-two/).  
Programming schedule from: "1963–1964 TV Schedule," *Classic TV Database*, <http://classic-tv.com/schedules/1963-1964-tv-schedule.html>.
3. "Nation: The Fear & The Facts," *Time*, September 25, 1964, [www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,876149-6,00.html](http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,876149-6,00.html).

4. Michael Pakenham, "Goldwater Urges Atom Use in Asia," *Chicago Tribune*, May 25, 1964, 3.
5. Associated Press, "Goldwater: Stop Supplies," *Christian Science Monitor*, May 28, 1964, 3.
6. Some examples of the negative press Goldwater received following his nuclear comments:
  - Victor Wilson, "A-Attack on Viet Jungle Proposed by Goldwater," *Washington Post*, May 25, 1964, A1; Art Buchwald, "Atomic Defoliation," *Washington Post* syndicated column, May 31, 1964, E7; Charles Mohr, "Goldwater Sees Move by 'Clique,'" *New York Times*, May 27, 1964, 22.
7. Nicole R. Hemmer, *Messengers of the Right: Conservative Media and the Transformation of American Politics* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016); Sandra Scanlon, *The Pro-War Movement: Domestic Support for the Vietnam War and the Making of Modern American Conservatism* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013).
8. David T. Courtwright, *No Right Turn: Conservative Politics in a Liberal America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010); Daniel K. Williams, *God's Own Party: The Making of the Christian Right* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Neil J. Young, *We Gather Together: The Religious Right and the Problem of Interfaith Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).
9. One of the few secondary works which mentions the malaise is Hemmer, *Messengers of the Right*. She focuses her analysis on the media landscapes of this period.
10. Frank S. Meyer, ed., *What Is Conservatism?* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964).
11. Barry Goldwater, *The Conscience of a Conservative* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 15.
12. *Ibid.*, 22.
13. *Ibid.*, 31 (emphasis in original).
14. There was a great tension in the early 1960s between segregation supporters in the South and the rest of the conservative movement. Though both supported ideas of states' rights, many conservatives who hailed from the Northeast and West disapproved of the South's Jim Crow segregation. In addition, many segregation supporters in the South were not small government conservatives; they were happy to support federal anti-poverty programs which sent money to their states. This tension made for awkward and uncomfortable bedfellows in the early 1960s. It is a topic which deserves further attention from scholars. However, this meant that segregationists were limited in their ability to lead and influence the movement outside of their home-bases in the South (with the exception of a few Southern elected politicians who brought important votes to the table).
15. Goldwater, *The Conscience of a Conservative*, 84.
16. Donald T. Critchlow, *The Conservative Ascendancy: How the GOP Right Made Political History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 7.
17. Kevin Mattson, *When America Was Great: The Fighting Faith of Postwar Liberalism* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 72.
18. Barry Goldwater, *Why Not Victory?*, 2nd ed. (New York: MacFadden Books, 1964), 16–17.
19. This summary does not suffice to describe the complexity of the liberal and left worldviews. For a more complete description, see: Terry H. Anderson, *The Movement and the Sixties* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); John A. Andrew, *Lyndon Johnson and the Great Society* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee,

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- 1999); Edward Bacciocco, *The New Left in America: Reform to Revolution, 1956–1970* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1974); Alan Brinkley, *Liberalism and Its Discontents* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998); Steven M. Gillon, *Politics and Vision: The ADA and American Liberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); Van Gosse, *Rethinking the New Left: An Interpretative History* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005); Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).
20. Memo from William Rusher to the Editors of *National Review* on April 7, 1969, Box 119, Folder 2, William Rusher Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.
  21. The Great Society is the name of Johnson's domestic policy proposals. In general, they included expanded the role of the federal government and promoting a stronger social safety net. The right strenuously opposed the majority of the Great Society, including its underlying principle.
  22. Lien-Hang T. Nguyen, *Hanoi's War: An International History of the War for Peace in Vietnam* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2012); Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, *Radicals on the Road: Internationalism, Orientalism, and Feminism during the Vietnam Era* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013).
  23. Examples of works which cover the New Right and conservatism in the 1970s are: Adam Clymer, *Drawing the Line at the Big Ditch: The Panama Canal Treaties and the Rise of the Right* (Lawrence, KA: University Press of Kansas, 2008); Critchlow, *Conservative Ascendancy*; Hemmer, *Messengers of the Right*; Philip Jenkins, *Decade of Nightmares: The End of the Sixties and the Making of Eighties America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); William A. Link, *Righteous Warrior: Jesse Helms and the Rise of Modern Conservatism* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2008); Catherine E. Rymph, *Republican Women: Feminism and Conservatism from Suffrage Through the Rise of the New Right* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2006); Gregory L. Schneider, *The Conservative Century: From Reaction to Revolution* (Lanham, PA: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009); Bruce Schulman and Julian Zelizer, eds., *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008); Williams, *God's Own Party*; Young, *We Gather Together: The Religious Right and the Problem of Interfaith Politics*.

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a guerrilla war in a ‘far-off’ nation. Conservatives were correct, as all of these proved to be insurmountable stumbling blocks, helping to explain why the war lasted as long as it did. Because they recognized these problems, many on the right refused to recommend or push Johnson into sending in a large contingent of troops. Bluntly stated, Vietnam was never the war that the right was itching for.

That conservatives did not always push the president to send in more troops does not mean that they were willing to see South Vietnam fall, quite the opposite. There is no doubt that the conservative movement’s anti-communist rhetoric and ideals helped convince Johnson that he needed to do anything in his power to protect the Republic of Vietnam. After all, the right was unwilling to consider the idea that a U.S. ally could *ever* fall to communist aggression. This was one of the major contradictions within the conservative discourse during the long 1964. There was the clear understanding that the United States had already lost South Vietnam, coupled with the claim that the United States could not allow any ally to fall. Johnson had, in the words of the *National Review*, a “cruel [choice], for there are fearful difficulties, costs and dangers along either horn of the dilemma: either in withdrawal or in the war’s enlargement.”<sup>55</sup> Lacking a good option, the right put Johnson into a corner and no matter what happened they were going to blame him. While the movement was clearly reluctant to advocate for the Americanization of the war, it also could not endorse a troop withdrawal. This was the heart of the right’s Vietnam paradox.

## Notes

1. Lyndon Johnson, “Press Conference,” *Miller Center Presidential Speeches Archive*, February 1, 1964, <http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/5898>.
2. This book will interchange the formal name Republic of Vietnam and the colloquial South Vietnam. It will also interchange North Vietnam and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, as well as China and the People’s Republic of China.
3. This term was coined by Fredrik Logevall, *Choosing War: The Lost Chance for Peace and the Escalation of a War in Vietnam* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999).
4. Sandra Scanlon, *The Pro-War Movement: Domestic Support for the Vietnam War and the Making of Modern American Conservatism* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013), 36.
5. Andrew Johns, *Vietnam’s Second Front: Domestic Politics, the Republican Party, and the War* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2010).
6. Barry Goldwater, *Why Not Victory?*, 2nd ed. (New York: MacFadden Books, 1964).
7. Michael Thompson, telephone interview with Seth Offenbach, January 9, 2012.
8. This is based on reviewing *Human Events*, *National Review*, and the *Manion Forum* in 1963 and 1964.
9. “This Week in Washington: Cuba, Not Panama, Is the Issue,” *Human Events*, January 25, 1964, 3A.



