

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: PROTECT, PRESERVE, AND RESTORE:
FUNDAMENTALIST ARGUMENTS IN
AMERICAN DISCOURSE

Hagar Attia, Doctor of Philosophy, 2022

Dissertation directed by: Professor Shawn Parry-Giles, Department of
Communication

Fundamentalism and ideas *about* fundamentalism are significant obstacles to dialogue and deliberation. Previous scholarly work on fundamentalism may have contributed to a general distaste for fundamentalism and fundamentalists. Some scholars define fundamentalists as people unable, or unwilling, to cope with the conditions of modernity and therefore turn to scriptural literalism, separatism, and traditionalism to maintain their sense of identity. This project seeks to contribute to this scholarly discussion by focusing on the rhetorical dimensions of fundamentalism. This project proposes understanding fundamentalism as a rhetorical concept—a type of argument—with themes and strategies that perform specific types of work in the world. Fundamentalist arguments emerge out of a concern for defending what is believed to be the *fundamentals of identity*. Those issuing fundamentalist arguments conclude that without the fundamentals of identity, a cherished and universalized identity would be profoundly compromised. In fundamentalist arguments, the universalized identity is threatened when some of its members arguably sully the fundamentals of identity by supporting external contaminants.

The ultimate calls to action in fundamentalist argument are to preserve, protect, and restore the integrity of the fundamentals.

Chapter One examines fundamentalist argument in the anti-abortion rhetoric of evangelical thinker Francis Schaeffer. For Schaeffer, *Roe v. Wade* symbolized a nation that broke with its foundation—a Christian worldview. Despite its origins in theological debates, Schaeffer's rhetoric demonstrates the flexibility of fundamentalist argument in addressing partisan issues in American politics. Chapter Two examines fundamentalist argument in white supremacist rhetoric, specifically that of Mississippi judge, Thomas Brady. My analysis reveals how Brady uses several strategies to achieve fundamentalist objectives to preserve, protect, and restore whiteness as a foundation for American culture. In this journey to understand fundamentalist argument, the cases examined so far cohere in that they champion conservative causes. Chapter Three nuances this pattern by exploring fundamentalist argument in environmentalist discourse, specifically that of microbiologist and renowned ecologist Barry Commoner. Commoner's particular audience—environmentalists—are tasked with defending all of humanity from self-destruction. Commoner's rhetoric illuminates the ways in which progressives can turn to more reactionary-based arguments.

In the Conclusion, I explore what this analysis reveals about fundamentalist argument as a genre of argument. Per contemporary understandings of genre theory, I appraise the cultural, situational, generic contexts that shape and are shaped by fundamentalist argument. I also discuss the strategic nature of fundamentalist argument as a compelling rhetoric to attract adherents to a cause. Lastly, my Conclusion demonstrates the relevance of fundamentalist argument to contemporary public discourse by briefly featuring fundamentalist arguments visible in our current political debates.

PROTECT, PRESERVE, AND RESTORE: FUNDAMENTALIST ARGUMENTS
IN AMERICAN DISCOURSE

by

Hagar Attia

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
2022

Advisory Committee:

Professor Shawn Parry-Giles, Chair

Kristy Maddux

Carly Woods

Trevor Parry-Giles

Madeline Zilfi

© Copyright by
Hagar Attia
2022

Dedication

For my mother and father

Acknowledgements

My first and deepest expression of gratitude is to Allah, my Creator and Sustainer, the Most Merciful, and the Most Compassionate.

This project would not have been possible without the support of a great many individuals. Your support and presence through this journey have been a gift I will treasure for the rest of my life.

To my advisor, Shawn Parry-Giles, thank you. You have been my teacher, mentor, advocate, and coach for these past eight years. I cannot express how much I appreciate your guidance and steadfast support throughout this journey. Without your mentorship, I would not have been able to complete one of the most difficult and most rewarding experiences of my life. You have taught me how to write, how to think, and how to teach. Any of my future endeavors are a credit to you and your guidance.

I am most appreciative of the many contributions of my dissertation committee members. Kristy Maddux, thank you for helping me think about how to frame this project. Your scholarship on William Jennings Bryan has been illuminating and provided a valuable contribution to this project. Also, I appreciate your many helpful comments and suggestions, especially regarding Francis Schaeffer. Trevor Parry-Giles, thank you for helping me understand our discipline all those years ago. I also appreciate how you have helped shape my thinking about Barry Commoner. Carly Woods, thank you for your service to my committee and for modeling excellence in scholarship and teaching. I am especially grateful for your contributions to my thinking about argumentation. Madeline Zilfi, thank you for your service to my committee and for your careful reading of my dissertation. The suggestions you provided for edits have

been invaluable. Your history courses have been some of my favorite and most formative during my time as a graduate student. I am also deeply grateful for your mentorship.

I am also most appreciative of the contributions of Sahar Khamis, Michelle Murray Yang, and Michele Lamprakos, all of whom have mentored me on this journey and shaped this project into what it is today. Thank you for sharing your insights on history, rhetorical criticism, and scholarship. This project would not have been possible without you.

In addition to the amazing professors at UMD, I would like to thank my new colleagues at Gustavus Adolphus College for their support. I am especially grateful to Provost Brenda Kelly, Dean Elizabeth Kubek, and the Chair of my department, Pamela Connors for providing me the time, support, and encouragement to complete this project.

I am deeply grateful to my friends and colleagues who have been with me while I wandered through this journey. Your feedback, ideas, support, laughter, and celebrations have been some of the best parts of graduate school. I am especially grateful for Lauren, Megan, Allison, Meredith, Annie Laurie, Sylvia, Liang, Irina, Ari, Ashley, Jade, Cae, and Sophie.

Speaking of graduate school, I am thankful for many resources provided by the University of Maryland. In addition to the indispensable holdings of its library, I appreciate the many services of the Graduate School Writing Center, directed by Linda Macri. She organized many writing retreats where I met my writing companions (and friends for life) Amelia, Cara, and Emilia. I also appreciate the many hours I have written with my newest writing companion, Crezelle. With you all, I found comfort, friendship, and solace while completing this project.

This project would have not been possible without the many support groups that helped keep me afloat through this journey. I am especially grateful to Dr. Chandni Shah for leading the Dissertation Support Group at UMD's Counseling Center. The support and celebration I received

from fellow graduate students were unique and invaluable. I could not have gotten this far without you. I also appreciate the many other support groups outside of UMD who have given me space, support, and precious moments of reprieve throughout this journey.

I am also deeply grateful to my friends in life who have supported me patiently while I found my way through academia. Thank you for being there through many ups, downs, detours, and sprints. I am especially grateful for Nazmieh Masswadi Huebner, Sarah Ismail, Nora Ismail, Rehab Salem, Nancy Mohamed, Miranda Gonzalez, Charmaine George, Eman Shurbaji, Mollie Kaufer, and TC Anthony.

To my parents, Mama and Baba, thank you for your prayers, your support, your ever-flowing encouragement, and your unwavering faith. I thank God every day He chose you to be my parents. I am lucky to be your daughter.

To my siblings Maryam, Sumaya, Abdulrahman, Sarah, and Zainab—thank you for being the most supportive, light-hearted, and funniest people I know. Your laughter carried me through this project better than anything else in the world. I am lucky to be your sister.

To my husband and partner, Mohamed—thank you. Thank you for believing in me even when I was not all that sure of myself. Thank you for listening to me while I formed my thoughts and expressed my fears. I especially appreciated how you would suggest ideas and see connections when I could not. Words will never express my gratitude for the many days and many nights you have stayed up with me while I wrote. I thank God every day that we are on the journey of life together. I can't wait to see where we'll go next.

Alhamdulillah.

Table of Contents

Dedication	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	vi
Introduction	1
A Review of Scholarship on Fundamentalism	7
Historical Origins of American Fundamentalism	22
Fundamentalist Argument Defined	38
Project Details	46
Project Arguments & Précis	63
Chapter One: Fundamentalist Argumentation in Francis Schaeffer's Anti-Abortion Rhetoric	69
Schaeffer's Construction of the Situation	75
Fundamentalist Argument Theme: A Christian Worldview is Fundamental to American Identity	78
Fundamentalist Argument Theme: America's Christian Worldview Is Under Threat	94
Fundamentalist Argument Theme: Threats to Christian Worldview are Existential	100
Fundamentalist Argument Theme: Preserve, Protect, and Restore America's Christian Worldview	103
Conclusion	109
Chapter Two: Fundamentalist Argument in Thomas Brady's <i>Black Monday</i>	114
Brady's Construction of the Situation	128
Fundamentalist Argument Theme: Whiteness as Fundamental to American Civilization	130
Fundamentalist Argument Theme: The Importance of Purity to Whiteness	139
Fundamentalist Argument Theme: Threats to Whiteness are Existential	144
Fundamentalist Argument Theme: Identifying the Threats to Whiteness	149
Fundamentalist Argument Theme: Preserve, Protect, and Restore Whiteness	155
Brady's Fundamentalist Persona	162
Conclusion	163
Chapter Three: Fundamentalist Argumentation in Barry Commoner's <i>The Closing Circle</i>	165
Commoner's Construction of the Situation	182
Fundamentalist Argument Theme: The Earth and Ecosphere are Fundamental	184
Fundamentalist Argument Theme: The Earth and Ecosphere Must Be Pure	192
Fundamentalist Argument Theme: Threats to the Earth and Ecosphere are Existential	195

Fundamentalist Argument Theme: Human Civilization is the Threat to the Ecosphere	201
Fundamentalist Argument Theme: Restore Nature's Balance	206
Conclusion	210
Conclusion	213
Fundamentalist Argument in Contemporary Public Discourse	219
Interpretations & Implications	224
Conclusion	228
Bibliography	230

Introduction

When the term “fundamentalist” is evoked, several images may come to mind. One might imagine a deeply religious community, living self-sufficiently and separately from the rest of the world.¹ Or perhaps the term conjures the image of a religious fanatic reciting scripture to justify controlling women in public spaces.² Or maybe the term reminds one of the Fundamentalist Church of Latter-Day Saints, a religious group deemed by the Southern Poverty Law Center as a “white supremacist, homophobic, antigovernment, totalitarian cult.”³ Whatever the image may be, in the popular American imagination, a fundamentalist is often the epitome of difference, danger, and the “repugnant cultural other.”⁴

As a scholar of rhetoric, I find such characterizations troublesome, however justified the impulse may be at times. To label someone, a “fundamentalist” is to imply their unsuitability for dialogue and deliberation. I witnessed this dynamic firsthand through my work in public deliberation and dialogue, where my interest in fundamentalism as a rhetorical strategy emerged. A few years ago, I co-facilitated a dialogue course on religious identity. The class was comprised

¹ Simon Romero and Giulia Heyward, “Fundamentalist Sect in Colorado Is Focus of Wildfire Inquiry,” *New York Times*, January 4, 2022.

² Amanda Taub, “What Taliban Gain From Repression of Women,” *New York Times*, October 5, 2021.

³ “Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints,” Southern Poverty Law Center, accessed January 6, 2022, <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/fundamentalist-church-jesus-christ-latter-day-saints>.

⁴ Susan Harding, “Representing Fundamentalism: The Problem of the Repugnant Cultural Other,” *Social Research* 58, no. 2 (1991): 373.

of participants from a diversity of religious backgrounds (and lack thereof), at various levels of religious commitment. Halfway into the semester, a student—one of the more active voices in the dialogues—publicly identified himself as a fundamentalist evangelical Christian. I observed how his proclamation almost immediately changed the dynamics of the in-class dialogues. Where there was previously lively debate and energetic discussion with the self-proclaimed fundamentalist, now there were meager responses, polite nods, and blank faces. Over the following weeks of the course, two conversations emerged in the dialogues—one between the self-identified fundamentalist and the facilitators and another between the rest of the class. The fundamentalist received almost no engagement from the rest of the students. It was as if the class collectively decided that his mind would not be changed—so why bother?

To be fair, he was not innocent in contributing to the icy relationship between himself and the rest of the class. At times he refused to concede any validity to the perspectives he opposed. He also frequently supported his views with biblical verses, references that were meaningful to only a portion of the class. By the end of the semester, the dynamic between the fundamentalist and the rest of the class could be best described as distant and detached—he had been effectively excommunicated from any meaningful dialogue with the class.

The obstacles to dialogue arising from fundamentalist ways of speaking prompted me to investigate how to best work with fundamentalists in dialogue. My research revealed that my experience was not unique. In her study on representations of fundamentalists, Susan Harding recounted popular sentiments about fundamentalists and their apparent inability to deliberate:

You cannot reason with them. They actually believe the Bible is literally true. They are clinging to traditions. They are reacting against rapid social change. They are unfit for modern life. They are dying out. Aren't they dead yet?⁵

Such polemical attitudes are not limited to the college students in a classroom or to sensationalist newspaper headlines. It has also been evident in our discourses about difference. For example, in journalist and former White House Press Secretary Bill Moyers' speech, "9/11 and God's Sport." Moyers delivered the speech in commemoration of the fourth anniversary of the September 11th attacks. In the speech, Moyers described what he believed was one of the greatest threats to the future of America—"fundamentalism." Moyers claimed the perpetrators of the attack were Islamic fundamentalists who "came bent on murder and martyrdom."⁶ These "fundamentalists," according to Moyers, that were inspired by "the sacred scriptures that had nurtured these murderous young men," were "steeped in the images of a violent and vengeful God who wills life or the faithful and horrific torment for unbelievers."⁷ Moyers suggested that although September 11th terrorists were Islamic fundamentalists, they were not that different from Christian fundamentalists in the United States.⁸ According to Moyers, Christian fundamentalists were America's "homegrown ayatollahs."⁹ In his view, for the sake of

⁵ Harding, 373.

⁶ Bill Moyers, "9/11 and God's Sport," *CrossCurrents*, 2006, 444.

⁷ Moyers, 444.

⁸ Moyers, 449.

⁹ Moyers, 450.

America's future, men and women of good conscience must be willing to resist these "religious bullies" for their appeasement would be fatal.¹⁰

Moyers' personal experience with the September 11th attacks may have contributed to his uncompromising position on fundamentalists. Yet, this position is not unique to Moyers. In 2004, Barack Obama warned that the "embrace of fundamentalism...dooms us all."¹¹ Neither Moyers nor Obama saw a place for dialogue when dealing with fundamentalists. Moyers and Obama's resistant attitude towards fundamentalism indicates the posture they advocate when confronting a fundamentalist.

When we dub another a "fundamentalist," we effectively exclude him or her from meaningful conversation. When we rhetorically excommunicate fundamentalists from mainstream discourse, we miss opportunities to understand their perspectives. We also miss opportunities to temper their worldview with our own. A lack of engagement can escalate conflict, resulting in increasing levels of violence. Barry Gills observes that taking the "harder, more intolerant and more judgmental view," where "the 'other' is rejected and possibly condemned," highlights the "estrangement" towards a different perspective and implies "an intrinsic hostility towards the 'other' culture." This posture tends to "generate ingrained antagonism, aggression, and ultimately violent conflict."¹²

¹⁰ Moyers, 450, 455.

¹¹ Barack Obama, "Preface to the 2004 Edition," in *Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2004), xi.

¹² Barry K. Gills, "Accepting Difference, Finding Tolerance, Practising Dialogue," *Globalizations* 3, no. 4 (2006): 424.

This project seeks another way of engaging fundamentalism by rethinking the category of “fundamentalism” altogether. In this project, I seek to re-conceptualize the notion of fundamentalism away from conventional understandings of it as a psychological state of mind and towards a rhetorical understanding of the concept. More specifically, I argue that fundamentalism can be understood as a genre of argument. I argue that a fundamentalist argument can be observed in discourses not conventionally categorized as “fundamentalist.” I make my case by examining fundamentalist arguments in three cases: the anti-abortion rhetoric of Francis Schaeffer, the segregationist rhetoric of Thomas Brady, and the environmentalist rhetoric of Barry Commoner. The diversity of these cases exemplifies how fundamentalist argument can be visible in both conservative and progressive discourses.

Recognizing the prevalence of fundamentalism is useful because finding fundamentalist arguments in discourses across the political spectrum can help neutralize its negative cultural meanings. The term “fundamentalist” typically connotes an image of someone who is ideologically rigid and out of touch with reality. However, when we find fundamentalist argument used in seemingly reasonable discourses, like environmentalism, we can dissociate the term from irrational extremism. A focus on the rhetorical dimensions of fundamentalist argument, and its visibility in a diversity of discourses, may also help decouple the concept from its essentialist and otherizing connotations.

A rhetorical definition of fundamentalism is important for anyone interested in civic engagement and deliberation. Fundamentalist discourses are often categorically disavowed or worse, dismissed as being too monologic, too irrational, or too fanatical, to engage. By understanding the logic of fundamentalist arguments, we can work toward rethinking our

antagonistic positions towards those we label fundamentalists. Such openness may perhaps give way to more understanding positions towards opposing perspectives.

Furthermore, a rhetorical understanding of fundamentalism transforms the task of studying fundamentalism from an exercise in classification (i.e., deciding who best fits under the category of “fundamentalist”) to a study of meaning-making. A rhetorical approach shifts our attention to what fundamentalist argumentation does for rhetors and audiences in the world. A focus on fundamentalist argument, rather than on fundamentalists, illuminates the situational and strategic nature of fundamentalism as a way of solving a perceived problem in the world.

Towards these purposes, I begin this project by accounting for two conversations that have dominated scholarship on fundamentalism. The first conversation is about who counts as a fundamentalist, the characteristics of fundamentalism, and its ideological positions. The second conversation revolves around whether the concept itself is a useful and/or ethical category for analyzing political movements. I arrive at the conclusion that many scholars of fundamentalism have accepted—many of our current formulations of the concept of “fundamentalism” are not helpful tools for analysis.