10. "Cargo Gains Made By Panama Canal, Now 50 Years Old," *New York Times*, December 19, 1964, 11.
11. Information about riots from: "Bitterness of Panama Grievances Stands in Way of Reconciliation," *New York Times*, January 18, 1964, 3.  
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12. Henry J. Taylor, "We Are Falling for Soviet 'Gradualism,'" *Human Events*, February 29, 1964, 12.
13. "Capital Bulletin," *National Review*, February 4, 1964, 5.
14. For more about the relationship between the right, Reagan, and the canal, see: Adam Clymer, *Drawing the Line at the Big Ditch: The Panama Canal Treaties and the Rise of the Right* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2008).
15. Mary Perot Nichols, "Garden Packed for Goldwater," *Village Voice*, March 15, 1962, [http://blogs.villagevoice.com/runninscared/2009/02/clip\\_job\\_yaf\\_go.php](http://blogs.villagevoice.com/runninscared/2009/02/clip_job_yaf_go.php); Steven V. Roberts, "Visa of Moise Tshombe," *Harvard Crimson*, February 28, 1962, [www.thecrimson.com/article/1962/2/28/yaf-to-see-court-action-on/](http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1962/2/28/yaf-to-see-court-action-on/).  
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30. One example of this was "Capital Bulletin," *National Review*, February 4, 1964, 5.

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such the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty. For further readings on détente, see: John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (New York: Penguin Press, 2005); Jeremi Suri, "Détente and Its Discontents," in *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s*, ed. Bruce Schulman and Julian Zelizer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008); Julian Zelizer, *Arsenal of Democracy: The Politics of National Security from World War II to the War on Terrorism* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2009).

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Speech. Albert Wedemeyer to Rotary Club in Bethesda, Maryland, November 17, 1964, Box 20, Folder 1, Albert C. Wedemeyer Papers, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University; Ralph de Toledano, "Red Strategy for Conquering All Southeast Asia," *Human Events*, April 10, 1965, 8; Publication, "The Battleline Is Vietnam," *ACU Report*, July–August 1965, Box 58, Folder 2, Marvin Liebman Papers, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.

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government, which would allow communists and anti-communists to form one government, in South Vietnam. To the conservative movement, which based its ideology on the idea that anti-communist governments could not give an inch to communist insurgents, accepting a unity government was tantamount to surrender.<sup>59</sup>

Three days before the presidential election, the front page of *Human Events* again focused on the peace negotiations instead of on the election. This time it bluntly called the rumored peace agreement “a diplomatic and military disaster.”<sup>60</sup> The editorial explained the agreement would require the United States to leave South Vietnam, while the North Vietnamese military would stay in the territory it controlled. Additionally, the amount of U.S. supplies to South Vietnam would be limited, but there would be no limits on the amount of supplies the North Vietnamese could give to the South Vietnam communists. After eight years of war, the Paris Peace Accords represented defeat for the United States.

Aside from the libertarian anti-war contingent, few conservatives supported the Paris Peace Accords, signed in January 1973. Arguments against the accord were scattershot. Some argued that victory for the United States remained a possibility, while others wanted a stronger demilitarized zone to help keep North Vietnamese troops away from Saigon.<sup>61</sup> Regardless, the private letters of conservatives and the conservative media indicate that there was widespread disapproval of the agreement. They believed that fighting against communists required perseverance and strength, and they held fast to the idea that the United States could not give up the battle. After eight long years, they wanted to see the United States victorious, regardless of the overall costs. In an unfortunate twist for these conservatives, their decision to support Nixon instead of Reagan in 1968 might well have precipitated defeat in the war which they had steadfastly supported for so long.

## Notes

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5. Editorial, *National Review Bulletin*, March 16, 1965, 1.
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10. Some examples of this argument: Editorial, “Vietnam Stalemate?,” *National Review*, August 22, 1967, 888; Clarence Manion, “The Short, Straight Line: Quick Military Victory: The Only Way Out of Viet Nam,” *Manion Forum*, March 13, 1966; Memo from Wayne Phillips to Cliff Carter, “Memo on International Days of Protest: October 15–16, 1965,” September 24, 1965, Box 217, WHCF, LBJL; Editorial, “President’s Viet Action Puzzles Cold War Observers,” *Human Events*, May 20, 1972, 1(369).
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41. Advertisement by YAF, *Human Events*, May 30, 1970, 31 (427).

42. "Sloganeering" quote from memo written by Teague to National Board of Directors, May 15, 1970, Box 2, Folder 3, Dowd Papers.  
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46. Letter. Judd to Emmet, July 1, 1970, Box 30, Folder 2, Judd Papers.
47. Letter. Norton to Randy Teague, "Re: A Quiet YAF Withdrawal from Vietnam," October 1, 1970, Box 3, Folder 2, Dowd Papers.
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51. Three examples of the Right's belief that the United States might lose the war:

In a letter from Christopher Emmet to Henry Kissinger, Emmet complains that Nixon should not appear optimistic in future predictions because there was already a large enough "so-called credibility gap." Letter. Emmet to Kissinger, May 29, 1970, Box 83, Folder 15, Emmet Papers.

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53. Letter. Niemeyer to Buckley, December 27, 1971, Niemeyer 1971 Folder, Buckley Papers. Other examples include: William Rusher to Ted Robertson, July 21, 1972, General Correspondence Ted Robertson Folder, Rusher Papers; Buckley to Niemeyer, January 13, 1972, Niemeyer 1972 Folder, Buckley Papers; Neil McCaffrey to William Rusher, July 17, 1972, General Correspondence Neil McCaffrey Folder, Rusher Papers.
54. Editorial, "Nixon Rhetoric Confuses True Viet Nam Aims," *Human Events*, January 15, 1972, 1 (33).
55. James Burnham, "The Protracted Conflict: I'll Tell You a Secret," *National Review*, February 18, 1972, 144.
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59. Editorial, "Will Kissinger's Secret Diplomacy Undermine Saigon? Asian Experts Concerned," *Human Events*, October 21, 1972, 1 (769).

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Publication. Daniel Lyons, "Man on the Go: Expert on Southeast Asia Prospects for Peace Now," *Manion Forum*, December 24, 1972, Box 84, Folder 4, Manion Papers.

An example of a call for a more serious DMZ line is: Editorial, "Have Critical Changes Been Made in New Viet Pact?," *Human Events*, January 27, 1973, 1 (65).

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biting sarcasm. The magazine also attacked the press for bothering to write about Hess, claiming the media covered his statements because he makes “good copy because he denounces his former comrades at every turn and claims, over and over, that his personal brand of libertarianism/anarchism is the only real conservatism.”<sup>49</sup> *National Review*’s Frank Meyer, who helped coin the term fusionism, also chastised these libertarians because they refused to compromise, disregarded reality, and used rhetoric that was indistinguishable from the New Left. For Meyer, these individuals were not true conservatives; they were heretics.<sup>50</sup>

Grassroots conservatives joined the fracas. In March 1970, Stephen J. Sniegoski, writing in *The Conservative*, a student publication of the American University YAF, wrote an article titled “Libertarianism” wherein he opposed the anti-draft and anti-war crowd. “In this age,” he wrote, “the task of the conservative is to defend society and the principles of ordered community, not to quibble about the perfect freedom for the individual. Such idyllic talk should be consigned to the utopian ideologues of the Left.”<sup>51</sup> In the same issue, Jay Mooney sarcastically suggested that the right should support legalization of drugs in order to help control the population—insinuating that drug users (including libertarian drug users) would eventually die of an overdose.<sup>52</sup> Mooney’s and Sniegoski’s articles demonstrate the lack of respect emanating from grassroots traditionalists toward their former comrades. For the first time, conservatives expressed the same hatred and rage normally reserved for the left towards their former comrades. There remained little affection between traditionalists and libertarians.

Despite the differences between the leadership of the two groups, conservatives did not suddenly forget their libertarian roots. Many traditionalists still believed in a smaller federal government, even if they were not dogmatic about it. Thus, there were still many instances throughout the remainder of the 1970s, and through to contemporary times, when the conservative movement endorsed libertarian principles. However, while traditionalists retained their views about small government in some areas, as the decade wore on, they were unable to maintain the fusionism philosophy without a strong libertarian influence. This dichotomy served conservatism well as morality-based issues began to enter the national political discourse. Issues such as abstinence education, abortion, public displays of religion, and more were thrust into the public sphere. As the early 1970s progressed, there was a greater focus within conservative literature on morality, Christianity, and order within society. During these debates, libertarians had less influence on the movement’s leadership than they did before the Vietnam War. Over the long term, this affected the movement’s ideology.<sup>53</sup>

## Notes

1. John H. Kessel, *The Goldwater Coalition: Republican Strategy in 1964* (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc, 1968), 197.

2. Michael Thompson, telephone interview with Seth Offenbach, January 9, 2012.
3. Donald T. Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism: A Woman's Crusade* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005); Nicole R. Hemmer, *Messengers of the Right: Conservative Media and the Transformation of American Politics* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016); George Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America Since 1945* (New York: Basic Books, 1976); Rick Perlstein, *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001).
4. For a longer history of modern libertarianism and its place in the conservative movement, see: Jennifer Burns, *Goddess of the Market: Ayn Rand and the American Right* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Donald T. Critchlow, *The Conservative Ascendancy: How the GOP Right Made Political History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007); Paul Gottfried and Thomas Fleming, *The Conservative Movement* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1988); Godfrey Hodgson, *The World Turned Right Side Up: A History of the Conservative Ascendancy in America* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1996); Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America Since 1945*; Gregory L. Schneider, *The Conservative Century: From Reaction to Revolution* (Lanham, PA: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009)
5. John Sainsbury, telephone interview with Seth Offenbach, June 28, 2012.
6. Sainsbury was one of the few libertarians who supported the Vietnam War. However, because he sided with many other libertarians on other issues, he was part of a larger contingent that was removed from YAF in 1967 and 1968. This is partially explained in Wayne Thorburn, *A Generation Awakes: Young Americans for Freedom and the Creation of the Conservative Movement* (Ottawa, IL: Jameson Books, 2010). Information from John Sainsbury, telephone interview with Seth Offenbach, June 28, 2012.
7. Rand had her own unique brand of libertarianism known as Objectivism. Many who read her works considered themselves Objectivists and were largely on the periphery of the conservative movement. Many others, however, sampled her work, along with that of other libertarians. This latter group is the one under discussion in this book because these people were more closely aligned with the Goldwater campaign in 1964, and also the group most likely to leave the right in the late 1960s and early 1970s.
8. Friedrich A. Hayek, *The Constitution of Liberty* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 298.
9. Letter from Hazlitt to Rex Barley, May 30, 1967, Box B023 I-L, Folder LA Times 1966–1967, Henry Hazlitt Subject Files, Henry Hazlitt Archives. Accessed online at *Henry Hazlitt Archives Beta*, [www.hazlitt.ufm.edu/index.php?title=DOC6218\\_3.pdf&gsearch=rex%20barley](http://www.hazlitt.ufm.edu/index.php?title=DOC6218_3.pdf&gsearch=rex%20barley).
10. Hazlitt's views were laid out in several articles, quotes are from: Henry Hazlitt, "Bankruptcy of Foreign Aid," June 25, 1967, LA Times Columns 1967, Box B03 I-L, Henry Hazlitt Archives, [www.hazlitt.ufm.edu/index.php?title=DOC6166\\_39.pdf&gsearch=%22foreign%20aid%22](http://www.hazlitt.ufm.edu/index.php?title=DOC6166_39.pdf&gsearch=%22foreign%20aid%22).
11. Darryl Johnson, "World Government: A Reactionary Disorder," *The Freeman*, June 1, 1960.
12. William Henry Chamberlain, "The UN Threat to the US," *The Freeman*, January 1, 1964.
13. Johnson, "World Government"; Chamberlain, "The UN Threat to the US."
14. Burns, *Goddess*, 144.
15. Rothbard's articles appeared in innumerable newspapers and magazines ranging from the mainstream *New York Times* to the small and eccentric *New Individualist Review*. He also published more than a dozen books by several publishing houses including the small D. Van Nostrand Company and

the mainstream Macmillan Publishers. Finally, Rothbard was involved in the libertarian Society for Individual Liberty, the Ludwig von Mises Institute, and the founding of the Cato Institute.

16. Murray N. Rothbard, "On the Importance of Revisionism for Our Time," *Rampart Journal* 2, no. 1 (Spring 1966): 3–4.
17. Murray N. Rothbard, "Myths of the Cold War," *Rampart Journal* 2, no. 2 (Summer 1966): 65–66.  
Fred Schwarz, *You Can Trust the Communists (to Be Communists)*, 13th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1962).
18. Peter Shaw, "Sentimental Journeys," *Commentary*, July 1, 1969, [www.commentarymagazine.com/article/hanoi-by-mary-mccarthy-trip-to-hanoi-by-susan-sontag/](http://www.commentarymagazine.com/article/hanoi-by-mary-mccarthy-trip-to-hanoi-by-susan-sontag/);  
William Sloane Coffine, Jr., et al., "A Call to Resist Illegitimate Authority," 1967, <http://vietnamwar.lib.umb.edu/warHome/docs/1967CallToResistIllegit.html>.  
Susan Sontag, "What's Happening to America," *Partisan Review* 34, no. 1 (Winter 1967): 58.
19. William F. Buckley, Jr., "Our Mission Statement," *National Review*, November 19, 1955, [www.nationalreview.com/articles/223549/our-mission-statement/william-f-buckley-jr](http://www.nationalreview.com/articles/223549/our-mission-statement/william-f-buckley-jr).
20. Frank S. Meyer, "Principles & Heresies: The Draft," *National Review*, August 9, 1966, 785.
21. Rebecca Klatch, *A Generation Divided: The New Left, the New Right, and the 1960s* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999).
22. David Franke, interviewed by Seth Offenbach, in New York, New York, November 17, 2005.
23. Editorial, "About the Draft," *National Review*, May 30, 1967, 556–557.
24. Alice Widener, "One Vote for the Draft," *Human Events*, June 10, 1967, 13.
25. James Burnham, "The Third World War: The Antidraft Movement," *National Review*, June 13, 1967, 629.
26. David Silbey, "A Crisis in the Humanities?," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 10, 2013, <http://chronicle.com/blognetwork/edgeofthewest/2013/06/10/the-humanities-crisis/>.
27. Letter from Steel to Buckley, October 12, 1967, Correspondence Folder, William Steel, William F. Buckley Papers, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University. Hereafter referred to as Buckley Papers.
28. Letter from Steel to David Keene, November 13, 1969, Correspondence Folder William Steel, Buckley Papers.
29. Juris Kaza and Marli Weiss, "Libertarians: New Right Meets New Left," *Columbia Daily Spectator*, October 28, 1969, C2.  
More info on the combination of libertarians and SDS, see Rebecca Klatch, *A Generation Divided: The New Left, the New Right, and the 1960s* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999).
30. Timothy Bleck, "Convention of Freedom Group Here," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, August 27, 1969, 3B.
31. Burns, *Goddess*; Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America Since 1945*; Jonathan M. Schoenwald, "No War, No Welfare, and No Damn Taxation: The Student Libertarian Movement, 1968–1972," in *The Vietnam War on Campus: Other Voices, More Distant Drums*, ed. Marc Jason Gilbert (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2001), 20–53.
32. Letter from Allen Brandstater to Misc, November 26, 1969, Box 341, YAF Folder, Group Research Papers, Columbia University, New York. Hereafter referred to as Group Research Papers.
33. There was much debate within YAF in 1969 and 1970 regarding the future of libertarianism in the movement. Libertarians often initiated this broader