I then present a rhetorical understanding of fundamentalism by exploring the origins of the term “fundamentalist” as well as the historical and cultural context from which it emerged as a religious movement in the United States. I develop my definition of fundamentalism through a close analysis of one of the earliest iterations of fundamentalist rhetoric, *The Fundamentals: A Testimony of Faith*. My aim in this exploration is to offer two contributions to scholarship on fundamentalism: (1) to conceptualize fundamentalism as a rhetorical concept, specifically a genre of argument, and (2) to present the characteristic elements that define fundamentalist arguments.

A Review of Scholarship on Fundamentalism

Scholarship on fundamentalism ranges from antagonistic to apologetic stances on the concept. In one of the earliest encyclopedic entries on fundamentalism, H. Richard Niebuhr defined American fundamentalism, a movement that emerged in Protestant evangelical circles, as “an aggressive conservative movement in Protestant churches of the United States in the decade after the World War.”¹³ According to Niebuhr, fundamentalists subscribed to the following beliefs: the inerrancy of the scriptures, the virgin birth of Christ, his resurrection in physical form, the supernatural atonement, and the Gospel miracles. Fundamentalists differed from other Christian conservatives because of their “aggressive” need to “impose” their creed in schools and churches.¹⁴ James Barr shared Niebuhr’s distaste for the movement. According to Barr, American fundamentalism was a “pathological” movement that precluded a belief in the inerrancy of the Bible.¹⁵ Barr also identified fundamentalists by their hostility towards modern technology, modern methods of knowledge, and modern scientific theories.¹⁶ Most importantly, Barr identifies fundamentalism as an “existential attitude” whereby adherents view themselves to be “True Christians.”¹⁷ From a sociological perspective, Seymour Lipset and Earl Raab categorized fundamentalism as right-wing political conservatism that is colored by religious

¹³ H. Richard Niebuhr, “Fundamentalism,” in *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, vol. 6 (New York: Macmillan, 1931), 526–27.

¹⁴ Niebuhr, 527.

¹⁵ James Barr, *Fundamentalism* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1978), 5.

¹⁶ James Barr, 2.

¹⁷ James Barr, 5.

theology.¹⁸ William McLoughlin defined fundamentalism as a “nativist phase” within the evolution of a culture that is a reaction to cultural change that precedes socioeconomic transformation.¹⁹ Though each one of these definitions revealed a distinct dimension of fundamentalism, the polemical tone of the authors suggested that the movement was anti-modern, primitive, and dangerous.

Ernest Sandeen’s assessment of the movement was less hostile. Sandeen was dissatisfied with how scholarship had approached fundamentalist movements and argued that defining American fundamentalism by what it opposed did not inform scholars of what it offered adherents. In *The Roots of Fundamentalism*, Sandeen traced the ideological foundations of fundamentalism in American history. Sandeen found that American fundamentalism was a religious movement born out of alliance between Protestants who shared a dispensationalist and millenarian view of history. According to Sandeen, dispensationalism was a nineteenth-century theology that divides history into distinct eras, or dispensations.²⁰ The final dispensation, as described in Christian scripture, is the thousand-year reign of Christ on Earth. The focus on this millennium is one of the defining characteristics of millenarianism. The present era, dispensationalists believed, presented the signs that the final dispensation was to occur soon. Dispensationalists believed the era immediately before the final dispensation would be defined

¹⁸ Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab, *The Politics of Unreason: Right-Wing Extremism in America, 1790-1977* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978).

¹⁹ William G. McLoughlin, *Revivals, Awakenings, and Reform: An Essay on Religious and Social Change in America 1607-1977* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978).

²⁰ Ernest R. Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 68.

by its wickedness, sin and social upheaval. In this view, the social and economic upheavals of the nineteenth century confirmed the prophecy of Christ's return. Dispensationalists anxiously awaited the fulfillment of this prophecy.²¹ While American fundamentalism encompasses far more than dispensationalist ideology, understanding dispensationalist views on history, Sandeen argued, is essential to understanding American fundamentalism.²² The second defining characteristic of American fundamentalism, according to Sandeen, was a literalist and inerrant view of scriptural text. This perspective on scripture was known as the Princeton Theology because it was developed by a group of nineteenth-century theologians at the Princeton Seminary. The Princeton Theology affirmed that the Bible was an infallible revelation of God and resisted any efforts to treat the Bible as historical artifacts of their time.²³ Ernest Sandeen's careful analysis of the roots of American fundamentalism humanized the movement and situated it in its historical context. Despite his efforts, the influence of the polemics offered by Fosdick, Niebuhr, Barr, Lipset, and Raab was apparent in popular understandings of the concept. By the 1980s, the term "fundamentalist" referred to "poorly educated religious zealots who failed to successfully adapt to the coming of modernity."²⁴

²¹ Ernest R. Sandeen, 3–4.

²² Ernest R. Sandeen, xv.

²³ Ernest R. Sandeen, 128–30.

²⁴ David Harrington Watt, *Antifundamentalism in Modern America* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2017), 122.

A World Transformed

Scholarship on fundamentalism from the 1920s through the 1960s largely defined fundamentalism as an American Christian religious movement that retreated from national prominence after the 1925 Scopes trial. Still, American fundamentalist churches continued to exist in small pockets all over the United States. However, the changing face of American political landscape of 1970s prompted some scholars to believe that fundamentalism was on the rise.

The first major shift was the emergence of evangelicalism as a political force. In 1976, Jimmy Carter became what many concluded was the first born-again Christian president. As a practicing Southern Baptist, Carter is credited with bringing evangelicalism into mainstream politics.²⁵ Although Carter identified with evangelicalism, many evangelical churches and political action groups did not find him, his Democratic Party, or his presidency all that compelling. Instead, they found leadership in fundamentalist preachers like Jerry Falwell and his organization, the Moral Majority.²⁶ Through the 1980s, the Moral Majority aligned with the Republican Party and crystalized what would come to be associated as “Right-wing” positions on abortion, marriage, and family.²⁷

²⁵ Somini Sengupta, “Carter Sadly Turns Back on National Baptist Body,” *The New York Times*, October 21, 2000, <http://www.nytimes.com/2000/10/21/us/carter-sadly-turns-back-on-national-baptist-body.html>.

²⁶ Peter Applebome, “Jerry Falwell, Moral Majority Founder, Dies at 73,” *The New York Times*, May 16, 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/16/obituaries/16falwell.html>.

²⁷ Daniel K. Williams, “Jerry Falwell’s Sunbelt Politics: The Regional Origins of the Moral Majority,” *Journal of Policy History* 22, no. 2 (2010): 125–47.

It should be noted that during this time, many Christians who identified as “evangelicals” adhered to many of the doctrines associated with the historical movement of American Fundamentalism. As shown above, the label of “fundamentalist” was such a loaded term that many conservatives who are fundamentalist in their doctrine prefer the term “evangelical” because it lacks the extremist connotations. Nevertheless, Jerry Falwell, in *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*, insisted that evangelicals should at least acknowledge that their doctrine “is not intrinsically different from mainstream Fundamentalism!”²⁸ Jerry Falwell, Ed Dobson, and Ed Hindson concluded that evangelicals and fundamentalists share a “common adherence to the basic authority of Scripture as the only dependable guide for faith and guidance.”²⁹ In other words, the difference between evangelical and fundamentalist is more rhetorical than doctrinal.

In addition to the rise of political conservatism, the 1980s witnessed a conservative backlash on a cultural level. In 1988, Martin Scorsese’s *The Last Temptation of Christ* was released. The film depicted Jesus Christ enduring several temptations, some of which were sexual. The Italian Episcopal Conference, as well as several evangelical Christian associations, condemned the film.³⁰ Protests broke out in the United States, Europe, and Latin America in front of theatres that screened the film.³¹ While not all those who opposed the film were

²⁸ Jerry Falwell, Ed Dobson, and Ed Hindson, eds., *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon: The Resurgence of Conservative Christianity* (Garden City: Galilee-Doubleday, 1981), 6–7.

²⁹ Falwell, Dobson, and Hindson, 53.

³⁰ “Venice Festival Screens Scorsese’s ’Last Temptation,” *The Los Angeles Times*, September 9, 1988, http://articles.latimes.com/1988-09-09/entertainment/ca-1870_1_venice-festival.

³¹ “Venice Festival Screens Scorsese’s ’Last Temptation.”

evangelical or fundamentalist, by the late 1980s, it was clear that religious fundamentalism was no longer relegated to the margins; it was a movement that demanded attention.

The 1970s are also when the term “fundamentalist” was more widely applied to groups other than American evangelical Christians. In 1979, the Islamic Revolution overthrew the Pahlavi monarchy in Iran. In that revolution, a US-backed regime was replaced with a religious theocracy headed by Grand Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Almost immediately, Western media identified Khomeini and his movement as “fundamentalist.”³² Ervand Abrahamian calls this label “slippery” since Khomeini shared very little in common with what scholarship at the time considered “fundamentalist.” Khomeini was far from a literal scriptural interpreter. Furthermore, his concerns were both political and worldly. While American evangelical fundamentalists debated moral questions such as abortion, Khomeini’s populist strategies was more in line with nationalist figures such as Kemal Ataturk or Juan Peron.³³ Despite these differences, the label persisted and was even adopted by followers of Khomeini. Although no comparable term exists in either Persian or Arabic, Khomeini’s followers eventually self-identified as *bonyadgarayan*—which literally translates into “fundamental-ist.”³⁴

The Fundamentalist Project

Some found the influence of religious groups on politics to be an alarming trend. In 1980, Martin E. Marty published an article titled “Fundamentalism Reborn: Faith and Fanaticism.” In the

³² Ervand Abrahamian, “Khomeini: A Fundamentalist?,” in *Fundamentalism in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Lawrence Kaplan (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992), 109.

³³ Abrahamian, 110–11.

³⁴ Abrahamian, 109.

article, Marty argued that strong religious movements were emerging all over the world. For Marty, Jerry Falwell, Ayatollah Khomeini, “Hindu fanatics,” and orthodox Jewish settler movements in Israel were all indications of a global trend that could not be ignored. He called this trend “fundamentalism” and hypothesized that it was a reaction to the disruptions of modernity.³⁵

Marty had the opportunity to test out his hypothesis through a massive scholarly undertaking known as *The Fundamentalism Project*. In 1991, Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby published the first installment of a massive five-volume series. The project examined 75 cases of so-called fundamentalist groups that emerged from all the world's major religions: Christianity, Judaism, Islam (both Sunni and Shi'ite), Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, and neo-Confucianism. The project set out to explain the similarities or “family resemblances” among so-called fundamentalist groups by examining the history of the movements, their theological underpinnings, and their political and socio-economic contexts.³⁶ In Lawrence Kaplan’s *Fundamentalism in Comparative Perspective*, Marty summarized a theory of global fundamentalism that emerged out of the studies in *The Fundamentalism Project*. For Marty, global fundamentalism surpasses any one religion or theology. He found fundamentalism to “occur on the soil of *traditional* cultures [emphasis in original], cultures in which people

³⁵ Martin E. Marty, “Fundamentalism Reborn: Faith and Fanaticism,” *Saturday Review*, May 1980, 37–42.

³⁶ Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, eds., *Fundamentalisms: Observed*, vol. 1, 5 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

perceive and claim that they simply and conservatively inherit a world view and way of life.”³⁷ According to Marty, fundamentalists perceive a “widespread, if vague, sense of threat.”³⁸ This sense of threat is existential in nature and causes a “generalized uneasiness, discontent, and fear of identity diffusion, or loss of focus.” Vague, existential threats include “westernization” and “modernity.” Modernity, much of the literature on fundamentalism assumes, represents the greatest threat to fundamentalists.³⁹

Marty observes that *reaction* is one of the hallmarks of global fundamentalism, whereby leaders and adherents “take steps to consciously react, to innovate, to defend, and to find new ways to counter” what they perceive to be existential threats to their way of life.⁴⁰ The posture of reaction, Marty suggests, takes the form of “discriminating reclamation” that allows fundamentalists to distinguish themselves from non-fundamentalists.⁴¹ Given their reactionary posture, where then, do fundamentalists find guidance for action? The perception of existential threat drives fundamentalists to seek authority from certain and infallible sources.⁴² For fundamentalists, authority can be located in sacred texts, law books, or even mythical narratives.

³⁷ Martin E. Marty, “Fundamentals of Fundamentalism,” in *Fundamentalism in Comparative Perspective* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992), 18.

³⁸ Martin E. Marty, 18–19.

³⁹ Bruce B. Lawrence, *Defenders of God: The Fundamentalist Revolt Against the Modern Age* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1989), 2–3.

⁴⁰ Martin E. Marty, “Fundamentals of Fundamentalism,” 19.

⁴¹ Martin E. Marty, 19.

⁴² Martin E. Marty, 19.

As long as it is “a canon that is an inerrant utterance of the final truth of reality,” it serves as a certain authority by which fundamentalists navigate a threatening and uncertain world.⁴³

Marty also defined the social, political, and ontological dimensions of global fundamentalism. He noted that a common feature of fundamentalists is the “tendency to offend” or attract scandal.⁴⁴ The object here, observes Marty, is to keep outsiders out of the circle of fundamentalists. Unlike other ideologies that seek to proselytize their message to gain adherents, Marty makes the case that fundamentalists are committed to distinguishing who belongs and who must be excommunicated. This need for certainty points to another characteristic of fundamentalism for Marty—its intolerance for ambiguity and ambivalence. According to Marty, fundamentalists live in a “Manichean” universe where there is a clear battle between good and evil, God and Satan, right and wrong. Given the sharpness of this divide, fundamentalists rely on “cultural thickness” to forage and maintain relationships within their communities. Culturally thick ties include blood relations, tribalism, and “physical propinquity” or spatial proximity. At the same time, they also transcend culturally-thick ties through “convergent selectivity” whereby adherents are summoned and mobilized across great distances through mass media.⁴⁵ The ability to form close, yet far-flung, communities makes fundamentalism a formidable force in politics. Politically, Marty observes, fundamentalists can be an uncompromisingly violent and aggressive force.⁴⁶

⁴³ Martin E. Marty, 20.

⁴⁴ Martin E. Marty, 20.

⁴⁵ Martin E. Marty, 21.

⁴⁶ Martin E. Marty, 22.

Finally, Marty echoes Sandeen's understanding of fundamentalism when he described the ontological assumptions fundamentalists hold of history. For Marty, all fundamentalists assume a cosmic view of history that is predetermined; one that has already occurred.⁴⁷ A fundamentalist measures his or her actions based on a predetermined future that has already come to pass, or at least is believed to have been prophesized in scripture. Since the future is already assumed, there is no possibility for innovation. Instead, a fundamentalist assumes their place in the grand narrative of history and awaits an apocalyptic doom. It should be noted that this philosophy of history is neither morbid nor passive. Rather it is one that expectantly awaits redemption by an inevitable history.⁴⁸

Marty's theory of global fundamentalism informed one of the most widely cited definitions of fundamentalism. *In Fundamentalisms Observed*, Marty and R. Scott Appleby defined fundamentalism as:

a tendency, a habit of the mind, found within religious communities and paradigmatically embodied in certain representative individuals and movements, which manifests itself as a strategy, or a set of strategies, by which beleaguered believers attempt to preserve their distinct identity as a people or a group. Feeling this identity to be at risk in the contemporary era, these believers fortify it by a selective retrieval of doctrines, beliefs, and practices from a sacred past. These retrieved "fundamentals" are refined, modified, and sanctioned in a spirit of shrewd pragmatism: they are to serve as a bulwark against the encroachment of outsiders who threaten to draw the believers into a syncretistic, areligious, or irreligious cultural milieu.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Martin E. Marty, 22.

⁴⁸ Martin E. Marty, 22.

⁴⁹ Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, "Conclusion: An Interim Report on the Hypothetical Family," in *Fundamentalisms Observed*, ed. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, The Fundamentalism Project (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 835.

Skeptics of Global Fundamentalism

The Fundamentalism Project produced and inspired a plethora of studies on Islamic fundamentalism. One such study includes Lawrence Davidson's *Islamic Fundamentalism*, which contextualizes different iterations of Islamic fundamentalism in Egypt, Iran, and Saudi Arabia.⁵⁰ However, as more and more studies of Islamic fundamentalist movements were performed, it became increasingly clear that applying definitions that originated from American fundamentalism to other contexts would prove to be a challenge in understanding Islamic fundamentalism. For example, scriptural literalism can be a useful way to distinguish between American fundamentalists and broader conservative or evangelical movements. However, scriptural literalism is less useful in an Islamic context because the vast majority of Muslim populations report believing in the inerrant truth of Qur'anic text. Abdel Salam Sidahmed and Anoushiravan Ehtesham argue that this condition makes the whole application of the term "fundamentalist" to a Muslim context misleading and less useful as a category of analysis.⁵¹ Instead, they prefer the term "Islamist" to refer to political movements of an Islamic character. Even then, they are careful to warn their readers that "Islamist" is not a static descriptor, but a dynamic posture in constant tension between religious commitments and political realities.⁵²

⁵⁰ Lawrence Davidson, *Islamic Fundamentalism* (Westport Connecticut: Greenwood Press Guides to Historic Events of the Twentieth Century, 1998).

⁵¹ Abdel Salam Sidahmed and Anoushiravan Ehteshami, eds., *Islamic Fundamentalism* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), 6.

⁵² Sidahmed and Ehteshami, 6.