debate. One example of this is a memo from Don Feder, State Chairman of Massachusetts YAF and a member of the National Board of Directors to the Libertarian Caucus, July 17, 1969. In this memo, Feder chides the LC for promoting a new ideology which would have “no place in it for Traditionalists.”

Feder to Libertarian Caucus, July 17, 1969, Box 1, Folder 2, Down Papers. Quote from Letter from Allen Brandstater to Misc, November 26, 1969, Box 341, YAF Folder, Group Research Papers.

34. Letter from Don Feder to the Libertarian Caucus, July 17, 1969, Patrick Dowd Papers, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University. Hereafter referred to as Dowd Papers.
35. Follow-up email correspondence from Donald Ernsberger to Seth Offenbach, July 12, 2013.
36. “Rightists to Fight Student Left,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, August 31, 1969, 3A.
37. “Young Conservatives Hear Buckley Speech,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, August 29, 1969, 8A.
38. “Rightists to Fight Student Left,” 3A.  
Robert Walters, “Young Americans for Freedom,” *First Principles*, March 22, 2012, [www.firstprinciplesjournal.com/articles.aspx?article=363&theme=amsec&page=2&loc=b&type=ctbf](http://www.firstprinciplesjournal.com/articles.aspx?article=363&theme=amsec&page=2&loc=b&type=ctbf).
39. Bleck, “Convention of Freedom Group Here,” 3B.
40. Murray Rothbard, “Listen YAF,” *Libertarian Forum*, August 15, 1969, <http://mises.org/daily/3090> (emphasis in original).
41. Kaza and Weiss, “Libertarians,” C2.
42. The organization continued to exist, and the SIL eventually merged with the Libertarian International to form the International Society for Individual Liberty: Vince Miller and Jim Elwood, “Taking Liberty Global: 25 Years Building the World Liberty Movement,” *International Society for Individual Liberty*, 2005, [www.isil.org/resources/fnn/2005fall/isil-history.html](http://www.isil.org/resources/fnn/2005fall/isil-history.html).  
Still, historian Jonathan Schoenwald claims that the organization’s influence essentially disappeared in 1971 because of dramatic declines in membership numbers: Schoenwald, “No War, No Welfare, and No Damn Taxation,” 37–38.  
The movement’s relative absence from historical records and publications throughout the late 1970s and into the 1990s indicates that Schoenwald was accurate, though the organization existed on paper for many years after its decline.
43. Wayne Thorburn, telephone interview with Seth Offenbach, July 19, 2011.
44. When arguing that libertarians should not try to rejoin YAF in 1970, Jerome Tuccille claimed that reconciliation was impossible since 78% of YAFers supported the Nixon administration’s policies, especially with regard to Vietnam.  
Jerome Tuccille, “Phony Libertarianism,” *The Libertarian Forum*, February 15, 1970, Box 2, Folder 3, Dowd Papers.
45. James Boyd, “From Far Right to Far Left-and Further-with Karl Hess,” *New York Times*, December 6, 1970, 306.
46. Murray N. Rothbard, “The New Libertarian Creed,” *New York Times*, February 9, 1971, 39.
47. Liberty League Pamphlet, undated [probably from early 1970s], Box 2, Folder 6, American Subject Collection, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
48. Editorial, “The Draft: Keep It Dead,” *SIL News*, August 1971, Box 300, Group Research Papers.
49. Editorial, “The Sudden Eminence of Karl Hess,” *National Review*, December 29, 1970, 1388–1389.
50. Frank Meyer, “Principles and Heresies: Libertarianism or Libertinism?,” *National Review*, September 9, 1969, 910.

51. Stephen J. Sniegowski, "Libertarianism," *The Conservative*, Published by the American University Young Americans for Freedom, March 1970: 3–4; *The Conservative*, March 1970, Box 341, Group Research Papers.
52. Jay Mooney, "Blow Your Mind," *The Conservative*, Published by the American University Young Americans for Freedom, March 1970: 2–3; *The Conservative*, March 1970, Box 341, Group Research Papers.
53. This theme is continued in Chapter 6, but it is also echoed in Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warrior: The Origins of the American New Right*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001), where she discusses the transitional focus of conservatism from focusing on external to internal enemies.

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alliances libertarians proposed. Karl Hess's 1969 announcement that he had more in common with the New Left than the right stung. Most conservative groups responded angrily to Hess, and their anger stemmed partially from Hess's role in helping raise the profile of their political icon and then leaving the movement for the political enemies. It was one thing for Hess to become disillusioned with conservative thinking, but it was quite another for him to join the other side.

Libertarians joined hand in hand with the anti-war left at the same time that Richard Nixon was gaining power and influence in the Republican Party. Beginning around 1966, conservatives started to recognize that Nixon was the leading contender for the Republican presidential nomination in 1968. They started discussing supporting the man whom they opposed in 1960. That they considered Nixon a potential ally is proof enough that conservatism was in trouble. As Chapter 5 demonstrates, the Nixon-conservative relationship of the late 1960s and early 1970s was turbulent and ultimately further divided the movement.

## Notes

1. Memo from William Rusher to the Editors of *National Review*, April 7, 1969, Box 119, Folder 2, Rusher Papers.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. Donald T. Critchlow, *The Conservative Ascendancy: How the GOP Right Made Political History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007); Matthew D. Lassiter, "Inventing Family Values," in *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 13–28; Stacie Taranto, *Kitchen Table Politics: Conservative Women and Family Values in the Seventies* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017).
5. Memo from Teague to the National Board of Directors, May 15, 1970, Box 2, Folder 3, Patrick Dowd Papers, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University [emphasis added]. Hereafter referred to as Dowd Papers.
6. William F. Buckley, Jr., *Up from Liberalism*, 2nd ed. (New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1968), 35.
7. John Leo, "Very Dark Horse in New York," *New York Times*, September 5, 1965, SM8.
8. For more on the public's changing views about the Vietnam War, see William L. Lunch and Peter W. Sperlich, "American Public Opinion and the War in Vietnam," *The Western Political Quarterly* 32, no. 1 (1979): 21–44, <https://doi.org/10.2307/447561>.
9. Fritz Krieger, telephone interview by Seth Offenbach, July 8, 2013.
10. Marilyn Manion interviewing Stefan Possony, "A Look At the 'New Left': A Psychological Warfare Expert Examines Communist Techniques On College Campuses," *Manion Forum*, March 27, 1966, Box 83, Folder 8, Clarence Manion Papers, Chicago Historical Society, Chicago. Hereafter referred to as Manion Papers.
11. James Jackson Kilpatrick, "Should Rockwell Kent Be Tried for Treason? Gives \$10,000 to North Viet Nam," *Human Events*, July 22, 1967, 1.
12. Bill Saracion, telephone interview with Seth Offenbach, July 9, 2012.