Marty and Appleby's definition was hailed as a useful one for its neutrality and for its potential to produce fair-minded analysis of fundamentalists.⁵³ However, several skeptics questioned its analytical utility. The controversy over Marty and Appleby's definition reduced scholarship on fundamentalism to a debate over definitions. Skeptics question the accuracy and ethicality of two underlying assumptions embedded in Marty and Appleby's definition.⁵⁴ Skeptics found Marty and Appleby's assumptions about the psychology of so-called fundamentalists problematic. Marty and Appleby claimed to identify the psychological impulses of "beleaguered believers" as "shrewd pragmatism" to "preserve their distinct identity" against "outsiders who threaten to draw the believers into a syncretistic, areligious, or irreligious cultural milieu." Critics of this claim questioned how they could have arrived at this conclusion given that not a single self-proclaimed "fundamentalist" contributed to *The Fundamentalism Project*.⁵⁵ Furthermore, skeptics question if all so-called fundamentalists are motivated by religion or even perceived threats to religion. Saba Mahmood suggests that some fundamentalists, especially those in non-Western contexts, are actually responding to Western intervention in their societies or to regimes who are supported by the West.⁵⁶

⁵³ Karen Armstrong, *The Battle for God* (New York: Knopf, 2000), 12.

⁵⁴ For a comprehensive analysis of this "debate of definitions" see Watt, *Antifundamentalism in Modern America*.

⁵⁵ Marty addresses the reasons for why no self-identified fundamentalists participated in the Fundamentalism Project in Martin E. Marty, "Too Bad We Are So Relevant: The Fundamentalism Project Projected," *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Science* 49, no. 6 (1996): 33.

⁵⁶ Saba Mahmood, "Islamism and Fundamentalism," *Middle East Report* 191, no. November-December (1994): 30.

Skeptics also take issue with Marty and Appleby's definition because it reduces the differences between so-called fundamentalists. Associating fundamentalism with religious communities assumes common ideological characteristics among "fundamentalists" that are not supported by the literature on fundamentalism. In other words, applying the concept of fundamentalism to a wide variety of religious groups assumes enough ideological similarity between religious groups to warrant categorizing them together. Defenders of the concept of global fundamentalism claim a "family resemblance" between so-called Christian evangelical, Islamic, Hindu, Jewish, and Buddhist fundamentalisms. For example, they all refer to religion for a source of identity.⁵⁷ Beyond that, no ideological coherence can be demonstrated across all these cases. There are no core tenants, political goals, or common symbols that justify categorizing such disparate groups under the umbrella of a unified ideology. David Harrington Watts illustrates the absurdity of equating fundamentalism with a form of religious ideology. In *Antifundamentalism in Modern America*, he imagined a fictional conference of so-called fundamentalists coming together to "compare notes on their religious beliefs and practices:"

The representatives of the New Christian Right would be deeply committed monotheists who firmly embraced the doctrine of biblical inerrancy. Other attendees would find the claims that there is only one God and that the Christian Bible is the indispensable guide to his nature to be absurd...And some of the claims made by the Hindus and

⁵⁷ R. Scott Appleby, "But All Crabs Are Crabby: Valid and Less Valid Criticisms of the Fundamentalist Project," *Contention* 4, no. 3 (1995): 196–99. Also see Peter Steinfels, "Fundamentalism: The 20th Century's Last Ideology," *The New York Times*, April 6, 1993, <https://www.nytimes.com/1993/04/06/us/fundamentalism-the-20th-century-s-last-ideology.html#:~:text=Unlike%20traditional%20believers%2C%20the%20scholars,not%20reject%20modernity%20in%20principle>.

the Buddhists at the conference might be dismissed as “heathen nonsense” by some of the Christians in attendance.⁵⁸

As this fictional scenario illustrates, defining fundamentalism in ideological terms is problematic because accounts of global fundamentalism tend to erase the ideological differences between religious movements—or dismiss them as inconsequential to understanding the concept.⁵⁹

Mark Juergensmeyer observes that the label of “fundamentalist” is also used to imply membership to a global conspiracy in popular discourse. He compared the way “fundamentalist” and “communist” have been similarly used in the United States during the 1940s and 1950s. Both terms label a group as outsiders too blind with ideology to be trusted or included in civil discourse.⁶⁰ John Simpson argues that scholarly accounts of global fundamentalism are not innocent of such polemics. Simpson observes that scholars use the term to imply the concerns and ideas of fundamentalists are not valid enough to take seriously. Simpson argues that the lack of inclusion of perspectives in public discourse from so-called fundamentalists is due to the perception that fundamentalists are “simply beyond the pale of civil discourse.”⁶¹

⁵⁸ Watt, *Antifundamentalism in Modern America*, 20.

⁵⁹ Jay M. Harris, “‘Fundamentalism’: Objections from a Modern Jewish Historian,” in *Fundamentalism and Gender*, ed. John Statton Hawley (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 137.

⁶⁰ Mark Juergensmeyer, “Antifundamentalism,” in *Fundamentalisms Comprehended*, ed. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, vol. 5, The Fundamentalism Project (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 353–59.

⁶¹ John H. Simpson, “Review of Fundamentalisms and the State: Remaking Politics, Economies, and Militance by Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby,” *Journal of the Scientific Study of Religion* 33, no. 4 (1994): 388–89.

Skeptics also argue that the association of global fundamentalism with religious ideology contributes to the hostile tone apparent in the ways we describe and talk about so-called fundamentalism. This tone is a result of viewing the arguments from fundamentalists as inherently irrational. One of hallmarks of fundamentalists, according to authoritative scholarship, is their irrational and reactionary response to modernity.⁶² Henry Munson Jr. observes a difference in the way scholars analyze so-called fundamentalist movements and the ways they analyze movements that oppose militarism or the contamination of the environment. Even though activists in those movements are responding to some condition of modernity, their concerns and their arguments are afforded more credence than those of so-called fundamentalists.⁶³ Not taking the concerns of fundamentalists seriously or framing them as unreasonable is evident in the polemical discourse on global fundamentalism. In a review of *Strong Religion*, a book summarizing the conclusions of five-volumes of *The Fundamentalism Project*, David Aikman observes that the authors displayed an “undercurrent of distaste that runs through parts of it for many of the groups under examination. It is as though the researchers had to don chemical-protective suits even to investigate the phenomenon of fundamentalism, as though it were a dangerous microbe that might harm them.”⁶⁴

⁶² Marty, “Fundamentalism Reborn: Faith and Fanaticism,” 37.

⁶³ Henry Munson Jr., “Not All Crustaceans Are Crabs: Reflections on the Comparative Study of Fundamentalism and Politics,” *Contention* 4, no. 3 (1995): 162–63.

⁶⁴ David Aikman, “The Great Revival: Understanding Religious ‘Fundamentalism,’” *Foreign Affairs* 82, no. 4 (2003): 190, <https://doi.org/10.2307/20033659>.

As demonstrated above, when applied to American evangelical Christianity, the term “fundamentalist” does appear to describe a distinct religious movement. However, when the term is used to describe religious movements in non-Western contexts, it appears to be less useful. If anything, the concept of global fundamentalism has only confirmed the negative connotations associated with fundamentalism since the 1920s. So, if there are limitations in the sociological and psychological definitions of fundamentalism, how should we define fundamentalist movements? How do we account for the “family resemblances” that we see among religious movements? Moreover, how do we account for the similarities observed in non-religious discourses as well? This project seeks to answer these questions by applying a rhetorical perspective to the concept of fundamentalism. In doing so, I argue, the concept transforms from a psycho-sociological one, to a rhetorical one.

Historical Origins of American Fundamentalism

To understand fundamentalism as a rhetorical concept, I trace the concept to its earliest iteration and situate it in its historical context. It has been widely reported that the term “fundamentalist” was introduced to the American vocabulary in 1920 by Curtis Lee Laws to describe a specific movement in American evangelical Christianity.⁶⁵ At the time of the term’s invention, Laws, a pastor and journalist, was reporting on the Northern Baptist Convention of 1920. According to Laws, fundamentalists were evangelicals who adhered the “great fundamentals” of the Christian faith.⁶⁶ Laws borrowed the label from a series of booklets

⁶⁵ George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth Century Evangelicalism: 1870-1925*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 107.

⁶⁶ Curtis Lee Laws, “Convention Side Lights,” *Watchman-Examiner*, July 1, 1920, 834.

published between 1910 and 1915 called *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*. The booklets were the project of “Protestant laymen,” who sought to solidify the foundations of Christian doctrine among evangelicals.⁶⁷

Though the terms “fundamentalist” or “fundamentalism” were not common to popular parlance before 1920, the ideas that inform the concepts go as far back as the 1840s. The roots of American fundamentalism can be traced back to the Prayer Meetings Revivals that emerged out of the Third Great Awakening. According to David O. Beale, the first Great Awakening swept the American colonies from the 1720s to the 1760s. The Second Great Awakening began 20 years later in the 1780s and lasted to the early 1840s.⁶⁸ The Third Great Awakening followed a period of relative prosperity. The 1840s through the 1860s witnessed a rapid rise and subsequent fall in the American economy. Gold was discovered in California and launched a massive westward expansion. The finance sector was expanding, and industrialization was booming. However, the upward trajectory of the nation’s prosperity took a sudden nosedive on October 12, 1857, when the stock market crashed. Businesses went bankrupt, factories closed, and workers were laid off.⁶⁹ Not only was the economy in shambles, but also the American Civil War was

⁶⁷ William O. Beeman, “Fighting the Good Fight: Fundamentalism and Religious Revival,” in *Exotic No More: Anthropology on the Front Lines* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 129.

⁶⁸ David O. Beale, *In Pursuit of Purity: American Fundamentalism Since 1850* (Greenville, SC: Unusual Publications, 1986), 15.

⁶⁹ David O. Beale, 14.

underway. Some Americans interpreted the Civil War to be a crisis of “apocalyptic” proportions.⁷⁰

In the midst of such economic and political turmoil, some Christians wondered whether God was punishing them for their “negligence in spiritual matters.”⁷¹ To alleviate such concerns, several community prayer meetings were established. Jeremiah C. Lanphier, a theologically untrained, but faithful layperson, began the first meeting in 1857 at the Fulton Street Dutch Reformed Church in New York City. Typically, these meetings were held at midday since the majority of the congregants were working businessmen. By the 1860s, prayer meetings were held in major cities like Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, and Philadelphia. In addition to providing spiritual support for national crises like panic of 1857 and the Civil War, prayer meetings also provided training and experience in spiritual leadership—experience that would later prove useful in the fundamentalist movement.⁷²

Revivalist movements emerged in response to economic, social, and political turmoil of the mid-nineteenth century. They also emerged in response to the growing popularity of empirical explanations for the natural world. Prior to the widespread popularity of the Baconian method of inductive scientific inquiry, Americans largely subscribed to a Common Sense

⁷⁰ George L. Prentiss, “The National Crisis,” *American Theological Review* 1st ser., no. 4 (October 1862): 674. This quotation is from George M. Marsden, *The Evangelical Mind and the New School Presbyterian Experience* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), 207.

⁷¹ David O. Beale, *In Pursuit of Purity: American Fundamentalism Since 1850*, 14.

⁷² David O. Beale, 14–15.

approach to faith, science, and the Bible.⁷³ Common Sense philosophy asserted that the human mind was capable of detecting and knowing, with certainty, the real world. Following Scottish philosopher Thomas Reid, Common Sense philosophy claimed that humans could know truth through their “common sense” access to reality.⁷⁴ The Common Sense paradigm was especially suited for an American context because of its democratic and anti-elitist implications.⁷⁵ Donald H. Meyer argues that appeals to common sense were evident in some of the rationales for the American Revolution.⁷⁶

For the most part, Common Sense philosophy was conceptualized to be compatible with Protestant doctrine. Until the nineteenth century, Common Sense philosophy was seen to confirm the Bible, not contest it. Furthermore, common sense, the God-given capacity to access truth, was seen as a way to prove the moral law of the Bible. In other words, common sense allowed a person to intuitively know the principles of morality as well as they could know any physical reality. Francis Wayland, an evangelical textbook author, affirmed Common Sense philosophy by asserting: “God created everything double: a world without us, and a correspondent world

⁷³ George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 2006), 14.

⁷⁴ For a detailed discussion of Common Sense Realism see Sydney E. Ahlstrom, “The Scottish Philosophy and the American Theology,” *Church History* XXIV (September 1955): 257–72.; Theodore Dwight Bozeman, *Protestants in an Age of Science: The Baconian Ideal and Antebellum American Religious Thought* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1977).

⁷⁵ Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth Century Evangelicalism: 1870-1925*, 14.

⁷⁶ See Donald H. Meyer, *The Democratic Enlightenment* (New York: Putnam, 1976), 191–92.

within us...moral qualities in actions and conscience to judge them.”⁷⁷ In other words, morality was as empirically observable as any physical phenomenon. Common Sense philosophy was the way American Protestant Christians reconciled a rational world paradigm with religious faith. However, the logical end of Common Sense philosophy was scientific empiricism. If one is to assume that reality exists detectable by human faculties, then it follows that an inductive scientific method, like the one suggested by Francis Bacon, would be the most certain way to discover it.⁷⁸

Charles Darwin’s *On the Origin of Species* (1859) and *The Descent of Man* (1871) sparked a debate about whether scientific empiricism and the notion of the inerrancy of the Bible were compatible. Darwin’s conclusion that the human species is a product of an evolutionary process directly contradicted biblical accounts of creation. The implications of Darwin’s claims to religious doctrine did not go unnoticed. Oliver Wendell Holmes observed that scientific empiricism would undo the very foundations of American evangelical religion—the notion of the inerrancy of the Bible. To threaten this foundation, Holmes warned, is to threaten the very basis of Christian civilization. Holmes warned of “the truth is staring the Christian world in the face, that the stories of the old Hebrew books cannot be taken as literal statements of facts.”⁷⁹ By the 1870s, evangelical leaders registered the seriousness of the threat of empiricism to their

⁷⁷ Francis Wayland, *The Elements of Moral Science*, ed. Joseph Angus (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), 85, 4.

⁷⁸ For a more detailed discussion, see Bozeman, *Protestants in an Age of Science: The Baconian Ideal and Antebellum American Religious Thought*.

⁷⁹ Letter to Fredric Hedge, quoted in Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth Century Evangelicalism: 1870-1925*, 17.

evangelical doctrine. In his reflections on the controversy, W. A. Stearns, president of Amherst College, wrote that Christianity had never been “assaulted with such variety and persistence of argument for its overthrow” as it had during the “hundred years just passed.”⁸⁰

Evangelical Christians responded to the contradictions between Darwinism and the Bible in one of two ways. Either church leaders and theologians rejected the doctrine of biblical inerrancy, or they rejected empirical rationality. Lyman Abbot represented one of the voices that rejected the doctrine of biblical inerrancy. In *The Evolution of Christianity*, Abbot argued that modern Christians must not interpret the Bible literally. Instead, Christians should recognize that the stories found in the Bible conveyed a higher ethical message through myths. Abbot asserted that preserving the Christian faith in the modern world necessitated interpreting biblical stories metaphorically. Abbot argued his perspective “cleansed” Christianity of “pagan thought and feeling” and thus reconciled Christian theology with modern science:

The New Theology does not tend toward unfaith, it is; on the contrary, an endeavor to maintain faith by expressing it in terms which are more intelligible and credible. I hope that the reader of these pages will discover that I have not abandoned the historic faith of Christendom to become an evolutionist, but have endeavored to show that the historic faith of Christendom, when stated in terms of an evolutionary philosophy, is not only preserved, but is so cleaned of pagan thought and feeling, as to be presented in a purer and more powerful form.⁸¹

Abbot’s relative view of the Bible was informed by modern theological liberalism. Liberalism, also known as Protestant modernism, is a perspective that is informed by Enlightenment rationalism, nineteenth-century German theology, and biblical criticism. The

⁸⁰ W.A. Stearns, “Recent Questions of Unbelief,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* XXVII (July 1870): 469.

⁸¹ Abbott Lyman, *The Evolution of Christianity* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1894), iv.

main features of this theological perspective included: a relativistic view of the Bible, the idea that the Bible and Christendom are conditioned by their historical contexts, an emphasis on Christ's humanity, and rejection of orthodox Christian doctrine.⁸² By the end of World War I, theological liberalism was the accepted theology in many American denominations and seminaries. Since liberal theology was developed, debated, and accepted by the *leaders* of denominations, some ministers and laypeople that preached the fundamentals of Christianity felt mistrusted church leadership.⁸³

In response to theological liberalism, some lay church members took it upon themselves to defend Christian orthodoxy. By "lay member" I mean a person who is unaffiliated with church leadership in an official or influential capacity. In 1909, Lyman Stewart, a lay person, commissioned a project to refute liberal theology, prove the inerrancy of the Bible, and spread the foundations of Christian doctrine throughout the world.⁸⁴ This project produced a set of 12 publications that called *The Fundamentals: A Testimony of Truth*.⁸⁵ Between the years 1910 and 1915, *The Fundamentals* were distributed to 21 countries. The stated goal of the project was to reach every Protestant teacher, preacher, missionary, and theologian in the English-speaking

⁸² David O. Beale, *In Pursuit of Purity: American Fundamentalism Since 1850*, 84. The confines of this space inhibit me from exploring the dimensions of liberal theology more fully. For more comprehensive studies on American theological liberalism, see: William R. Hutchinson, *The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976); Kenneth Cauthen, *The Impact of American Religious Liberalism* (New York: Harper and Row, 1962); J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism* (New York: Macmillan, 1923).

⁸³ Ernest R. Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism*, 192–93.

⁸⁴ David O. Beale, *In Pursuit of Purity: American Fundamentalism Since 1850*, 41.

⁸⁵ Amzi C. Dixon, Louis Meyer, and Torrey, eds., *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*, 12 vols. (Chicago and Los Angeles, 1910).

world.⁸⁶ *The Fundamentals* contained what were considered the foundational doctrine every Protestant Christian should hold.⁸⁷

Although many of the doctrines espoused by *The Fundamentals* did not align with mainstream evangelical theology, the authors presented their arguments as an orthodox view of Christian doctrine, especially on matters that were debated by liberal sects of Christianity such as the inerrant authority of the Bible.⁸⁸ James Orr, one of the contributing authors of *The Fundamentals*, argued that the Bible was “the record to revelation and that revelation shines in its light from the beginning to the end of it.”⁸⁹ For the authors of *The Fundamentals*, the Bible was God’s definitive revelation of himself to humanity. Since God was the author and authoritative source, the Bible was absolutely trustworthy and without error.

This project derives its understanding of fundamentalism from fundamentalist rhetoric. As established above, the only group of people that can unequivocally be considered fundamentalist are the first Fundamentalists of the early twentieth century.⁹⁰ For this reason, I analyze one of the earliest publications issued by the first Fundamentalists, *The Fundamentals: A Testimony of Faith*, to arrive at a rhetorical definition of fundamentalist argument and to

⁸⁶ David O. Beale, *In Pursuit of Purity: American Fundamentalism Since 1850*, 40.

⁸⁷ Dixon, Meyer, and Torrey, *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*, foreword.

⁸⁸ Ernest R. Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism*, 191–92.

⁸⁹ James Orr, “Holy Scripture and Modern Negations,” in *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*, ed. Ruben Torrey, Amzi C. Dixon, and Louis Meyer, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1910), 108.

⁹⁰ David Harrington Watt, “Fundamentalists of the 1920s and 1930s,” in *Fundamentalism: Perspectives on a Contested History* (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 2014), 18–35.

understand the characteristics of fundamentalist argumentation. *The Fundamentals* is a representative text of this movement because it articulated the mission and goals of the first Fundamentalists. In the next few pages, I will analyze of the first essay of the first volume of *The Fundamentals*, entitled “The Virgin Birth of Christ.”

Analysis of *The Fundamentals*

James Orr, the author of “The Virgin Birth of Christ,” was a reverend and professor at United Free Church College in Glasgow, Scotland. In the essay, Orr asserts his purpose was to “show that those who take the lines of denial on the Virgin birth...do great injustice to the evidence and importance of the doctrine they reject.”⁹¹ For Orr, accepting the Virgin birth of Christ was fundamental to the whole infrastructure of Christian doctrine. Without it, Christ “would have shared in Adam’s corruption and doom—would Himself have required to be redeemed.”⁹² Orr asserts: “*Doctrinally*, it must be repeated that the belief in the Virgin birth of Christ of the highest value for the right apprehension of Christ’s unique and sinless personality (emphasis in original).”⁹³ For Orr, questioning the miraculous birth of Christ cast doubt on the whole of Christian faith.

The Centrality of the Virgin Birth to a Christian’s Faith

Orr makes a case for why the Virgin birth is central to Christianity as a coherent belief system. Orr argues that the Virgin birth is foundational to believing Christ’s supernatural

⁹¹ James Orr, “The Virgin Birth of Christ,” in *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*, vol. 1 (Chicago, IL: Testimony Publishing Company, 1910), 9.

⁹² Orr, “The Virgin Birth of Christ,” 20

⁹³ Orr, “The Virgin Birth of Christ,” 19

personhood: “Placed in its right setting among the other truths of the Christian religion, it is not only no stumbling-block to faith, but it is felt to fit with the self-evidencing power into the connection of these other truths, and to furnish the very explanation that is needed of Christ’s holy and supernatural person.”⁹⁴ In other words, denying the Virgin birth of Christ denies the divine nature of Christ. Orr further explains: “If Christ was, as John and Paul affirm and His church has ever believed, the Son of God made flesh, the second Adam, the new redeeming head of the race, a miracle was to be expected in His earthly origin; without a miracle such a Person could never have been.”⁹⁵ Per Orr’s logic, belief in the miracle of Christ’s Virgin birth is necessary to justify and accept Christ’s significance in Christianity.

The Threat to Identity: Doubt in the Virgin Birth of Christ

Once Orr established the Virgin birth of Christ as foundational to Christian belief, he turned his attention to attacks on it. Orr devoted a significant portion of his essay to establishing the existence of a threat to which he was compelled to respond. He described the threat as a “determined assault” upon the foundations of Christian doctrine, namely the “truth of the Virgin birth of Christ.”⁹⁶ Orr identifies the sources of this assault as an “agitation... against the doctrine of the Virgin birth,” which had grown ever since 1892 when a pastor named Schrempf in Germany refused to use the Apostles’ Creed in a baptism because of his disbelief in the Virgin birth and other articles Christian doctrine. Orr added that the “agitation” was bolstered by “the

⁹⁴ James Orr, “The Virgin Birth of Christ,” 9.

⁹⁵ James Orr, 10.

⁹⁶ James Orr, 7.

rise of an extremely radical school of historical criticism.”⁹⁷ In a later passage, Orr accuses the sources of the assault by name: “From the side of criticism, science, mythology, history, and comparative religion, assault is thus made on the article long so dear to the hearts of Christians and rightly deemed by them so vital to their faith.”⁹⁸ The results of such an attack are “that in many quarters the Virgin birth of Christ is openly treated as a fable. Belief in it is scouted as unworthy of the twentieth century intelligence....it is likened to the Greek and Roman stories, coarse and vile, of heroes who had gods for their fathers.”⁹⁹

The scope of the threat, according to Orr, reached beyond the belief in the Virgin birth—it had implications that compromised other Christian doctrines that depended on it: “The attack is not confined, indeed, to the article of the Virgin birth. It affects the whole supernatural estimate of Christ—His life, His claims, His sinlessness, His miracles, His resurrection from the dead.”¹⁰⁰ For Orr, doubt in the Virgin birth of Christ leads to doubt in other foundational doctrines, upon which Christian faith depends. Denial of the Virgin birth simultaneously denies the significance of Christ. The results of such a denial are the eventual disintegration of the Christian faith.

Sources of the Threat: Corrupting Elements

The source of the threat, according to Orr, is not external to the Christian community, but instead resides within it. Orr implicates the church and its leaders for the threat to the doctrine of the Virgin birth: “It is not only...in the circles of unbelief that the Virgin birth is discredited; in

⁹⁷ James Orr, 7.

⁹⁸ James Orr, 8.

⁹⁹ James Orr, 7.

¹⁰⁰ James Orr, 7.

the church itself the habit is spreading of casting doubt upon the fact, or at least of regarding it as not an essential part of the Christian faith.”¹⁰¹ The church’s reasoning, Orr relates, is that the belief in the Virgin birth “did not belong in the earliest Christian tradition, and evidence for it is not strong. Therefore, let it drop.”¹⁰² Orr finds this trend in church leadership alarming: “Till recently, no one dreamed of denying that, in the sincere profession of Christianity, this article, which has stood from the beginning in the forefront of all great creeds of Christendom, was included. Now it is different.”¹⁰³

In addition to blaming the church for the spread of this doubt, Orr claimed that the belief in the Virgin birth is the distinguishing line between those who truly believe and those who do not. Orr asserts: “It is surprising how clearly the line of division here reveals itself...those who repudiate or deny this article of faith either hold a lowered view of Christ’s Person, or, more commonly, reject His supernatural claims altogether.”¹⁰⁴ By defining those with an unwavering belief in the Virgin birth as *true* believers, Orr establishes a metric by which to determine who is trustworthy and who is not. Furthermore, by accusing church leadership of exacerbating the problem, Orr appeals to the common, lay person’s sensibilities.

Orr also accuses those who deny the Virgin birth of Christ of not being true Christians. Orr asserts: “Among those who reject the Virgin birth of the Lord few will be found—I do not know any—who take in other respects an adequate view of the Person and work of the Savior.”

¹⁰¹ James Orr, 8.

¹⁰² James Orr, 8.

¹⁰³ Orr, “Holy Scripture and Modern Negations,” 8.

¹⁰⁴ James Orr, “The Virgin Birth of Christ,” 8.

Orr reiterates that “those who repudiate or deny this article of faith either hold a lowered view of Christ’s Person, or more commonly, reject His supernatural claims altogether.”¹⁰⁵ In doubting the Christianity of those attacking the doctrine of Christ’s Virgin birth, Orr implies that their intentions are suspect. Furthermore, Orr alludes that those attackers had aligned themselves with the enemies of Christianity by reviving “the methods of the oldest opponents of Christianity.”¹⁰⁶ For Orr, the attackers sought to shake the foundations of Christianity from within.

The Audience: Fellow Lay, Believing Christians

The audience that Orr addresses is a lay, believing audience. This audience is constituted through Orr’s logic. Orr referred to a layperson’s common sense of reasoning to make a case for the coherence of Christ’s Virgin birth in Christian theology. When discussing the centrality of Christ’s Virgin birth to Christ’s supernatural nature, Orr explicitly appeals to the common sense of ordinary believers rather than reasoning provided by theologians:

The ordinary Christian is a witness here. In reading the Gospels, he feels no incongruity in passing from the narratives of the Virgin birth to the wonderful story of Christ’s life in the chapters that follow, then from these to the pictures of Christ’s divine dignity given in John and Paul. *The whole is one piece* [emphasis added]: the Virgin birth is as natural at the beginning of the life of such a One—the divine Son—as the resurrection is at the end.¹⁰⁷

Orr claims that the coherence of Christ’s story to the layperson’s sensibilities is what makes it true, but the logic of his argument is circular. According to Orr, “ordinary Christians” accept the biblical account of Christ’s birth because they already accept the Bible as an authority

¹⁰⁵ James Orr, 8

¹⁰⁶ James Orr, 7

¹⁰⁷ James Orr, “The Virgin Birth of Christ,” 10.

on the subject. Orr asserts that the ordinary Christian's logic must be grounded in scripture in order to accept the supernatural nature of Christ: "It is only when the scriptural conception of Christ is parted with that various difficulties and doubts come in."¹⁰⁸ By making adherence to scripture necessary to believe in the Virgin birth, a foundational tenet of Christian doctrine, Orr establishes yet another metric to distinguish true believers from others.

Call to Action: Reject Doubt and Warn Others

By establishing the centrality of the doctrine of Christ's Virgin birth to a Christian's faith, Orr sought to bolster the reader's confidence in this doctrine and provide the reader with arguments and evidence for defending this doctrine. The authors of *The Fundamentals* mention in the foreword to the first volume that it is their "earnest desire that you will carefully read it and pass its truth on to others."¹⁰⁹ Given the wide distribution of the publications, it is clear that the ultimate goal was to reach as many Christians as possible. Believing Christians, they hoped, would be wary of and reject the corrupting elements of their church leadership.

The Narrative of the First Fundamentalists

From this brief analysis of Orr's essay, the underlying narrative of Orr's fundamentalist argument is apparent. He casts Christianity as a whole as being subject to threat by a corrupted theological class of church leaders who have been led astray. If anything, they have employed the tactics of Christianity's oldest enemies in order to foster doubt in its most foundational premises—the Virgin birth of Christ. Without the belief in this premise, the entire doctrinal

¹⁰⁸ James Orr, 10.

¹⁰⁹ Dixon, Meyer, and Torrey, *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*, foreword.

system of Christianity crumbles—thereby shattering the very basis of a Christian’s identity. For Orr, the danger is that the foundational doctrines are no longer tacitly accepted. Believing Christians who wish to preserve their identity as Christians, must learn to identify such threats, shore up their own faith, articulate why the enemies of Christianity are wrong, and warn their fellow Christians.

Reactions to *The Fundamentals*

Mainstream church leaders did not readily accept fundamentalist theology. In 1922, Harry Emerson Fosdick, a popular Baptist minister, delivered a sermon titled, “Shall the Fundamentalists Win?” that painted an unflattering picture of fundamentalists. In his sermon, Fosdick conveyed his respect for conservative Christians. However, he viewed the fundamentalist posture on doctrine to be the actual danger to the survival of Christianity. According to Fosdick, the battle between liberal, modernist Christians and fundamentalist Christians was akin to the battle between Jewish leaders and the first Christians. Jewish leaders, according to Fosdick, persecuted early Christians because they strayed from Jewish orthodoxy. Upholding orthodoxy prevented Jewish leaders from embracing Christianity—“the finest flowering out that Judaism ever had.”¹¹⁰ By comparing fundamentalist Christians to Jewish leaders, Fosdick painted fundamentalist Christians as believers who failed to appreciate the importance of progressive revelation. Fosdick argued that “revelation is progressive” and that Jesus understood this notion.¹¹¹ Although Jesus wanted to fulfill the beliefs and practices of

¹¹⁰ Harry Emerson Fosdick and Michael Warner, “Shall the Fundamentalists Win?,” in *American Sermons: The Pilgrims to Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: Library of America, 1999), 775.

¹¹¹ Fosdick and Warner, 780–81.

ancient Judaism, Fosdick argued, he understood that God’s “words and works” did not end with the Old Testament.¹¹² Fosdick argued that Jesus understood God as “a contemporary God—a God who is still speaking and still working.” Therefore, there was no reason to cling to outdated religious doctrines when God wanted to guide people from “partial truth” to “fuller truth.”¹¹³ Fosdick depicted fundamentalist Christians as conservatives who were too obsessed with ancient doctrine to keep up with a progressive arch of history.¹¹⁴ Fosdick’s sermon associated fundamentalism with a conservative backwardness that was unsuited to the modern world.

The struggle between liberal sects and fundamentalists reached a crescendo in the Scopes trial of 1925. The case involved the prosecution of John Thomas Scopes, a Dayton, Tennessee high school teacher accused of violating the Butler Act of 1925. The Butler Act was a newly passed Tennessee law that prohibited public school teachers from teaching the theory of evolution. Local Dayton business leaders decided to test the law by trying a local high school science teacher. Famed attorney Clarence Darrow defended Scopes and his right to teach evolution. William Jennings Bryan, populist figure and three-time Democratic presidential nominee, championed the anti-evolution position.¹¹⁵

¹¹² Fosdick and Warner, 780–81.

¹¹³ Fosdick and Warner, 783.

¹¹⁴ Fosdick and Warner, 783.

¹¹⁵ Kristy Maddux, “Fundamentalist Fool or Populist Paragon? William Jennings Bryan and the Campaign Against Evolutionary Theory,” *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 16, no. 3 (2013): 490.

The press paid significant attention to the Scopes trial in part because it was less of a trial and more of a debate between William Jennings Bryan and Clarence Darrow.¹¹⁶ Bryan argued against the theory of evolution and for parental rights to oversee their children's education. The trial lasted two weeks and Scopes was found guilty of teaching evolutionary theory and subsequently fined \$100. Although historians like Garry Wills credit Bryan for raising important issues in the debate, such as social Darwinism and the relationship between science and democracy, historians largely viewed the Scopes trial as a circus and a farce because of the fundamentalist and anti-intellectualism displayed by Bryan.¹¹⁷ As the culminating event in Bryan's career, the Scopes trial solidified Bryan's association with anti-evolution and branded him a "fundamentalist fool."¹¹⁸ Furthermore, it reinforced the association between fundamentalism and its animosity towards modernity.

Fundamentalist Argument Defined

A review of the scholarship on fundamentalism, as well as an examination of the earliest examples of American Fundamentalist rhetoric, leads me to propose the following definition as a useful way of understanding fundamentalism as an argument.

Fundamentalist arguments promise clarity, certainty, and a strengthened sense of group identity and purpose. They accomplish these goals by framing uncertain situations as threats to what is fundamental to a universal identity. In response to such threats, fundamentalist arguments prescribe action to preserve and protect

¹¹⁶ Michael Lienesch, *In the Beginning: Fundamentalism, the Scopes Trial, and the Making of the Antievolution Movement* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 139.

¹¹⁷ Constance Areson Clark, "Evolution for John Doe: Pictures, the Public, and the Scopes Trial Debate," *Journal of American History* 87, no. 4 (2001): 1277.

¹¹⁸ Kristy Maddux, "Fundamentalist Fool or Populist Paragon? William Jennings Bryan and the Campaign Against Evolutionary Theory," 490.

the fundamentals of identity. Fundamentalist arguments address fellow members of the aggrieved group and seek to bolster and reinforce the actions necessary to ensure the survival of the group.

The definition and concepts I define below echo and extend William Connolly's understanding of fundamentalism as:

a general imperative to assert an absolute, singular ground of authority; to ground your own identity and allegiances in this unquestionable source; to define political issues in a vocabulary of God, morality, or nature that invokes such a certain, authoritative source; and to condemn tolerance, abortion, pluralism, radicalism, homosexuality, secular humanism, welfarism, and internationalism (among other things) by imputing moral weakness, relativism, selfishness, or corruption to them.¹¹⁹

Connolly acknowledges the connection between an authoritative source and identity in configuring fundamentalism. Furthermore, Connolly acknowledges the utility of extending the definition to groups and ideological positions that have not historically been labeled as fundamentalist because "...it may be productive to stretch the range of the word somewhat, to open up the possibility of touching those (liberals, secularists, modernists, rationalists, scientists, moderates) who habitually perceive fundamentalism only in the other."¹²⁰

This definition proposed above requires the explication of a few key terms. In fundamentalist argument, *group identity* refers to the distinct self-concept of a particular audience for whom fundamentalist argument is intended. According to Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, a "particular audience" is one subject to persuasion and influence

¹¹⁹ William E. Connolly, *The Ethos of Pluralization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 105.

¹²⁰ Connolly, 105.

through argument.¹²¹ In fundamentalist argument, the particular group is cast as the seers of an approaching danger and thus are encouraged to act in defense of a larger community. The particular group can include a wide variety of activists, such as anti-abortion activists, segregationist organizations, and environmentalist groups.

Rhetors who use fundamentalist arguments address particular audiences of real people that exist in the world. Yet, they present their case as if they speak to and on behalf of a *universal identity*. Universal identity refers to an imagined community that reflects and, in Perelman and Olberchts-Tyteca's terms, "universalizes" the values, grievances, and purposes of the particular group's identity.¹²² Appeals to the universal identity reinforce the perceived justice and urgency of a particular group's mission by cloaking it in the language of universality.