13. Victor Wilson, "A-Attack on Viet Jungle Proposed by Goldwater," *Washington Post*, May 25, 1964, A1.
14. As previously mentioned, Goldwater described the possibility that nuclear weapons could be used, if the military thought it necessary. The press described it as an explicit endorsement of using nuclear weapons in Vietnam. In reality, both Goldwater (who downplayed it) and the media (which hyped it) were not being accurate.
15. Nicole R. Hemmer, *Messengers of the Right: Conservative Media and the Transformation of American Politics* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 165.
16. Marvin Liebman to Don Lipsett of the American Conservative Union, May 15, 1965, Box 7, Folder 7, Marvin Liebman Papers, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University. Hereafter referred to as Liebman Papers.
17. "Vietnam, the Photographs We're Never Asked for . . ." *National Review*, October 18, 1966: 1049–1051.
18. Andrew J. Huebner, "Rethinking American Press Coverage of the Vietnam War, 1965–68," *Journalism History* 31, no. 3 (2005): 151; Daniel C. Hallin, *The "Uncensored War": The Media and Vietnam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).
19. Michael E. Ruane, "A Grisly Photo of a Saigon Execution 50 Years Ago Shocked the World and Helped End the War," *Washington Post*, February 1, 2018, [www.washingtonpost.com/news/retropolis/wp/2018/02/01/a-grisly-photo-of-a-saigon-execution-50-years-ago-shocked-the-world-and-helped-end-the-war/?utm\\_term=.8819f4cdc2a6](http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/retropolis/wp/2018/02/01/a-grisly-photo-of-a-saigon-execution-50-years-ago-shocked-the-world-and-helped-end-the-war/?utm_term=.8819f4cdc2a6).
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21. Editorial, "The Open Society," *National Review*, April 8, 1969, 319–320.
22. One example of the ad was on the back page of *Human Events*, February 7, 1970.
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24. First quote from: Doug Black, Co-Chairman of Free Campus Coalition to Patrick Dowd, July 31, 1969, Box 1, Folder 2, Dowd Papers.  
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25. Letter from Wayne Thorburn to Roy Lewis, March 12, 1969, Box 1, Folder 1, Dowd Papers.
26. YAF membership numbers per state and region from 1965 and 1969, Box 2, Folder 1, Dowd Papers.
27. YAF membership numbers per state and region from 1969, Box 2, Folder 1, Dowd Papers.
28. Thor F. Nelson, President of YAF Merced, to Patrick Dowd, undated but clearly in 1969, Box 1, Folder 2, Dowd Papers.
29. "Had Enough" poster, undated but likely from 1969, Box 1, Folder 12, Dowd Papers.
30. "Buckley, Al Capp to Speak at Youth Convention Here," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, August 20, 1969, 14A.
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33. Number of chapters from David Keene speech reproduced as “YAF Celebrates 10th Anniversary,” *Human Events*, September 26, 1970, 8(752). Finances from CPA paperwork 1970, Box 3, Folder 2, Dowd Papers.
34. YAF Chapters 1970, Box 2, Folder 1, Dowd Papers.

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35. YAF finances from records reported by certified public accountants based on year ending July 31, 1970, Box 3, Folder 2, Dowd Papers.

YAF chapter records from a count of YAF Chapter from April 15, 1970, Box 2, Folder 1, Dowd Papers.

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Recognizing that the end of the war created an opportunity for the right to grow, Jeffrey Bell, in his unusually long four-page article in *Human Events*, reminded his readers that the long-term prognosis for the movement remained positive and that conservatives must begin focusing on the tremendous opportunities presented to them by the end of the war. Libertarians had disagreed with the war. Many conservatives had lost faith in the war. Some organizations had stopped growing because of popular opposition to the war. Overall, focusing on Vietnam was self-defeating for conservatives, but at last it was over and “the conservative opportunity is greater than at any time in two generations.”<sup>56</sup> Bell’s article turned out to be prophetic.

## Notes

1. “A Declaration,” *National Review*, August 10, 1971, 842.
2. “The Conservative and Mr. Nixon,” *Firing Line*, December 5, 1971, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University, Palo Alto, California.
3. Whittaker Chambers, *Witness* (New York: Random House, 1952), 532.
4. Quote from: Sarah Katherine Mergel, *Conservative Intellectuals and Richard Nixon* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), 14. For a more complete look at the right’s relations to Nixon prior to the election, see Mergel, chapter 1.
5. *Ibid.*, 87–88.  
The reference to Munich is a reference to England and France’s appeasement of Hitler in the 1938 Munich Conference. Here, Goldwater was referring to the idea that conservatives gave up policy positions before the convention fight even started.
6. Buckley to Mark Burlingame, April 18, 1968, Inter-Office Memos, Correspondence 1968, William F. Buckley Papers, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University. Hereafter referred to as Buckley Papers.
7. Frank Meyer represents this view of Nixon vs Reagan in his piece: Frank Meyer, “Principle and Heresies: What Is at Issue in 1968?,” *National Review*, July 30, 1968, 751.  
For a more complete look at this debate, see Mergel, *Conservative Intellectuals and Richard Nixon*, chap. 1.
8. Wayne Thornburn, telephone interview with Seth Offenbach, July 19, 2011.
9. Editorial, “News Brief,” *National Review*, November 26, 1968, B185.
10. William F. Buckley, Jr., “On the right: Mr. Nixon’s Cabinet,” *National Review*, December 3, 1968, 1236–1237.
11. Memo from Bryce Harlow to Lyn Nofziger, September 18, 1969, Box 52, Folder 7, White House Special Files, Richard Nixon Presidential Papers, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland. Hereafter referred to as Nixon Papers.
12. One example is a meeting between the Nixon Administration and William F. Buckley, Jr.  
Memo from Mr. Ehrlichman to Kissinger, August 4, 1969, Box 8, Folder 1, Nixon Papers.
13. Nixon archives and papers indicate that he set up frequent meetings between National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger and Special Assistant Patrick Buchanan and various conservative leaders in order to cultivate close ties between the White House and the right. One example is: Memo from Mr. Ehrlichman to Kissinger, August 4, 1969, Box 8, Folder 1, Nixon Papers.

14. This was an especially important program because it was one of the few wherein Manion focused on Vietnam, indicating that he held great respect for Lyons (a regular guest).

Daniel Lyons, "Vietnamization Program Shows Promise: South Viet Nam Should Be Allowed to Destroy Red Sanctuaries," *Manion Forum*, February 22, 1970, Box 84, Folder 2, Clarence Manion Papers, Chicago Historical Society, Chicago. Hereafter referred to as Manion Papers.