In fundamentalist rhetoric, the universal identity appears to refer to a real community or category that exists in the world, like "Christians," "America," or "the human species." However, conceptually, the universal identity's characteristics, values, and purposes are imagined and constructed by those issuing fundamentalist arguments. Therefore, the universal identity is an abstraction of a real community or category that exists in the world. For example, rhetors may claim, explicitly or implicitly, to speak on behalf of "Christians" in a universal sense. However, their construction of those Christians reflects their own particular values and political purposes. Furthermore, their particular vision of "Christians" resonates with, attracts, and activates members of the intended particular audience. The universal identity of Christians

¹²¹ Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olberchts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), 28–29.

¹²² Perelman and Olberchts-Tyteca, 28–29.

may not necessarily reflect the reality or diversity of actual Christians in the real world. Yet, appeals to and identification with the universal identity serves to portray the fundamentalist arguer's mission as a grander cause, in service of a wider community, with a higher purpose than that of the particular group.

Universal identity is based on two concepts—universal audience and imagined community. A “universal audience,” according to Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, is an idealized group of people the rhetor views as intelligent, reasonable, and capable of processing argument competently. The universal audience does not actually exist, rather it is an abstraction in the rhetor's mind.¹²³ Its purpose is to assess the validity of truth and rational claims made in argument. In other words, the arguments rhetors make are intended for particular audiences, but to make claims about truths in reality, they must also appeal to the rationality of universal audiences. According to Perelman, the universal audience is capable of objectivity because it is above the particular values of any one group: “The universal audience transcends every particular grouping.”¹²⁴ However, because it is imagined in the mind of subjective rhetor, the universal audience is as the rhetor “*conceives it, even in the absence of an objectivity which imposes itself upon everyone*” (emphasis in original).¹²⁵ In other words, the universal audience reflects the values of the rhetors and the particular audiences to which they address.

¹²³ Perelman and Olberchts-Tyteca, 28–29.

¹²⁴ Chaim Perelman, “The New Rhetoric and the Rhetoricians: Remembrances and Comments,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 70 (1984): 192.

¹²⁵ Perelman, 191.

Through fundamentalist argument, the rhetor translates his or her vision of the universal audience into an “imagined community” with whom the particular group identifies. Imagined communities, according to Benedict Anderson, are socially constructed communities, or “invented” groups, whereby members cannot possibly know every other member, yet “where in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.”¹²⁶ The concept of imagined community explains the kinship people feel among vast communities. It also explains why people are willing to strive and sacrifice in defense of their community.¹²⁷

By casting the rhetor’s universal audience as an expanded and large-scale version of the particular group, fundamentalist argument invites a sense of kinship between the particular group and the universal audience. They are seen to share similar defining characteristics, values, and purposes—or *a similar identity*. In other words, fundamentalist argument universalizes a particular group identity to transform it into a universal identity. If we return to fundamentalist Christian identity as an example, we can see how fundamentalist argument justifies its defense of the fundamentals of Christianity not for the sake of a particular group, but rather for the sake of all Christians, the universal identity. Similarly, when environmentalists discuss pollution or environmental decay in terms of its effects on humans, they are expanding the circle of concern beyond just the affected community, like those who consume polluted water or are exposed to nuclear radiation. The fundamentalist argument escalates the stakes by positioning the universal identity as being in danger of decline or decay, thereby motivating the particular audience into

¹²⁶ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (London: Verso, 2006), 6.

¹²⁷ Anderson, 7.

action. The universal identity is thus the imagined category, whose distinct characteristics fundamentalist argument seeks to defend.

Fundamentalist arguments ultimately claim to defend the *fundamentals of identity*. The fundamentals of identity are what are believed to be core, necessary and foundational to an integrity of the universal identity. In other words, the universal identity's distinct character is defined by a set of doctrines, an ideology, a text, a physical/ geographic location, or a natural process. Fundamentals of identity are analogous to the sacred sources or "doctrines, beliefs, and practices from a sacred past," indicated in Marty and Appleby's definition of fundamentalism.¹²⁸

The fundamentals of identity are seen to be central to the character of a universal identity because they are believed to be appointed as such by an *authoritative source*. The authoritative source is an *a priori*, external, and unquestionable cultural framework like God or Nature. The type of the authority evoked in fundamentalist argument depends on where rhetors locate the fundamentals of identity. For example, for Fundamentalist Christians, the fundamentals of Christian identity are specific doctrines. They are ordained as such by God, who communicates with humans through an inerrant Bible. Similarly, for white supremacists, whiteness is fundamental to white identity, as authorized by God and Nature. In environmentalist discourse, Nature is frequently conceptualized as the ultimate source of meaning for humans. Therefore, Nature's processes and/or its physical locations are believed to be fundamental to the human species on earth.

¹²⁸ Marty and Appleby, "Conclusion: An Interim Report on the Hypothetical Family," 835.

In fundamentalist argument, the authoritative source is not presented as a cultural or ideological framework. Rather, fundamentalist argument presents the authoritative source as based in an “*ontic logos*.” In his reflections on the sources of identity in Western culture, *Sources of the Self*, Charles Taylor defines an *ontic logos* as a meaningful order to reality that is external to rational and linguist representations of reality. In an *ontic logos*, the “perfections of being” replace the “perfections of description or representation.”¹²⁹ When operating within the *ontic logos*, humans rely on their senses and reason to discover “true knowledge” and “true valuation” of reality. In other words, meaning exists external to and independently of human consciousness, accessible to humans through their senses and reason. Furthermore, Taylor argues that “things are as they are” in an *ontic logos* to “conform to a pattern of rational self-manifestation”—a pattern that “sets the paradigm purposes of the human beings within it.”¹³⁰ In other words, an *ontic logos* is one where the cosmos is seen as a source of meaning and purpose for humans.

According to Taylor, the *ontic logos* was how humans related to the cosmos in pre-modern times. For some ancients, like Plato and Aristotle, meaning existed in the world, eternal, *a priori*, and independent of the mental faculties of humans. For Plato, reason, virtue, and wisdom, were the means by which humans accessed the meaningful order or the “vision of cosmic order.”¹³¹ In the fourth century, Christian theologian Augustine of Hippo applied Plato’s

¹²⁹ Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 160.

¹³⁰ Taylor, 160.

¹³¹ Taylor, 126.

ideas to Christianity and argued that God created the eternal cosmic order, thereby reading reality as a function of the divine mind.¹³²

Part of the cosmic order is what Taylor called “moral sources.” For Taylor, the self is shaped by its relationship to the good it draws upon, or its “moral source.” This moral source, in the *ontic logos*, is external to human subjectivity, or as Taylor asserts, “the locus of our sources of moral strength resides outside.”¹³³ In his formulation of identity, the self is “something that can exist only in a space of moral issues.”¹³⁴ In other words, a person understands their place in the world by their position on a moral issue. As Taylor puts it, “to know who I am is a species of knowing where I stand” in relation to the good.¹³⁵ This relationship between the self and the good is a reciprocal one whereby “our understandings of the good are tied our with our understandings of the self.”¹³⁶ In the *ontic logos*, human identity, morality, and purpose are grounded in what is exterior, universal, and beyond human consciousness.

By the Enlightenment, Taylor argues, Western civilization had shifted away from the *ontic logos* and moved towards an “inwardness” of self.¹³⁷ Enlightenment philosophers like Rene Descartes exemplify this mode of thought. For Descartes, reality was meaningful only in the minds of its observers. Furthermore, Descartes situates moral sources within humans, rather

¹³² Taylor, 128.

¹³³ Taylor, 143.

¹³⁴ Taylor, 49.

¹³⁵ Taylor, 27.

¹³⁶ Taylor, 105.

¹³⁷ Taylor, 111.

than to the cosmic order.¹³⁸ In other words, Descartes collapses objective reality into the subjective self. Fundamentalist argument rejects the collapse of the subject and object in the inward construction of identity. Instead, fundamentalist argument insists on locating the sources of the identity outside of the human subject.

Project Details

With my proposed definition of fundamentalist argument in mind, this project seeks to understand the rhetorical force of fundamentalist argument, its characteristics, and the exigencies to which it responds in a diversity of political causes and contexts. This project examines three case studies that use fundamentalist arguments to respond to similarly perceived exigencies – alleged threats to the fundamentals of identity. More specifically, this project assesses the rhetorical characteristics fundamentalist arguments share across a diversity of reactionary discourses. By reactionary discourse, I refer to Corey Robin’s conception of “reactionary movements” designed to oppose the increased “agency of the subordinate classes.”¹³⁹ According to Robin, the political orientation of reactionary movements is more conservative and opposed to extending freedom and equality to more people in society, particularly women and historically marginalized people of color. Reactionaries are invested in maintaining current hierarchies of privilege and power because they assume that such hierarchies impose order on the unruly and chaotic.¹⁴⁰ Robin finds that reactionaries naturalize hierarchies through the sentiment of “some

¹³⁸ Taylor, 143.

¹³⁹ Corey Robin, *The Reactionary Mind: Conservatism from Edmund Burke to Donald Trump* (New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2017), 7–8.

¹⁴⁰ Robin, 24.

are fit, and thus ought, to rule others.”¹⁴¹ Disturbed by a perceived loss of power, reactionaries are motivated to maintain the subjugation of “the subordinate classes” through political action.¹⁴² For example, anti-abortion discourses and segregationist discourses both exhibit this desire to deny and control the freedoms of women and people of color, respectively. Implied in this desire for control is a mistrust in the capacities of women and people of color to exhibit rational judgments.

Richard Shorten nuances Robin’s understanding of reaction by identifying the characteristics of “reactionary rhetoric.” According to Shorten, reactionary rhetoric is a “repertoire of appeals” to “indignation, decadence, and conspiracy.”¹⁴³ Shorten argues that reactionary rhetoric encourages audiences towards indignation that he defines as the feeling that “fortune—whether good or bad— is undeserved.” In other words, reactionaries respond with indignation to those seen to enjoy underserved prosperity or suffer underserved misery. Reactionary rhetoric also articulates the present historical moment in the language of “decadence.”¹⁴⁴ According to Shorten, decadence is synonymous with decline, decay, or loss. In reactionary rhetoric, the present historical moment for a society is seen as diminished in relation to the past. Those viewed as responsible for the decadence of society are cast as “corrupt” and

¹⁴¹ Robin, 18.

¹⁴² Robin, 7–8.

¹⁴³ Richard Shorten, “Reactionary Rhetoric Reconsidered,” *Journal of Political Ideologies* 20, no. 2 (2015): 179.

¹⁴⁴ Shorten, 191.

“degenerate” in reactionary rhetoric.¹⁴⁵ Lastly, reactionary rhetoric attributes the perceived decline or decay of society to a “conspiracy,” wherein secretive and nefarious forces are plotting evil actions against a beleaguered group of people—the reactionaries. Reactionaries claim to discern the truth of reality and thus see the conspiracy.¹⁴⁶

Shorten argues that by presenting their insights on conspiracy as “testimony,” reactionaries invite the audience to test the truth of their claims and to verify the existence of the conspiracy for themselves, thereby advancing the process of persuasion by direct engagement of the audience.¹⁴⁷ Shorten concludes that the appeal of reactionary rhetoric is that it presents its appraisal of the world in the language of facts and truth so that “resistance to the reactionary’s assessment of the world becomes no less than resistance to the truths of nature.”¹⁴⁸

Environmental discourse exhibits many of the characteristics of reactionary rhetoric found by Shorten. Environmentalism often expresses indignation at how capitalism prioritizes prosperity at the expense of the environment. Furthermore, in environmentalist discourse, agribusinesses, weapons manufacturers, and chemical companies, among others, are blamed for the decline and decay of the ecosystem. For many environmentalists, these entities conspire to enrich themselves at any cost, even at the expense of the environment and public health. The discourses explored in this project exhibit these characteristics of reactionary rhetoric and thus warrant their grouping with conservative fundamentalist arguments.

¹⁴⁵ Shorten, 192.

¹⁴⁶ Shorten, 195.

¹⁴⁷ Shorten, 195.

¹⁴⁸ Shorten, 193.

This project ultimately investigates fundamentalist arguments as a genre by exploring three discourses—anti-abortion rhetoric, segregationist rhetoric, and environmentalist rhetoric. In Chapter One, I examine anti-abortion rhetoric that emerged after the Supreme Court’s 1973 decision on *Roe v. Wade*. I analyze the anti-abortion arguments presented by Francis A. Schaeffer, an evangelical theologian, writer, filmmaker, missionary, and a fundamentalist Presbyterian pastor.¹⁴⁹ Michael Hamilton, of *Christianity Today*, contended that Schaeffer was “evangelicalism’s most important public intellectual in the twenty years before his death.”¹⁵⁰ Schaeffer presents his account of America’s relationship with Christianity and the impact of that relationship on moral issues, including abortion, in the following three texts examined in the first chapter: *How Should We Live Then? The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture* (1976), *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* (1979), and *A Christian Manifesto* (1981).¹⁵¹

In Chapter Two, I examine segregationist rhetoric that emerged in response to the precedent-setting Supreme Court case—*Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954). The text I analyze is *Black Monday* (1954), written by Mississippi Supreme Court judge and staunch segregationist, Thomas P. Brady. Brady was hailed by the *New York Times* to be the “intellectual grandfather” of the Citizens’ Council movement, a white supremacy and segregationist

¹⁴⁹ Barry Hankins, *Francis Schaeffer and the Shaping of Evangelical America* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2008), xiii.

¹⁵⁰ by Michael S. Hamilton, “The Dissatisfaction of Francis Schaeffer,” *Christianity Today*, March 3, 1997.

¹⁵¹ Francis Schaeffer, *How Should We Then Live? The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1976); C. Everett Koop and Francis Schaeffer, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*, 2nd ed. (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1983); Francis Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1981).

association that worked to fulfill many of the calls to action made by Brady in *Black Monday*.¹⁵² Citizens' Councils existed all over the South. In Mississippi, Councils effectively resisted federally mandated integration measures in public schools for over a decade.¹⁵³

In Chapter Three, I examine the rhetoric of the environmentalist movement of the 1970s with a focus on Barry Commoner's *The Closing Circle* (1972). Commoner was a microbiologist and prolific author on the vital relationship between human society and the environment. *TIME* Magazine called Commoner the "Paul Revere of Ecology."¹⁵⁴ He was recognized to be one of the founding voices of the environmental justice movement.¹⁵⁵ In response to growing public health concerns about air, water, and soil pollution, Commoner wrote the national bestselling environmental treatise, *The Closing Circle*. In it, Commoner made a case for why abiding by nature's laws was necessary for preserving human life on earth.

In this project, I explore fundamentalist arguments as a distinct genre of argument utilized by activists across the political spectrum. I pursue three research questions in this study: 1) How do writers and speakers who use fundamentalist arguments locate the fundamentals of their identity? 2) What rhetorical characteristics do fundamentalist arguments share across a

¹⁵² "Thomas P. Brady, Mississippi Judge: Author of Citizens Council's Segregationist Guide Dies Curbed His Views," *New York Times*, 1973.

¹⁵³ James C. Cobb, *The South and America Since World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 35.

¹⁵⁴ "Paul Revere of Ecology," *TIME Magazine*, February 2, 1970.

¹⁵⁵ Alan H. McGowan, "Remembering Barry Commoner," *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development* 55, no. 2 (March 2013): 17-17, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00139157.2013.765312>; "Fighting to Save the Earth from Man," *TIME Magazine*, February 2, 1970.

diversity of discourses grappling with significant cultural shifts? 3) How do political activists who use fundamentalist arguments rely on appeals to God or Nature to justify their call to restore order and strengthen identity?

Critical Lens: Genre, Identity, and Argument

As a rhetorical study, my critical perspective is shaped by theories of genre, argument, and identity. In his *Norms of Rhetorical Culture*, Thomas Farrell defines rhetoric as "the collaborative art of addressing and guiding decision and judgment—usually public judgment about matters that cannot be decided by force or expertise."¹⁵⁶ More specifically, I view rhetoric as a constitutive force in public discourse. As James Jasinski explains, a rhetorical approach appreciates the constitutive "ways specific discursive strategies and textual dynamics shape and reshape the contours of political concepts and ideas."¹⁵⁷

Genre

As a project that is attuned to the characteristic features of fundamentalist argument, this dissertation is guided by an understanding of genres as integral to understanding the ways in which rhetors and audiences formulate meaning. According to Carolyn Miller, genres are "typified social action associated with a recurrent situation."¹⁵⁸ A rhetorical understanding of a

¹⁵⁶ Thomas B. Farrell, *Norms of Rhetorical Culture* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1995), 1.

¹⁵⁷ James Jasinski, "Constitutive Framework for Rhetorical Historiography: Toward an Understanding of the Discursive (Re)Construction of 'Constitution' in The Federalist Papers," in *Doing Rhetorical History: Concepts and Cases*, ed. Kathleen J. Turner (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1998), 74.

¹⁵⁸ Carolyn R. Miller, "Genre as Social Action," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 70, no. 2 (1984): 153.

genre allows critics to appreciate the function and flexibility of form in responding to, organizing, and generating social action. Building on Miller's definition, Amy Devitt defines genres as "types of rhetorical actions that people perform in their everyday interactions with their worlds."¹⁵⁹ For Devitt, studying genre as a social action gives scholars insight on "how people use language to make their way in the world."¹⁶⁰ Both Miller's and Devitt's definitions of genre point to the rhetorical nature of genres and shift generic criticism from a classifying practice to a method of exploring the meaning-making process. In conceptualizing a genre of fundamentalist arguments, I read similarities in how the authors constructed their rhetorical situations wherein the fundamentals of their respective identities were perceived to be under threat. I also observed how in each case, the fundamentals of identity were seen to have been sanctioned by a transcendent authority, like God or Nature. Lastly, I observed similarities in how the authors constituted group identities (as defenders) and universal identities (as universalized abstractions of a cherished group).

As established above, genres respond to recurring rhetorical situations. According to Lloyd Bitzer, "rhetorical situations" are comprised of exigences, audiences, and constraints. An *exigence* is an "imperfection marked by urgency; it is a defect, an obstacle" that can be addressed and modified through rhetoric.¹⁶¹ In rhetorical situations, *audience* refers to the people who are "capable of being influenced by discourse and being mediators of change."¹⁶² Rhetorical

¹⁵⁹ Amy Devitt, *Writing Genres* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2004), 2.

¹⁶⁰ Devitt, 9.

¹⁶¹ Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 1, no. 1 (1968): 6.

¹⁶² Bitzer, 7–8.

situations also include *constraints*, which have the power to limit the resources available to the rhetor to respond and modify the exigence. Constraints include persons, events, attitudes, beliefs, traditions, relationships, interests, and anything that might impose a boundary on how the situation can be addressed.¹⁶³

The rhetorical construction of situations points to the fact that genres evolve over time and across texts responding to varied contexts. Historically, genre criticism has been concerned with the classification of speech acts and understanding the social truths expressed through texts. For example, the persistent mention of God in inaugural addresses points to complex relationship between religion and government in the United States. Classification is useful when seeking to understand a common structure, function, arguments, and language styles texts from disparate cases. Miller argues that “de facto” genres, or those already named and recognized in everyday language, are important to study because they “tell us something theoretically important about discourse.”¹⁶⁴ While this approach is helpful in understanding recognized genres of rhetoric, the classification model is limited if it fails to consider the audience. The traditional classification model is critic-centered – it relies on the discretion of the critic to make meaning out of genre. I concede that I am reading the arguments presented in this project as fundamentalist arguments. Yet, I also recognize that the ways in which fundamentalists define exigencies and compare responses to those exigencies across contexts is formative to genre analysis because of the assumption that genres are socially constructed by their users.

¹⁶³ Bitzer, 8.

¹⁶⁴ Miller, “Genre as Social Action,” 155.

Theories of genres recognize that genres are social actions that respond to recurring situations. Recurrent situations are recurring by virtue of their repeated conceptualization by rhetors and audiences. As Miller notes, “recurrence is an intersubjective phenomenon, a social occurrence, and cannot be understood on materialist terms.”¹⁶⁵ In other words, recurrent situations do not exist *a priori* rhetorical action. Rather it is through the process of interpretation and definition that both situations and the recurrence of situations are determined.¹⁶⁶ It is in the shared definition of the situation between the rhetor and the audience that meaning is made. In response to the socially constructed situation, genres can be understood as “cultural knowledge” in that they conceptually “frame and mediate” how users understand and live in various situations.¹⁶⁷ This understanding of genre as cultural knowledge explains how the authors presented in this study utilized a similar genre of argument to respond to similarly constructed situations. Devitt argues that people draw on the genres that are salient in a culture in response to socially constructed situations. She argues that:

Writers and speakers do not create genres in a generic void...people’s knowledge and experience of genres in the past shape their experience with any particular discourse and any particular genre at any particular time.¹⁶⁸

As a type of cultural knowledge, genres are important for critics to explore in order to understand how rhetors construct situations. Exploring genre is also important in understanding

¹⁶⁵ Miller, 156.

¹⁶⁶ Miller, 156.

¹⁶⁷ Anis S. Bawarshi and Mary Jo Reiff, *Genre: An Introduction to History, Theory, Research, and Pedagogy*. (West Lafayette, Indiana: Parlor Press, 2010), 4.

¹⁶⁸ Devitt, *Writing Genres*, 28.

how genres (as responses to rhetorically constructed situations) are shaped by the cultures from which they emerge.

Identity

Identity is integral to understanding the rhetoric of fundamentalist argument. Dana Anderson offers a rhetorical definition of identity as “the influencing of others through the articulation of our sense of who we are.”¹⁶⁹ Psychologists and sociologists often define identity as the way people understand who they are and how they fit in the society.¹⁷⁰ In contrast, Anderson understands identity as a strategy people leverage in the service of persuasion: “Like all symbolic action, the expression of identity is a strategy, a way of addressing a situation in order to transform it.”¹⁷¹ A rhetorical definition of identity underscores how identity serves as a kind of a “persuasive strategy” or a “means of moving audiences toward certain beliefs or actions.”¹⁷² By acknowledging the strategic possibilities of identity, a rhetorical conception of identity resists essentializing identity.¹⁷³ Instead, such a conception focuses on the rhetorical dimensions of identity, allowing critics to explore how identities are constituted in texts.

¹⁶⁹ Dana Anderson, *Identity's Strategy: Rhetorical Selves in Conversion* (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 2007), 4.

¹⁷⁰ José de Valverde, Laurent Sovet, and Todd Lubart, “Self-Construction and Creative ‘Life Design,’” in *The Creative Self*, ed. Maciej Karwowski and James C. Kaufman (San Diego: Academic Press, 2017), 99–115; Stephen Reicher and S. Alexander Haslam, “Towards a ‘Science of Movement’: Identity, Authority and Influence in the Production of Social Stability and Social Change,” *Journal of Social and Political Psychology* 1, no. 1 (December 16, 2013): 112-131–131.

¹⁷¹ Anderson, *Identity's Strategy*, 56.

¹⁷² Anderson, 4.

¹⁷³ Anderson, 4.

The rhetorical force of identity is especially important when considering how identity groups are formed and how they bear on deliberation and democracy. Amy Gutmann defines identity groups as “politically significant associations that attract people because of their mutual identifications.”¹⁷⁴ For a politically active group to form, its members must have some basis of shared identity. Mutual identifications take shape based on perceptions of race, gender, class, religion, nationality, and sexual orientation. Identity groups can also form around issues like shared values, shared concerns, and/or a common enemy. Mutual identification allows group members to support one another and find strength in numbers, particularly in the face of injustice and inequality. However, a strong commitment to one’s own identity group can complicate the deliberation processes. It has been observed that some members of fundamentalist groups withdraw from deliberative spaces, so excessively strong identification with a group may be an obstacle to deliberative communication.¹⁷⁵ The importance of identity in understanding fundamentalism has been noted by William Connolly specifically who writes that fundamentalism “is a general imperative to assert an absolute, singular ground of authority [and] to ground your own identity and allegiances in this unquestionable source.”¹⁷⁶ Since grounding identity in an authoritative source is integral to fundamentalist rhetoric, this study examines the ways in which fundamentalist arguments articulate and constitute a group’s identity and its fundamentals.

¹⁷⁴ Amy Gutmann, *Identity in Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 12.

¹⁷⁵ Martin E. Marty, “Fundamentals of Fundamentalism,” 20.

¹⁷⁶ Connolly, *The Ethos of Pluralization*, 105.

Argument

In the processing of exploring fundamentalist arguments about identity, existential threats, and sacred authority, this project examines three types of arguments: deductive arguments, inductive arguments, and narratives. Deductive arguments reason from general and universal principles towards necessary and unequivocal conclusions. As Irving Copi explains: “Although every argument involves the claim that its premises provides some grounds for the truth of its conclusion, only a deductive argument involves the claim that its premises provide conclusive grounds.”¹⁷⁷ In other words, if the premises of a deductive arguments are true, the conclusion, deductive logic presumes, is necessarily true. According to Howard Kahane, “the essential property of a valid deductive argument is that if its premises are true, then its conclusion cannot be false.”¹⁷⁸ Inductive arguments, on the other hand, reason towards probable generalizations or predictions through past experience or examples.¹⁷⁹ As Evan Heit puts it, we can think of inductive reasoning as “using the known to predict the unknown.”¹⁸⁰ The truth of the premises does not guarantee certainty in inductive arguments. According to Kahane, “a valid inductive argument provides good, but not conclusive grounds for the acceptance of its conclusion...”¹⁸¹ In other words, inductive arguments can only provide partial certainty of their

¹⁷⁷ Irving Copi, *Introduction to Logic*, 5th ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1978), 32.

¹⁷⁸ Howard Kahane, *Logic and Contemporary Rhetoric*, 2nd ed. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1976), 32.

¹⁷⁹ Evan Heit, “Properties of Inductive Reasoning,” *Psychonomic Bulletin and Review* 7, no. 4 (2000): 569.

¹⁸⁰ Heit, 569.

¹⁸¹ Kahane, *Logic and Contemporary Rhetoric*, 32.

conclusions. For Copi, “[a]n inductive argument... involves the claim, not that its premises give conclusive grounds for the truth of its conclusion, but only that they provide *some support for it* [emphasis added].”¹⁸²

For deductive and inductive arguments, I identify the claims, grounds and warrants of each argument.¹⁸³ A warrant “authorizes, sanctions, or justifies belief, attitude, or action.”¹⁸⁴ Stephen Toulmin’s model of argument is useful guide because it not only accounts for warrants, but also accounts for “warrant-establishing arguments” or arguments that establish the “assumption underlying the inference.”¹⁸⁵ Fundamentalist arguments can be understood as warrant-establishing because they are concerned with validating the underlying assumptions about authority, identity, and policy.

Finally, I analyze narratives as arguments in this project. Narratives function as arguments because they provide “good reasons” for action.¹⁸⁶ Good reasons are “those elements that provide warrants for accepting or adhering to the advice fostered by any form of communication that can be considered rhetorical.”¹⁸⁷ Fundamentalist argumentation works to

¹⁸² Copi, *Introduction to Logic*, 32.

¹⁸³ Stephen E. Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1958), 89–95.

¹⁸⁴ Walter Fisher, “Towards a Logic of Good Reasons,” *The Quarterly Journal of Speech* 64 (1978): 378.

¹⁸⁵ Wayne Brockriede and Douglass Ehninger, “Toulmin on Argument: An Interpretation and Application,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 46 (1960): 46.

¹⁸⁶ Walter Fisher, “Towards a Logic of Good Reasons,” 378.

¹⁸⁷ Walter Fisher, 378.

establish the warrants or “good reasons” for action. For Walter Fisher, the notion of good reasons challenges us into “rethinking all argumentative forms, so that they include all modes of communication, not just those with clear-cut inferential structures.”¹⁸⁸ A narrative approach to argument acknowledges the meaning-making process of arguments. For Michael Goldberg, narratives are how we make sense of facts and experience:

Neither ‘the facts’ nor our ‘experience’ come to us in discrete and disconnected packets which simply await the appropriate principle to be applied. Rather they stand in need of some narrative which can bind the facts of our experience together into a coherent pattern and is thus in virtue of that narrative that our abstracted rules, principles and notions gain their full intelligibility.¹⁸⁹

Fundamentalist argumentation is concerned with the morality of community. Given this concern, narratives are an appropriate object for this project because narratives represent “moral constructs.”¹⁹⁰ Hayden White affirms the moral impulse embedded in narrative: “where, in any account of reality narrativity is present, we can be sure that morality or a moral impulse is present too.”¹⁹¹ Additionally, a narrative approach to “public moral argument” is appropriate for this study because it acknowledges the “dualism of modernism.” For Fisher, the narrative paradigm “is a ground for resolving the dualism of modernism: fact-value, intellect-imagination,

¹⁸⁸ Walter Fisher, 378.

¹⁸⁹ Michael Goldberg, *Theology and Narrative: A Critical Introduction* (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001), 242.

¹⁹⁰ Walter R. Fisher, “Narration as the Human Communication Paradigm: The Case of Moral Public Argument,” *Communication Monographs* 51 (March 1984): 10.

¹⁹¹ Hayden White, “The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality,” *Critical Inquiry* 7, no. 1 (1980): 26.

reason-emotion...” because it accounts for the complexity of human reasoning.¹⁹² Scholars of fundamentalism routinely identify fundamentalism as a critique and backlash to modernist dualism. Taking a narrative approach is a useful lens for examining how fundamentalist arguments resist modernist dualisms.

In this project, I explore two types of narratives in fundamentalist discourse: the grand narratives that underlie each fundamentalist discourse and the myths told within each case. First, I explore how fundamentalist rhetoric casts adherents/believers in a grand narrative involving a cosmic battle between the forces of good and evil. According to Jean-Francois Lyotard, a grand narrative is an all-encompassing story.¹⁹³ The presence of grand narrative in fundamentalist discourse is readily apparent in religiously oriented fundamentalism, but it also exists in other forms as well. According to Fisher, “any ethic, whether social, political, legal or otherwise, involves narrative.”¹⁹⁴ Within this context, I examine the following dimensions of grand narratives: characters (heroes and villains), plot (the challenge or problem), values, and prescriptions for success.¹⁹⁵

The second type of narrative relevant to this project is “myth.” I explicate the specific myths visible in the fundamentalist discourse of each case. According to Leroy Dorsey, “myths

¹⁹² Fisher, “Narration as the Human Communication Paradigm: The Case of Moral Public Argument,” 10.

¹⁹³ Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), xxiii.

¹⁹⁴ Fisher, “Narration as the Human Communication Paradigm: The Case of Moral Public Argument,” 3.

¹⁹⁵ Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*.

can represent foundational narratives that frame a culture's identity."¹⁹⁶ A myth is a "persistent story of extraordinary historical experiences and protagonists, real or fictive."¹⁹⁷ Myths explain and reinforce a community's origin and "sense of self."¹⁹⁸ Moreover, myths work to "explain and justify a culture's sense of identity by providing that culture with a romanticized and compelling story of its origins and the extraordinary people and events involved, fictive or real."¹⁹⁹ Whether myths are fictional or not, they are believed to be "truthful accounts of what happened in the remote past" by target audiences.²⁰⁰ For storytellers, myths function as sacred authority in that "they are accepted on faith, they are taught to be believed, and they are cited as authority in answer to ignorance, doubt, or disbelief."²⁰¹ Given that myths justify identity and authorize action, I examine how myths function as warrants, or good reasons, within fundamentalist rhetoric. Attention to the functions of myth in arguments also gives us insight into how the rhetor reasons through an issue. For Calvin O. Schrag, "reason, as the performance of vision and insight, commemoration and foresight, occasions the recognition of a process of meaning-

¹⁹⁶ Leroy Dorsey, "Managing Women's Equality: Theodore Roosevelt, the Frontier Myth, and the Modern Woman," *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 16, no. 3 (2013): 430.

¹⁹⁷ Leroy Dorsey, *We Are All Americans, Pure and Simple: Theodore Roosevelt and the Myth of Americanism* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2007), 5.

¹⁹⁸ Dorsey, 5.

¹⁹⁹ Dorsey, "Managing Women's Equality: Theodore Roosevelt, the Frontier Myth, and the Modern Woman," 430.

²⁰⁰ William Bascom, "The Forms of Folklore: Prose Narratives," in *Sacred Narrative*, ed. Alan Dundes (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984), 9.

²⁰¹ Bascom, 9.

formation that gathers within it the logic of technical reason and the logos of myth.”²⁰² Following Schrag, this project explores the logos of myth in fundamentalist argumentation.

In addition to understanding the reasoning of fundamentalist rhetoric, I will also examine the rationality of fundamentalist argumentation. Fundamentalist argumentation, like most argumentation, often appeals to warrants that are based in the divine, universal, “natural,” and “timeless.” The deductive flow of fundamentalist argumentation appears rational. According to Chaim Perelman, the rational corresponds to “mathematical reason” and for some “a reflection of divine reason.”²⁰³ It is both individual and universal because it is “revealed within a single mind.”²⁰⁴ Arguments that appeal to the rational “owe nothing to experience or dialogue” since they are self-evident—depending on neither “education nor on the culture of a milieu or an epoch.”²⁰⁵ Since it is not mitigated by lived experience, the rational refers to an “adherence to an immutable divine standard, or to the spirit of the system, to logic and coherence, [and] to conformity with precedents to purposefulness.”²⁰⁶ For fundamentalist arguments, the goal is to maintain coherence of thought and action. This goal leads to an emphasis on producing rationally structured arguments. This project examines the relationship between this rational coherence and

²⁰² Calvin O. Schrag, *Radical Reflection and the Origin of the Human Sciences* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 1980), 126.

²⁰³ Chaim Perelman, “The Rational and The Reasonable,” *Philosophic Exchange* 10, no. 1 (1979): 29.

²⁰⁴ Perelman, 29.

²⁰⁵ Perelman, 29.

²⁰⁶ Perelman, 30.

fundamentalist arguments. In analyzing the arguments and narratives of each text featured in this project, I hope to elucidate the generic features of fundamentalist rhetoric.

Project Arguments & Précis

The purpose of this project is to understand fundamentalist argument as a rhetorical force in American public discourse. I argue that fundamentalist arguments are visible in a diversity of discourses. These discourses include those typically associated with American fundamentalism such as conservative and right-wing evangelical and white supremacist discourses. Yet I will also show the ways that fundamentalist arguments are also visible in progressive and left-leaning discourses, most notably for this project, environmentalist discourse. What unites these cases is their shared appeal to a transcendent and immutable authority, specifically God and Nature.

I argue that fundamentalist argument, at its core, is about defending what is believed to be the fundamentals of identity. The identities in question can be wide ranging, encompassing, at times, “universal” abstractions formulated by the rhetor. In this study, the universal identities at stake are American identity or humanity as a whole. Whatever the universal identity may be, fundamentalist argument identifies what is core, necessary, and foundational to that identity—what I call the *fundamentals of identity*. Those issuing fundamentalist arguments conclude that without the fundamentals of identity, what they conceive as a universal identity, would be profoundly compromised. In this study, anti-abortion evangelicals view a Christian worldview as fundamental to America as a just and free nation. White supremacists view whiteness as fundamental to America as an advanced nation. Environmentalists view harmony with ecological laws to be fundamental to human life on earth. In each of these cases, compromises to the fundamentals of identity are equal to the decline of the universal identity as we know it.

The fundamentals of identity are also authorized by an authoritative source. The nature of the authority depends on the perceived origins of the universal identity. For anti-abortion evangelicals, cherished American ideals that preserve the sanctity of life are derived from a God who communicates to humans through an inerrant Bible that preserves life at all costs. For white supremacists, the superiority of whiteness is bestowed from both God and Nature to warrant a challenge to civil rights for all. For environmentalists, Nature and its ecological laws are the authority to which the human species owes its existence.