15. "This Week's News from Inside Washington: The Realistic Mr. Nixon," *Human Events*, March 15, 1969, 3 (163).
16. *National Review* circulation numbers from ABC Auditing, 1968, Box 110, Folder 5, William Rusher Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC. Hereafter referred to as Rusher Papers. YAF figures from Randal Teague to National Board, Re: Analysis of Current Financial Status, December 17, 1969, Box 2, Folder 4, Patrick Dowd Papers, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University. Hereafter referred to as Dowd Papers.
17. Financial Reports and Statements, American Conservative Union, 1967–1972, Box 136, Folder 1,2,3,4, Rusher Papers.
18. Examples of supporting arguments for Nixon's foreign policies: Editorial, "Slow Boat from Vietnam," *National Review*, June 24, 1969, B92; "This Week's News from Inside Washington: The Realistic Mr. Nixon," *Human Events*, March 15, 1969, 3(163).
- Examples of opposing Nixon's foreign policies: Gen. Thomas A. Lane, "War Requires More Than Troop Withdrawal," *Human Events*, June 21, 1969, 1; "This Week's News from Inside Washington: SALT: Nuclear Munich?," *Human Events*, November 8, 1969, 3(763); Letter from William Loeb (President of *Manchester Union Leader*) to Elizabeth Churchill Brown, November 25, 1969, Box 2, Folders 24, Elizabeth Churchill Brown Papers, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University. Hereafter referred to as Churchill Brown Papers.
19. William Rusher to Ted Robertson, August 18, 1969, Box 76, Folder 10, General Correspondence, Rusher Papers.
20. Examples of articles pressuring Nixon to spend more on national defense:

"This Week's News from Inside Washington: Laird's Alarming Budget Cuts," *Human Events*, January 17, 1970, 3(35); Editorial, "This Week's News from Inside Washington: Deploy the ABM," *Human Events*, March 22, 1969, 3(179).

21. Editorial, "Now Is the Time for All Good Men to Come to the Aid of Their President," *National Review*, May 19, 1970, 500–501.
22. "YAF: Nixon Is Double-Dealing on Vietnam," March 12, 1971, Box 341, YAF Folder, Group Research Papers, Columbia University, New York. Hereafter referred to as Group Research Papers.
23. Editorial, "This Week's News from Inside Washington: Nixon to Push East-West Trade?," *Human Events*, May 17, 1969, 2(355).
24. Examples of each: Front-Page Editorial, "Nixon Needs Country's Support: Conservatives Praise Cambodian Move," *Human Events*, May 9, 1970, 1(353); Front-Page Editorial, "Conservatives Worried: Nixon After One Year," *Human Events*, January 24, 1970, 1(57).
25. "This Week's News from Inside Washington: Budget Expert Says Defense Spending Too Low," *Human Events*, November 21, 1970, 4 (908).
26. John Ligonier, "The Soviets and the 'Era of Negotiation': It Takes Two to Talk," *Human Events*, November 14, 1970, 16(896). John Ligonier was a pseudonym for a freelance writer (emphasis in original).

27. Frank Meyer, "Principles and Heresies: Mr. Nixon's Course?," *National Review*, January 12, 1971, 86.
28. Nicole R. Hemmer, *Messengers of the Right: Conservative Media and the Transformation of American Politics* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 235.
29. *Ibid.*
30. Joyce Mao, *Asia First: China and the Making of Modern American Conservatism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).
31. One example is Anthony Harrigan's article wherein he compared China's secret support for the North Vietnamese to Pearl Harbor: Anthony Harrigan, "Our War with China: In Vietnam & in the UN," *National Review*, March 8, 1966, 204–209.
32. Congressional conservatives tended to mute their criticism of Nixon, largely because of party loyalty and because Nixon controlled the Republican National Committee, which controlled money flowing to congressional campaigns. Meanwhile, conservatives were outraged by the idea of recognizing China (which Nixon did not do), and they attacked the idea before it was even public. For instance, see: James Burnham, "The Protracted Conflict: How to Solve the China Problem," *National Review*, June 29, 1971, 693; David Brudnoy, "Nixon Risks Losing Conservative Votes on Red China," *Human Events*, May 22, 1971, 9(417).
33. Ping-pong diplomacy was particularly symbolic because the U.S. and Chinese national teams played one another in an attempt to demonstrate the warming relations between the two nations.  
DC YAF Pamphlet, Box 340, Young Americans for Freedom Folder, Group Research Papers.
34. Molly Ivines, "The Observer Goes to a YAF Convention," *The Texas Observer*, September 24, 1971, Box 340, Young Americans for Freedom (magazine and clippings) Folder, Group Research Papers.
35. One example comes from the Russell J. Fuhrman to Buckley, March 5, 1972, Personal Correspondence, Buckley Papers.  
Historian Kevin J. Smart records that the letters were divided, with about a quarter strongly supporting the president, about half opposing his moves but supporting him as president, and a quarter wanting conservative leaders to help push him from office. Kevin J. Smart, *Principles and Heresies: Frank S. Meyer and the Shaping of the American Conservative Movement* (Wilmington, DE: ISI Books, 2002), 317–318.
36. Front-Page Editorial, "Leading Conservatives 'Suspend Support' of Nixon," *Human Events*, August 7, 1971, 1(593).
37. Most likely, this was because Nixon's prestige as president was greater than the prestige of editing a magazine or appearing on a television show (such as Buckley did).  
*Human Events* circulation numbers from Survey of Far Right Wing Organizations, 1971, Box 406, Group Research Papers.
38. By early 1972, articles within the conservative press began appearing such as: James Burnham, "The Protracted Conflict: I'll Tell You a Secret," *National Review*, February 18, 1972, 144. This article explained why the United States was about to lose the Vietnam War.
39. Ivines, "The Observer Goes to a YAF Convention," Young Americans for Freedom (magazine and clippings) Folder, Group Research Papers.
40. Wayne Thorburn, *A Generation Awakes: Young Americans for Freedom and the Creation of the Conservative Movement* (Ottawa, IL: Jameson Books, 2010), 342–349.

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41. One example is a letter from Rusher to Frank Masland arguing that *National Review* was correct in pushing Ashbrook's candidacy even though the editors knew he could not win. Rusher to Masland, February 4, 1972, Box 57, Folder 3, William Rusher Papers.
42. Letter from Rusher to Ted Robertson, August 15, 1972, Box 76, Folder 10, William Rusher Papers.
43. McCaffrey to Rusher, July 17, 1972, Box 57, Folder 7, William Rusher Papers.
44. W. H. von Dreele, Poem: "I Remember Nixon," *National Review*, October 13, 1972, 1102.
45. One instance of conservatives supporting Nixon's strong pro-war policy is: "This Week's News from Inside Washington: How Nixon Can Make Vietnamization Work," *Human Events*, May 13, 1972, 3(355).

This belief held true even after the election, an example of that is: Front-Page Editorial, "Last Chance for Tough Viet Agreement," *Human Events*, November 25, 1972, 1(889).

46. Walter Isaacson, *Kissinger: A Biography* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2005), 459.
47. There was suspicion among conservatives that Buckley enjoyed being wooed by Kissinger since he was in power and Buckley enjoyed the idea of being close to power. Quote from: John B. Judas, *William F. Buckley, Jr.: Patron Saint of the Conservatives* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1988), 300.
48. Romney and the right had an especially tense relationship because he attempted some last-minute maneuvers to keep Goldwater from winning the 1964 primary.  
Survey from: Membership Survey of Conservative Book Club, 1969, Box 368, Conservative Book Club Folder, Group Research Papers.
49. Letter from Loeb to Brown, February 16, 1971, Box 2, Folder 24, Churchill Brown Papers.
50. Front-Page Editorial, "Will Kissinger's Secret Diplomacy Undermine Saigon? Asian Experts Concerned," *Human Events*, October 21, 1972, 1(769).
51. Daniel Lyons, "Man on the Go: Expert on Southeast Asia Prospects for Peace Now," *Manion Forums*, December 24, 1972, Box 84, Folder 4, Manion Papers.
52. Rusher to Buckley, February 21, 1973, Inter-Office Memos 1973, Buckley Papers.
53. Buckley to Rusher, March 8, 1973, Inter-Office Memos 1973, Buckley Papers.
54. Jeffrey Bell, "The State of Conservatism: Conservatives Have Suffered an Unpleasant Four Years, but the Opportunities Are Enormous If They Can Resist the Lures of 'Pseudorealism,'" *Human Events* 8-11, February 24, 1973, 8-11 (152-155).
55. Rusher to Priscilla Buckley, November 17, 1972, Box 123, Folder 3, Rusher Papers.
56. Jeffrey Bell, "The State of Conservatism: Conservatives Have Suffered an Unpleasant Four Years, but the Opportunities Are Enormous If They Can Resist the Lures of 'Pseudorealism,'" *Human Events*, February 24, 1973, 8-11 (152-155).

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an editor at the magazine, believed that the best solution to gain interest in conservatism again was to completely change the subject. Borrowing Neil McCaffrey's idea from a few years earlier, McFadden argued that the magazine needed to begin publishing "matching articles for and against abortion, both written by noted conservatives (ideally both non-Catholics)." McFadden believed this would be a "tremendous draw;" after all, whenever *National Review* wrote about abortion, it often saw more letters to the editor and sold slightly more subscriptions.<sup>65</sup> In this instance, the editors were listening to their readers when they made the decision to devote more ink to the abortion issue.

On January 22, 1973, the Supreme Court issued its ruling in *Roe v. Wade*, legalizing abortion. This ruling brought a storm of anger from Christian evangelicals and fundamentalists, many of whom had opposed laws which legalized abortion. Five days later, on January 27, the Paris Peace Accords were signed, bringing to a close U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. After agreeing, in principle, that the United States needed to fight and win the Vietnam War, and after jointly experiencing the pain of defeat when the United States lost the war, the evangelical anti-communist community and the conservative movement now found another issue on which to agree.

The following year, evangelical anti-communists and the conservative movement burst into the national spotlight in the most unlikely of places: Charleston, West Virginia. As discussed earlier, in September 1974, hundreds of Christian activists closed down the Kanawha school district because the district had integrated several books which these activists deemed immoral. This protest represented the culmination of much effort on the part of local conservative activists and major national conservative organizations. Together, these groups identified a moral society as one of the most powerful forces propelling the burgeoning New Right. Though the movement's leaders were not solely responsible for the change—in many respects, they were responding to changes from below—the movement's decision to begin to focus more attention on morality, religion, and abortion reflected the changes that were occurring in the early 1970s. With the conclusion of the Vietnam War, the right needed a new topic that could agitate the grassroots—and abortion burst into the national political debates at precisely the right time for the right to rally against abortion rights and the pro-choice laws of the early and mid-1970s. It is likely that the Kanawha protests would not have occurred without the conservative movement shifting its focus from foreign policy to religion in the early 1970s.

## Notes

1. Associated Press, "Textbook Protest Hits Public Buses," *New York Times*, September 11, 1974, 34.



2. For more information on the Kanawha County protests, see: Rick Perlstein, *The Invisible Bridge: The Fall of Nixon and the Rise of Reagan* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2014). For more information on the polarization of Christian evangelicals and a focus on the Kanawha protests, see: Daniel K. Williams, *God's Own Party: The Making of the Christian Right* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), chap. 7.
3. United Press International, "Protesters Assail 'Filthy' Textbooks in West Virginia," *New York Times*, September 6, 1974, 11; Ben A. Franklin, "Schools Closed in Textbook Rift," *New York Times*, September 16, 1974, 16.
4. AP, "Driver Shot in Violence Over Textbooks: Driver's Condition Critical," *New York Times*, September 14, 1974, 27.
5. AP, "Classes Are Suspended In Textbook Dispute," *New York Times*, September 13, 1974, 73.
6. AP, "Driver Shot in Violence Over Textbooks," 27.
7. Ben A. Franklin, "Schools Damaged in Books Protest," *New York Times*, October 10, 1974, 17.
8. Franklin, "Schools Closed in Textbook Rift," 16; AP, "Blast Ruins Car of Woman Held in Textbook Protest," *New York Times*, October 13, 1974, 59.
9. John Kifner, "Eldridge Cleaver, Black Panther Who Became G.O.P. Conservative, Is Dead at 62," *New York Times*, May 2, 1998, A1.
10. UPI, "Protesters Assail 'Filthy' Textbooks in West Virginia," 11.
11. Special to the *New York Times*, "Shaky Truce Set in Textbook Rift," *New York Times*, September 15, 1974, 32.
12. Austin Scott, "W. Virginia Schoolbook Protest Apparently Got Out of Hand," *Washington Post*, September 15, 1974, A4.
13. For more on the blue-collar angst felt in the 1970s, see books such as: Jefferson R. Cowie, *Stayin' Alive: The 1970s and the Last Decade of the Working Class* (New York: The New Press, 2010); Judith Stein, *Running Steel, Running America: Race, Economic Policy and the Decline of American Liberalism* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1998).
14. Scott, "W. Virginia Schoolbook Protest Apparently Got Out of Hand," A4.
15. This work defines Christian evangelicals as the large segment of the Christian population which believes in the centrality of conversion, a literalist interpretation of the Bible, and a commitment to evangelizing their message. Fundamentalists are a subset of Christian evangelicals who read the Bible more literally (with fewer metaphors), and in the early post-World War II era, fundamentalists often tried to remove themselves from those who refused to be born again.  
 For a classic definition of terms, see: David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989).  
 For a further discussion of the differences between Fundamentalists and Evangelicals, see: Williams, *God's Own Party*, 33–45.
16. A variety of excellent works which cover versions of this topic include: Donald T. Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism: A Woman's Crusade* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005); William A. Link, *Righteous Warrior: Jesse Helms and the Rise of Modern Conservatism* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2008); William Martin, *With God on Our Side: The Rise of the Religious Right in America* (New York: Broadway, 2005); Alex R. Schafer, *Piety and Public Funding: Evangelicals and the State in Modern America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012); Williams, *God's Own Party*; Neil J. Young, *We Gather Together: The Religious Right and the Problem of Interfaith Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