In fundamentalist arguments, the universal identity is threatened when some of its members arguably sully the fundamentals of identity by supporting external contaminants. These threats, such logic suggests, require the group to defend against the contaminants and to fortify the health of the community. Fundamentalist argument constitutes a particular group as defenders of the fundamentals of the larger, more universal identity. Fundamentalist argument then calls on a specific group to act on behalf of the universal identity and the larger public good. This group is activated because they adhere to the same fundamentalist assumptions that motivates them to act. For example, anti-abortion evangelicals view their activism as a defense of broader American culture and ideals. Segregationists view their resistance to integration as a defense of American racial purity and cultural evolution. Similarly, environmentalists see their campaign against pollution as a defense of the human species and its survival on earth.

Fundamentalist argument is often preoccupied with the purity of the fundamentals of identity. In this study, the legalization of abortion, federally mandated integration of schools, and environmental pollution symbolize the disintegration in the fundamentals of identity. For the authors featured in this study, secular humanism, Blackness, and environmental pollution are construed as breaches to a Christian worldview, whiteness, and ecological laws, respectively. As

such, fundamentalist argument emphasizes the importance of purity to maintaining the fundamentals of identity. The ultimate calls to action in fundamentalist argument are to preserve, protect, and restore the integrity of the fundamentals. In protecting, preserving, and restoring the purity of the fundamentals, the group regains its alignment with the transcendent authoritative source.

This project also traces the role of religious commitments, symbols, metaphors, and idioms in fundamentalist argument. As direct heirs of the American fundamentalist tradition, evangelical anti-abortion rhetoric most clearly exhibits a religious commitment in its fundamentalist argument to align American culture with a Christian worldview. It is also the case that white supremacy rhetorics are steeped in religious and Christian sentiments that challenge the civil rights advancements for others. White supremacy has long presumed that God ordained Christian white people, particularly in the United States, as a distinct and superior race.²⁰⁷ This belief has been codified in a diversity of myths like Manifest Destiny and American Exceptionalism and is used to restrict the realization of full equality for all.²⁰⁸ Nature similarly has been construed as ordained by God even by political theorists like John Locke who at once talked about freedom as based in Nature and decreed by God.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ J. Russell Hawkins, *The Bible Told Them So: How Southern Evangelicals Fought to Preserve White Supremacy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 50.

²⁰⁸ See Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981); and Deborah L. Madsen, *American Exceptionalism* (Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), 41–43.

²⁰⁹ John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, ed. C.B. MacPherson (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 1980), 6.

Through this project, I hope to illuminate the rhetorical force of fundamentalist argument in constituting the basis of a universal identity, or the fundamentals of identity. Furthermore, this project looks at how perceived threats to the fundamentals can be used to motivate a particular group into defending the universal identity through actions like opposing abortion, sustaining segregation, and protecting the environment. In Chapter One, I seek to understand fundamentalist argument in the anti-abortion rhetoric of evangelical thinker, Francis Schaeffer. For Schaeffer, *Roe v. Wade* (1973) symbolized a nation that broke with its foundation—a Christian worldview. In breaking with that foundation, all the things that make America a great nation, such as the ideals of freedom, justice, and sanctity of life, were in danger of disappearing. Schaeffer utilized fundamentalist argument to make a case for how America’s greatness was rooted in a Christian worldview and how discarding that worldview led to destructive consequences. More specifically, Schaeffer encouraged his particular audience (his defenders)—politically-active evangelicals—to take on the mantle of defending the basis of culture (the fundamentals) cherished by all Americans, his universal identity. Schaeffer’s rhetoric demonstrates the flexibility of fundamentalist argument in addressing partisan issues in American politics, despite its origins in theological debates.

Chapter Two examines fundamentalist argument in white supremacist rhetoric, specifically that of Mississippi judge Thomas Brady. Brady, a staunch segregationist, viewed *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education* (1954) as a breach of America’s foundation—whiteness. Brady utilized fundamentalist argument to make a case for how whiteness was fundamental to American civilization. He uses evidence from cultural anthropology to show how God and Nature have equipped white people with the “divine impulse” for civilizational progress. For Brady, the end of segregation meant the end of white racial “purity” and therefore an end to what

drives American greatness. As in other examples of fundamentalist argumentation, Brady positions Southern segregationists as defenders of all Americans—his universal identity. In his case, the universal identity constitutes Americans invested in American purity and cultural achievement. My analysis reveals how Brady calls for several strategies to achieve fundamentalist objectives to preserve, protect, and restore whiteness as a foundation for American culture. These strategies include *indoctrination*, *separation*, *revelation*, *consolidation*, and *representation*.

In this journey to understand fundamentalist argument, the cases examined so far cohere in that they champion conservative causes. Chapter Three nuances this pattern by exploring fundamentalist argument in environmentalist discourse, specifically that of microbiologist and renowned ecologist, Barry Commoner. Barry Commoner viewed environmental pollution as a human assault on the earth and ecosphere, both of which he construes as foundational to human life on earth. He utilizes fundamentalist argument to make a case for how damage to the earth and ecosphere make the planet inhospitable for human life, culture, and economic activity. Commoner's particular audience—environmentalists—are tasked with the responsibility to defend all of humanity from self-destruction. Commoner's rhetoric illuminates the ways in which progressives can turn to more reactionary-based arguments. Furthermore, Commoner's argument demonstrates the durability of religious idioms in fundamentalist argument.

In the Conclusion, I explore what this analysis reveals about fundamentalist argument as a genre. Per Devitt's understanding of genre theory, I appraise the cultural, situational, generic

contexts that shape and are shaped by fundamentalist argument.²¹⁰ I also discuss the strategic nature of fundamentalist argument as a compelling rhetoric to attract adherents to a cause. Lastly, my Conclusion demonstrates the relevance of fundamentalist argument to contemporary public discourse by briefly featuring fundamentalist arguments that are visible in our current political debates.

²¹⁰ Devitt, *Writing Genres*, 25.

Chapter One: Fundamentalist Argumentation in Francis Schaeffer’s Anti-Abortion Rhetoric

“A republic once equally poised must either preserve its virtue or lose its liberty.”

– *John Witherspoon*

In 1973, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled in the landmark case, *Roe v. Wade*, that the U.S. Constitution protected the privacy rights of pregnant women to access abortions.¹ The decision was heavily criticized by members of the pro-life movement and galvanized new members to the cause. The pro-life movement and anti-abortion positions preexisted the *Roe v. Wade* decision. They were primarily spearheaded by Catholics who grounded their position in liberal and New Deal values.² Before the 1970s, evangelicals were minimally involved with pro-life or the anti-abortion movement. Many held a position they felt was a “middle ground” between two extremes—where one extreme sought to legalize full unrestricted access to on-demand abortions, and the other called for a total ban on abortions. In 1971, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), a leading evangelical organization, passed a resolution affirming the “sanctity of human life, including fetal life.” The same resolution also stated that abortion should be legal in instances of “rape, incest, clear evidence of severe fetal deformity, and carefully ascertained evidence of the likelihood of damage to the emotional, mental, and physical health of

¹ *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 113 (1973)

² Daniel K. Williams, “The Partisan Trajectory of the American Pro-Life Movement: How a Liberal Catholic Campaign Became a Conservative Evangelical Cause,” *Religions* 6 (2015): 453, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel6020451>.

the mother.”³ The SBC resolution represented evangelical support for the pro-life movement as measured, lukewarm, and even nuanced. Yet by the 1980s, evangelicals made anti-abortion their signature political cause.⁴ Growing evangelical support for the anti-abortion positions can be attributed to many reasons, ranging from shock at the Supreme Court decision on *Roe v. Wade* to the increasing scientific evidence of fetal brain activity and a heartbeat in early stages of pregnancy. Still, anti-Catholic sentiments prevented many evangelicals from fully aligning with the pro-life stance and movement. That is until Francis Schaeffer entered the rhetorical arena and provided evangelicals with the justifications for anti-abortion action.

Francis Schaeffer’s rhetoric was instrumental in making pro-life an evangelical cause because he gave evangelicals the arguments and language necessary to support anti-abortion action. Before the 1970s, much of pro-life discourse was embedded with liberal ideals about the value of human life. The sources of these ideals were Catholic principles and New Deal values. For Catholics, the New Deal was seen to be a “manifestation of the Catholic values of social responsibility.” They viewed the liberal principles of the New Deal to be “invocations of the Catholic natural law tradition.” As such, the Catholic campaign against the legalization of abortion was rooted in the idea that the “right to life” was a human right guaranteed by the liberal values espoused in the New Deal. For those reasons, Daniel Williams argues that the Catholic

³ Southern Baptist Convention, “Resolution on Abortion,” <https://www.sbc.net/>, accessed April 2, 2021, <https://www.sbc.net/resource-library/resolutions/resolution-on-abortion-2/>.

⁴ Williams, “The Partisan Trajectory of the American Pro-Life Movement: How a Liberal Catholic Campaign Became a Conservative Evangelical Cause.”

pro-life movement was a liberal cause that transformed into a conservative one when evangelicals joined the movement.⁵

Despite sharing the same objective as Catholic pro-lifers, Schaeffer's anti-abortion rhetoric differed from one based on liberal and Catholic values. Rather than drawing upon a tradition of human rights and social justice rhetoric, Schaeffer utilized fundamentalist arguments to defend the unborn. This is not because he is steeped in evangelicalism or because he participated in the fundamentalist debates of the 1930s, although they certainly bear upon his rhetoric. Nor is it because he defers to biblical authority as an evangelical pastor. Instead, I argue that it is in his characterization of the rhetorical situation, and his choices in responding to it, that makes his rhetoric fundamentalist. Schaeffer viewed the legalization of abortion as evidence of a nefarious and increasingly authoritarian state acquiescing to a culture bent on erasing the Christian character of American democracy. He reframed the problem of legalized abortion as a threat to a universalized American and Christian identity and thereby sounded the alarm against this threat and justified action against it.⁶

In this chapter, I argue that Schaeffer's writings against abortion provide insight into a distinct fundamentalist genre of argumentation. Following Devitt's genre framework, I account for the "cultural, situational, and generic" contexts that shape and are shaped by Schaeffer's rhetoric.⁷ I analyze the three books in which Schaeffer argues against abortion: *How Should We*

⁵ Williams, 453.

⁶ Williams, 464.

⁷ Devitt, *Writing Genres*, 25.

Then Live? (1973), *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* (1976), and *A Christian Manifesto* (1981). My analysis reveals how Schaeffer's argument for anti-abortion action bears the hallmarks of fundamentalist argumentation: he identified a Christian worldview as fundamental to American (and Western) universal identity; he equated threats to the Christian worldview as threats to Christian and Western identity.⁸ Lastly, Schaeffer argued for the purification of a Christian worldview from contaminants like secular humanism to preserve, protect, and restore the American identity (see also the Introduction). Ultimately, Schaeffer's argument called for the protection of the unborn by restoring America's Christian worldview. Schaeffer's argument exemplifies a fundamentalist argument because his call to action is a call to preserve, protect, and restore what *is fundamental to identity*. By analyzing Schaeffer's texts and the contexts from which they emerge and interact, we can see fundamentalist argumentation as both a genre and a compelling rhetorical force in American discourse.

In the following few pages, I introduce Francis Schaeffer, describe the ways in which he framed the legalization of abortion in America, and analyze how he utilizes a fundamentalist framework to construct his argument for action against legalized abortion. Whereas Catholic pro-life arguments involve questions about the start of human life and the morality of terminating the unborn, Schaeffer's arguments against abortion are centered on culture—the rise of cultures and the signs of their decline. Schaeffer certainly viewed abortion to be immoral; however, he argued that the legalization of abortion in the United States is a symptom of a nation that has lost its

⁸ *How Should We Then Live? The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture* (1976), *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* (1979) and *A Christian Manifesto* (1981), along with *Pollution and the Death of Man* (1970), are grouped together under “A Christian View of the West” in the five-volume anthology of Schaeffer's work.

moral foundation. Specifically, Schaeffer argued that abortion had been legalized because America replaced its Christian basis for Western society with a humanistic one. According to Schaeffer, humanism was a philosophical and cultural approach to life that centered the human and human experience as the ultimate source of meaning.⁹ In *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*, Schaeffer writes: “In our time, humanism has replaced Christianity as the consensus of the West. This has had many results, not the least of which is the change to people’s view of themselves and their attitudes toward human beings.”¹⁰ It is Schaeffer’s emphasis on the foundations of American culture and morality that makes his argument against abortion fundamentalist.

Who was Francis Schaeffer?

Francis August Schaeffer (1912-1984) was a Presbyterian preacher, missionary, and author of over twenty books. At his death, Schaeffer was described as possessing “something of a superstar status” among young evangelicals of the 1950s and 1960s.¹¹ John Walford, a professor at Wheaton College (Illinois), credits Schaeffer’s legacy on his ability to “give honest answers” to a “seeking generation,” thereby transforming them “from a lost generation to a generation of purpose.”¹² In addition to evangelicals, Schaeffer appealed to a broad range of questioners. *TIME* magazine dubbed Schaeffer’s work as a “mission to intellectuals” because his

⁹ Schaeffer, *How Should We Then Live? The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture*, 60.

¹⁰ Koop and Schaeffer, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*, 4.

¹¹ Bruce Buursma, “Francis A. Schaeffer, 72, Theologian,” *Chicago Tribune*, May 16, 1984.

¹² Buursma.

audiences included “existentialists and Catholics, Protestants, Jews, and left-wing atheists.”¹³ Evangelical theologians like Harold O. J. Brown and Christian scholars like Os Guinness cite Schaeffer as a source of guidance for their own work. Schaeffer also inspired religious political activists like Charles Colson and Jerry Falwell.¹⁴ Towards the end of his life, Schaeffer’s writing, lectures, and ministries centered on Christians taking political action to end abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia. This message was especially evident in *A Christian Manifesto* (1981), which sold almost 300,000 copies in the first year of its publication. *A Christian Manifesto* remained an important reference for Christian activists through the 1990s.¹⁵ Terry Randall, the founder of Operation Rescue, a controversial anti-abortion organization, credited Schaeffer with shaping many of his ideas on political activism: “You have to read Schaeffer’s *Christian Manifesto* if you want to understand Operation Rescue.”¹⁶

Schaeffer was an important figure in shaping Christian Right political thought. Commenting on the reach of Schaeffer’s influence, Michael Hamilton of *Christianity Today* writes: “Perhaps no intellectual save C. S. Lewis affected the thinking of evangelicals more profoundly; perhaps no leader of the period save Billy Graham left a deeper stamp on the movement as a whole.”¹⁷ John Whitehead, a student of Schaeffer and the president of The

¹³ “Mission to Intellectuals,” *TIME Magazine*, January 11, 1960.

¹⁴ Barry Hankins, *Francis Schaeffer and the Shaping of Evangelical America* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2008), 238–39.

¹⁵ “Guru of Fundamentalism,” *Newsweek*, November 1, 1982, 88.

¹⁶ Garry Wills, *Under God: Religion and American Politics* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2007), 324.

¹⁷ Hamilton, “The Dissatisfaction of Francis Schaeffer,” 22.

Rutherford Institution, a Christian Right legal organization, describes Schaeffer's writings as instrumental in the rise and shape of the Christian Right political movement:

[W]ithout the philosophical groundwork laid by these books and A Christian Manifesto...it is highly unlikely that people such as Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell, James Dobson, Tim LaHaye and others would have had the political influence they wield. This despite the fact that much of what comes out of the mouths of these people would alarm Francis Schaeffer.¹⁸

Schaeffer's Construction of the Situation

Schaeffer's early work provided answers on the existence of God, the relationship between Christianity and mainstream American culture, the truth of the Bible, and the connection between spirituality and the Church.¹⁹ However, several events prompted his work to turn political and explicitly against abortion. First, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of *Roe v. Wade* in 1973. The ruling granted privacy for women to make decisions about reproductive care. In conjunction with medical advice, women and pregnant persons had the sole right to make decisions regarding reproductive care through the second trimester of pregnancy.²⁰ *Roe v. Wade* represented a victory within a long struggle for reproductive rights. The pro-choice movement, at times a part of the Women's Liberation Movement, was rooted in liberal values such as equality, independence, and the value of the individual. The pro-choice movement also

¹⁸ John W. Whitehead, "Crazy for God: An Interview with Frank Schaeffer," *OldSpeak*, October 23, 2007, https://www.rutherford.org/publications_resources/oldspeak/crazy_for_god_an_interview_with_frank_schaeffer.

¹⁹ Francis Schaeffer, *The Complete Works of Francis Schaeffer*, 2nd ed., 5 vols. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1985).

²⁰ *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 113 (1973)

sought to guarantee for women the legal rights to have complete autonomy in making decisions about pregnancy.

Schaeffer found this ruling alarming and a symbol of America's weakening moral base. *In How Should We Then Live?* Schaeffer interpreted the ruling as the state capitulating to humanist values of "personal peace" and "affluence" at the expense of the moral and ethical. Schaeffer defined the value of personal peace as the desire to be "let alone, not be troubled by the troubles of other people...to live one's life with minimal possibilities of being personally disturbed."²¹ He also defined affluence as a desire to accumulate material wealth "and overwhelming and ever-increasing prosperity" where success was determined by "an ever-higher level of material abundance."²² Such values, Schaeffer argues, without a Christian base to regulate and give them meaning, can be destructive to humans and cultures: "The Christian consensus gave great freedoms without leading to chaos—because society, in general, functioned within the values given in the Bible, especially the unique value of human life."²³ For Schaeffer, when these values were replaced by humanist values, things went awry. Schaeffer saw the ruling as more evidence that America's moral standard was becoming more relativistic, less universal, and more prone to violence: "because the Christian consensus has been put aside, we are faced today with a flood of personal cruelty"²⁴ The fact that the Supreme Court's ruling protected a

²¹ Schaeffer, *How Should We Then Live? The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture*, 205.