17. Though he only spends about three pages on the Vietnam War, Williams does an excellent job of describing the distrust and how it broke down in his book. He also explains how anti-communism helped bring together evangelicals and the mainstream right: Williams, *God's Own Party*.
18. The only two occasions in the post-World War II era when Democrats received more than 60% of the Catholic vote in a presidential election were 1960 and 1964. Jeffrey M. Jones, "The Protestant and Catholic Vote," *Gallup Poll*, June 8, 2004. [www.gallup.com/poll/11911/Protestant-Catholic-Vote.aspx](http://www.gallup.com/poll/11911/Protestant-Catholic-Vote.aspx).
19. Russell Kirk, *The Conservative Mind: From Burke to Eliot* (Washington, DC: Regnery Co., 2001), 6.
20. Walter Michelson, "What Would Life Be Like in the United States If This Country Went Socialist or Communist?," *Human Events*, November 14, 1964, 15.
21. Young, *We Gather Together: The Religious Right and the Problem of Interfaith Politics*, chaps. 1 & 2.
22. James E. Clayton, "Thunder on the Right Here Gives a Military Roll," *Washington Post*, March 22, 1962, A6.
23. Laura Jane Gifford, "'Girded With a Moral and Spiritual Revival': The Christian Anti-Communism Crusade and Conservative Politics," in *The Right Side of the Sixties: Reexamining Conservatism's Decade of Transformation*, ed. Laura Jane Gifford and Daniel K. Williams (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012), 225.
24. "The Achilles Heel of Communism," *Christian Anti-Communist Crusade Newsletter*, April 1962, 1, [www.schwarzreport.org/uploads/schwarz-report-pdf/schwarz-report-1962-04.pdf](http://www.schwarzreport.org/uploads/schwarz-report-pdf/schwarz-report-1962-04.pdf).
25. "About The Schwarz Report," [www.schwarzreport.org/about](http://www.schwarzreport.org/about).
26. Fred Schwarz, *You Can Trust the Communists (to Be Communists)*, 13th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1962).
27. Even today, more than 20 years after the fall of the Soviet Union, the Schwarz Report website proclaims that Schwarz "had the courage to tell the naked truth about [communism] while The New York Times lied about it for nearly the whole 20th century." "About The Schwarz Report," [www.schwarzreport.org/about](http://www.schwarzreport.org/about).
28. Fred Schwarz, "Will You Be Free to Celebrate Christmas in the Future?," by the Allen-Bradly Company, undated [originally published 1958], Box 35, Radical Right Papers, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University. Hereafter referred to as Radical Right Papers.
29. Various Financial Statements from Christian Anti-Communist Crusade, including IRS forms. Files located in: Box 364, Christian Anti-Communist Crusade Folder, Group Research Papers, Columbia University, New York. Hereafter referred to as Group Research Papers.; Box 365, Christian Anti-Communist Crusade Pamphlet Folder, Group Research Papers.
30. Gifford, "Girded."
31. Williams, *God's Own Party*, 40.
32. Ronald Lora and William Henry Longton, eds., *The Conservative Press in Twentieth Century America* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999), 146.
33. "Hargis Compares Faith in God to Americanism," *Dallas Morning News*, December 8, 1962, Box 67, Christian Crusade Folder, Group Research Papers.
34. Pamphlet by W. S. McBirnie, "What You Need to Know About That Rumsford Act!," 1964, Box 35, No Folder, Radical Right Papers.  
W. S. McBirnie, "How Real Is the Internal Menace of Communism?," undated [probably late 1960s], Box 34, McBirnie, W. S. Folder, Radical Right Papers.

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36. UPI, "Police Are Not Amused: Minister Stages Fake Arrest," March 30, 1964, Box 29, Anti-Communism (General) Folder, Group Research Papers.
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43. Most likely, the Christian evangelical anti-communist organizations were able to insulate themselves from the rest of the movement partially because of their focus on religion, which is by definition an exclusive pious belief. Throughout this period, there were many references in the mainstream conservative literature where organizations and presses dismissed the Christian evangelical anti-communist organizations as fraudulent extremists. Additionally, there was no discernible attempt by Christian evangelical anti-communist organizations to moderate their rhetoric. This strain between the mainstream right and extremists groups is a central focus of Jonathan M. Schoenwald, *A Time for Choosing: The Rise of Modern American Conservatism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).
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48. Focusing more on the Cold War: Correspondence from Neal Freeman to William F. Buckley, Jr., October 1966, Correspondence 1966, Buckley Papers.  
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Memo from Marvin Liebman to Don Lipsett, May 15, 1965, Box 7, Folder 7, Marvin Liebman Papers, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
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52. Letter from John Davenport to Brent Bozell, April 21, 1969, Box 2, Folder 6, John Davenport Papers, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University. Hereafter referred to as Davenport Papers.
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54. Two specific examples of Buckley using religion to defend the Vietnam are:  
William F. Buckley, Jr., "Letter from Saigon: Terrorism—Weapon of Warfare," *National Review*, March 7, 1967, 237.  
Response from Buckley to questionnaire of Cecil Woolf and John Bagguley, September 18, 1967, Name Files, Buckley Papers.
55. Michael Thompson, telephone interview by Seth Offenbach, January 9, 2012.
56. Editorial, "Abortion," *National Review*, June 30, 1970, 658–659.
57. One person wrote about the editorial, according to: Memo from Kevin Lynch to the Editorial Board, July 6, 1970, Inter-Office Memos 1970, Buckley Papers.  
Circulation figures from: Audit Bureau of Circulations Reports and Statements, January-July 1970, Folder 5, Box 110, William Rusher Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.
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59. William F. Buckley, Jr., "On the Right: Catholics and Abortion," *National Review*, December 15, 1970, 1366–1367.
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61. Clare Boothe Luce, "Two Books on Abortion and the Questions They Raise," *National Review*, January 12, 1971, 27.
62. Memos from Linda Bridges to the Editorial Board, from February 5, February 22, and September 2, 1971, Inter-Office Memos 1971, Buckley Papers.
63. Articles from: William F. Buckley, Jr., "On the Right: Abortion the Crunch," *National Review*, April 20, 1971, 444–445.  
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while never questioning the motives and actions of the Russian government. He opposes military intervention, except against those whom he claims are responsible for Islamic terrorism. He also claims to speak for (and has much support from) white evangelical Americans, though he is less comfortable talking about religion than any previous modern Republican presidential candidate. In short, neither Trump's ideas nor his ideology have roots in the New Right's brand of conservatism; the times are changing.

President Trump is fostering a rising fear of Muslim terrorists (both real and imagined) and immigrants. This likely signals a shift in the thinking and ideology of the Republican Party, and a change in the ideological makeup of the conservative movement as it becomes rooted in ethnonationalism and less doctrinarian. As with the 1960s, the conservative movement will adapt. Though scholars cannot predict the future—and at present, do not know how Trump will change the movement—a transformation is undoubtedly taking place. In the meantime, historians can take comfort in knowing that we can dissect the New Right and the modern conservative movement from start to finish, as any future conservatism will be a different movement altogether.

## Notes

1. Memo from Rusher, August 5, 1964, Inter-Office Memos, Aug. 1964–Dec. 1964, William F. Buckley Papers, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University. Hereafter referred to as Buckley Papers.
2. Memo from Rusher to Editorial Board, March 5, 1973, Inter-Office Memo, Jan. 1973–April 1973, Buckley Papers.
3. The ad was reprinted “without charge” in full in *Human Events*, May 30, 1964.
4. Poster, undated [probably 1973], Box 300, Society for the Christian Commonwealth Folder, Group Research Papers, Columbia University, New York.
5. Kim Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands: The Making of the Conservative Movement from the New Deal to Reagan* (New York: Norton, 2009); Steven Teles, *The Rise of the Conservative Legal Movement* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008).
6. Daniel K. Williams, *God's Own Party: The Making of the Christian Right* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 119.
7. For more on the Christian Right, see: Donald T. Critchlow, *The Conservative Ascendancy: How the GOP Right Made Political History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007); Williams, *God's Own Party*; Neil J. Young, *We Gather Together: The Religious Right and the Problem of Interfaith Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).
8. Goldwater actively campaigned for gay rights and supported the right to abortion in the early 1990s, long after he retired from the Senate. He was not outspoken about either issue while active in politics.
9. Neil J. Young, “‘Worse Than Cancer and Worse Than Snakes’: Jimmy Carter’s Southern Baptist Problem and the 1980 Election,” *Journal of Policy History* 26, no. 4 (2014): 479–508.



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