²² Schaeffer, 205.

²³ Koop and Schaeffer, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*, 7.

²⁴ Koop and Schaeffer, 7.

pregnant person's privacy was deeply problematic for Schaeffer because it circumvented the ethics of the choices pregnant people might make. He saw *Roe v. Wade* as the "clearest illustration of arbitrary sociological law, whereby judges were operating on a situational basis with "no fixed ethics."²⁵

Schaeffer was also disturbed by the manner in which pro-choice activists secured legal abortions—the courts. He found this method for social and legal change to be undemocratic because it forced change upon the country by a group of unelected individuals: "Those taking the lead on the changes involving who should live and who should die increasingly rely on litigation (the courts) rather than legislation and the election process."²⁶ Schaeffer viewed the Supreme Court ruling on *Roe v. Wade* as a step towards dependence on the state to guarantee personal peace, therefore making the citizenry vulnerable to authoritarianism in the name of peace and order. In *How Should We Then Live?* Schaeffer writes:

An elite, an authoritarianism as such, will gradually force form on society so that it will not go on to chaos. And most people will accept it—from the desire for personal peace and affluence, from apathy, and from the yearning for order to assure the function of some political system, business, and the affairs of daily life."²⁷

Schaeffer's concern for abortion is rooted in the moral and cultural implications of legalizing the practice. In his books and lectures, Schaeffer warns his audience about the dangers of a culture that was based on humanism. The legalization of abortion symbolized the shift of

²⁵ Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto*, 48.

²⁶ Koop and Schaeffer, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*, 7.

²⁷ Schaeffer, *How Should We Then Live? The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture*, 245.

America's cultural base from a Christian one to a humanist one. In other words, the legalization of abortion signaled a larger and more consequential problem for Schaeffer—it signaled a compromise to the foundations of American culture. In the following sections of this chapter, I explore how Schaeffer utilizes fundamentalist argument themes to make a case for why the legalization of abortion threatens what is fundamental to American culture and democracy. To make this case, he spends much of his argument establishing what he views as central to American cultural identity—a Reformation-based Christian consensus.

Fundamentalist Argument Theme: A Christian Worldview is Fundamental to American Identity

The first premise of a fundamentalist argument is to identify the fundamentals of the universal group's identity. In *Strong Religion: The Rise of Fundamentalism Around the World*, the authors assert that one of the characteristics of fundamentalist "rhetoric and self-understanding is the assertion that their innovative programs are based on the authority of the sacred past, whether that past be represented in a privileged text or tradition or in the teaching of a charismatic or official leader."²⁸ In other words, fundamentalist rhetoric grounds the identity of a particular group (the defenders) in a sacred past, text, tradition, or teachings of a leader. These sources are thus the fundamentals of identity for that particular group. Rhetorically, such an assertion requires a rhetor to provide reasons for how the fundamentals of identity are legitimate sources of identity.

²⁸ Gabriel A. Almond, R. Scott Appleby, and Emmanuel Sivan, *Strong Religion: The Rise of Fundamentalism Around the World*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 92.

Schaeffer achieves this task by claiming that the Christian worldview is the basis of Western and American culture. He provides evidence for this claim by narrating Western history through the tension between Christianity and humanism. To support his argument, Schaeffer defined the measure of cultures as to how humanely they treat others: “eventually every nation of every age must be judged by this test: *how did it treat people*” (emphasis in original)?²⁹ Schaeffer asserted that a culture’s success or failure at treating people well is based on its ideological foundation or “presuppositions.” Schaeffer defined presuppositions as the basic ways in which an individual views reality or “the grid through which he sees the world.” Presuppositions represent the truth of reality, inform values, and provide the basis by which individuals conduct their lives.³⁰ Schaeffer argued that individuals are not only products of external, socio-economic, and cultural forces but are also driven by an inner world. It is this inner world that determines the survival of the individual and of cultures: “A culture or an individual with a weak base can stand only when the pressure on it is not too great.”³¹ In other words, the success of cultures is dependent on their *fundamental presuppositions*.

With the survival of cultures at stake, it becomes imperative for Schaeffer to examine the presuppositions that undergird the Western world. For Schaeffer, understanding the West’s current intellectual, cultural, and political moment requires tracing three lines of history: the “philosophic, scientific, and religious.” For Schaeffer, the philosophic is concerned with

²⁹ Koop and Schaeffer, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*, 1.

³⁰ Schaeffer, *How Should We Then Live? The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture*, 9.

³¹ Schaeffer, 23.

foundational questions about life and the scientific is concerned with the nature of the universe and its practical application to technology. As a field of study, science is driven by the philosophic world view of scientists. Religious views in turn shape the course of individual lives and their societies.³² According to Schaeffer, these three lines of history inform the presuppositions that shape individuals and societies.

Schaeffer's analysis uses intellectual history as a strategy to make his case that Western culture owes its strength and survival to Christian ideas. By taking on the task of intellectual historian, Schaeffer presents appeals to rationalism, a style of intellectualism that is privileged in traditional fundamentalist discourse, especially during the debates about the ineffability of the Bible. James Barr argues that while fundamentalism may seem to be a demonstration of "fideism," or an approach based on the "primacy of faith," it is, in actuality, a rationalist position:

Nowhere is the rationalism of fundamentalist argument more clear than in the doctrine of inspiration and the ineffability of the Bible itself. Though inspiration is mentioned in the Bible, nowhere does the Bible suggest that inspiration includes the package of implications taken as authoritative by fundamentalists...The fundamentalist construction is not derived from what scripture says but is derived *rationaly*: the fundamentalist as a rational man cannot see how the scripture can be inspired unless it is historically inerrant (emphasis in original).³³

Fundamentalist argumentation is rationalistic because of the deductive manner by which conclusions are made. We can observe this in how Schaeffer establishes a sufficient basis for culture. He operated on the principle that sufficient bases of cultures were those that provided

³² Schaeffer, 20.

³³ James Barr, "The Problem of Fundamentalism Today," in *Explorations in Theology: The Scope and Authority of the Bible*, ed. James Barr (SCM Press, 1980), 5–6.

people with an unyielding foundation for meaning and morals. With this principle in mind, Schaeffer compared examples from the Western world to show how a culture's foundations determined its survival or ruin.

A Christian Worldview as Fundamental to Cultural Survival

In *How Should We Then Live?*, Schaeffer traced the origins of Western civilization to Rome because Roman civilization is the “direct ancestor” of the modern Western world. He contended that Roman law and political ideas have shaped European countries and the entire Western world: “Wherever Western civilization has gone, it has been marked by the Romans.”³⁴ Yet, despite its persistent influence on modern Western culture, Schaeffer deemed Roman civilization a failure. “In many ways Rome was great,” Schaeffer concedes, “but it had not real answers to the basic problems that all humanity faces.” Its problem was an insufficient philosophical foundation. According to Schaeffer, Roman thought and culture, which were heavily influenced by Greek philosophy, attempted to build a society on the idea of the *polis*, or city-state. The city-state was “comprised of all those who were accepted as citizens. All values had meaning in reference to the *polis*.” Schaeffer referenced Socrates who was given a choice between death and exile from the city, “or that which gave him meaning.” He ultimately chose death over exile. Schaeffer interpreted Socrates' choice as his desire to not be separated from the city from which he derived his sense of meaning. With this anecdote, Schaeffer concluded that the *polis* was an insufficient foundation by which to build societies.³⁵ Schaeffer's analysis of the

³⁴ Schaeffer, *How Should We Then Live? The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture*, 20.

³⁵ Schaeffer, 21.

city-state indirectly critiqued and undermined state authority. His condemnation of the *polis* implies that national, regional, or any territorial source of meaning would be an insufficient basis for a society, and thus people should look elsewhere for the fundamentals of identity. By reasoning from a general principle (strong cultural foundations provide sufficient meaning and morals), he reasoned to the conclusion that Roman culture was insufficient, and thus should not be a model for successful culture.

The Roman example also served Schaeffer in his argument about the ineffectiveness of other cultural foundations. In addition to the insufficiency of the state, Schaeffer argued that Roman attempts to base society on their religion also failed. Roman gods proved to be too small, too finite, and too limited to provide a proper foundation for society. They were much too like humans to provide a stable footing for society: “the gods amplified humanity, not divinity.” In the absence of an infinite god, Roman gods failed to provide a robust enough base for “life, morals, values, and final decisions.” Since Romans could not rely on absolute and transcendent values, they turned to authoritarian leaders for constancy.³⁶ Schaeffer asserted that people sacrificed republican rule for law and order: “Self-interest became more significant than social interest...thus in desperation the people accepted authoritarian government.”³⁷ While it may have brought about some social and political stability, authoritarian rule was still incapable of providing a stable foundation for a culture. Schaeffer cited Julius Caesar’s grandnephew and heir, Octavian (later named Caesar Augustus), to show how authoritarian leaders eventually

³⁶ Schaeffer, 21.

³⁷ Schaeffer, 21.

became human gods in Rome. Schaeffer argued that because Augustus was able to maintain some measure of internal and external peace, “Romans of every class were ready to allow him total power in order to restore and assure the functioning of the political system, business, and the affairs of daily life.”³⁸ This relinquishment of control later developed into worship as Augustus assumed the title of *Pontifex Maximus* to the head of the state religion. He was worshipped as “the spirit of Rome and the genius of the emperor.”³⁹ Yet despite its best efforts to legislate morality and enact legal and welfare programs, the Roman Empire as a culture failed because “a human god is a poor foundation and Rome fell.”⁴⁰ For Schaeffer, Rome served as an example for the futility of finite sources of meaning like nations, governments, and leaders. It also implied the necessity of an absolute, immutable, and divinely mandated foundation for cultural success and survival. In other words, these were the criteria for a resilient foundation for culture. Most of all, Rome served as an example of how chaos, self-interest, and desperation can lead people to accept authoritarianism, all of which are ills Schaeffer sees in current American culture. In Schaeffer’s argument, a fallen Rome represented the unpleasant future America may witness if it does not change its course.

Schaeffer’s narration of Western history did not only show the failures of a non-Christian foundation; it also showcased the victories of a Christian worldview. Schaeffer contended that while Rome failed because of the weakness of its base, early Christians of the Roman Empire

³⁸ Schaeffer, 22.

³⁹ Virgil, *The Aeneid (29-19 BC)* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1964).

⁴⁰ Schaeffer, *How Should We Then Live? The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture*, 22.

survived Roman persecution because of the strength of their own. Schaeffer argued that due to the strength of their foundation—their faith—Christians eventually dominated the Roman Empire. Christianity was adopted as the official state religion of the Roman Empire in 381, spread throughout Europe, and thrived in the Byzantine Empire. Schaeffer credited its success to the “Christian worldview” which was based on a conception of God being both infinite and personal. The worldview also rested on God’s communication with humanity in the Old Testament, the teachings of Jesus Christ, and in the subsequent accumulation of the New Testament.⁴¹ From these sources, according to Schaeffer, Christians were equipped with an understanding of themselves and the universe. These sources also provided Christians with absolute and universal values by which to measure society. Schaeffer argued that values endowed in Scripture were superior to Roman legislation in promising human dignity because the individual is valued as reflection of God.⁴²

Schaeffer’s use of cultural comparison to validate the superiority of a Christian cultural foundation is an argumentative strategy common to Christian fundamentalist and evangelical rhetoric. George M. Marsden credits A. C. Dixon, one of the editors of *The Fundamentals*, with extending fundamentalist concerns from doctrinal to cultural issues.⁴³ In a 1920 speech delivered to the World Christian Fundamentals Association, Dixon connected the teaching of evolution in schools with threats to American civilization. Dixon argued that Darwin’s theories

⁴¹ Schaeffer, 22.

⁴² Schaeffer, 22.

⁴³ Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth Century Evangelicalism: 1870-1925*, 161.

of evolution and the idea of the survival of the fittest, along with German attempts to attack the Bible as a basis for civilization, were the ideological foundations that led to the carnage Germany wrought in World War I. In contrast, Dixon argued, American civilization was founded on the Bible and thus defended “the weak against the aggression of the strong.”⁴⁴ By attributing violence and bloodshed to Germany’s anti-Bible stance, Dixon made a case for the centrality of the Bible to America’s moral identity. In a similar vein, Schaeffer juxtaposed Christian values of human dignity against the poor treatment of people in Rome, where abortion was socially sanctioned. This rhetorical move demonstrated the consequences of a culture that did not hold divinely inspired absolute principles as fundamental to its base. Furthermore, claiming human dignity as a Christian civilizational value appealed to evangelicals and contributed to the aligning evangelical identity with an anti-abortion position.

As argued above, fundamentalist argumentation requires rhetors to establish the fundamentals of identity. Once the fundamentals are identified, fundamentalist argumentation is also concerned with preserving *the purity* of the fundamentals. A concern with the purity of the fundamentals goes back to the fundamentalist debates of the early 1900s, which revolved around identifying and affirming the doctrines viewed as fundamental and critical for the Christian faith.⁴⁵ Schaeffer continues and extends the concern for doctrinal purity in his argument about the fundamentals of culture and how the legalization of abortion is a violation of such fundamentals.

⁴⁴ Quoted in Norman F. Furniss, *The Fundamentalist Controversy, 1918-1931* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1954), 51.

⁴⁵ David O. Beale, *In Pursuit of Purity: American Fundamentalism Since 1850*.

In his narration of Western intellectual history, Schaeffer emphasized the purity of Christian doctrine as the key to cultural survival. He aligned the pure, Bible-based Christian doctrine with stable, free, and democratic societies. On the other hand, he aligned humanism with authoritarianism and cultural decline: “There is a death wish inherent in humanism—the impulsive drive to beat to death the base which made our freedoms and our culture possible.⁴⁶ In other words, Schaeffer believed that the closer a culture adhered to biblical teachings, the more likely it is to be free and democratic. Alternatively, the more a culture looks to human beings for substance and meaning, which Schaeffer calls “human distortions,” the less likely it is to create, prosper, and persevere. For Schaeffer, Western intellectual and cultural history is split between those who upheld the distortions to Christian doctrine and those who rejected them: “Soon European thought would be divided into two lines, both of which have come down and influenced our own day: first, the humanistic elements of the Renaissance and the second, Bible-based teaching of the Reformation.”⁴⁷ In fundamentalist argument terms, a tension exists in European history between those who wished to preserve the purity of a culture’s foundations (Christian doctrine) and those who allowed human interventions to pervert those foundations.

As in his analysis of the successes and failures of Western culture, Schaeffer deemed the Renaissance a cultural failure. While he acknowledged the Renaissance was a testament to human creativity and achievement, it still failed because it was based on humanism, and not the Bible. Schaeffer traces the first suggestions of humanism in the church to the Middle Ages when

⁴⁶ Schaeffer, *How Should We Then Live? The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture*, 226.

⁴⁷ Schaeffer, 48.

Thomas Aquinas, a Catholic theologian, argued that the fall of man did not corrupt the whole being. According to Aquinas, the will was corrupt, but the intellect was not. Consequently, people could rely on human intellect as well as Scripture for spiritual and earthly guidance. In other words, human understanding was not inherently corrupted and could be a reliable source of knowledge and wisdom. Aquinas' position lent credence to non-Christian philosophers, such as those of ancient Greece, which Schaeffer argued led to theological "mixing" with revelation. Eventually, human philosophy and thought became increasingly separate and privileged over divine revelation, especially among intellectuals.⁴⁸ Schaeffer's concern with theological mixing not only points to the importance of purity in fundamentalist argumentation but is the logical extension of a fundamentalist framework. If the fundamentals of an identity can be corruptible, there is an imperative to preserving its purity. For Schaeffer, humanism corrupted the purity of a Christian cultural foundation. However, because it was an inherently inadequate foundation for culture, as it failed Rome and Renaissance Europe, it would eventually fail modern-day America.

Schaeffer's narration of the origins of humanism was more than an intellectual exercise. It shows the moral poverty of modern humanism. In Schaeffer analysis of Western intellectual history, he juxtaposed the failings of the Renaissance with the successes of Reformation to represent the antagonism between Christianity and humanism. This example also served to demonstrate the steadfastness of a Christian worldview. The problem with the Renaissance humanism, according to Schaeffer, was that it depended too heavily on limited human faculties: "...Renaissance humanism steadily evolved toward modern humanism—a value system rooted

⁴⁸ Schaeffer, 52.

in the belief that man is his own measure, that man is autonomous, totally independent.”⁴⁹ By relying on human experience for meaning, Schaeffer argued that there would be no absolute universals by which to measure or judge human actions. He concluded it impossible to be certain about what is morally right or wrong without universal and immutable principles: “If one starts from individual acts rather than an absolute, what gives any real certainty concerning what is right and what is wrong about individual action?”⁵⁰ In other words, by replacing the centrality of God and the Bible with human experience and potential, the human meaning-making process loses its anchor and reference point.

The discussion about certainty about what is right and wrong is especially relevant to the abortion debate. The ethics of legalizing abortion is the crux of much of the controversy. On one hand, pro-choice activists argue that that it is unethical to subject women to dangerous and unwanted pregnancies. On the other hand, pro-life activists argue that is unethical to terminate an unborn life. For evangelicals who had not yet adopted a strong anti-abortion position, reminding them that their moral reference point was the Bible is important to the process of adopting the pro-life position as their own. For the non-evangelical reader, claiming that American culture requires absolute and transcendent values to survive as a culture can be compelling to anyone interested in the integrity of American culture and offsetting its moral deterioration.

Following Schaeffer’s logic, if grounding one’s culture and identity in humanism is a formula for cultural decline, then grounding one’s culture and identity in absolute and immutable

⁴⁹ Schaeffer, 60.

⁵⁰ Schaeffer, 55.

principles is the formula for cultural triumph. To advance this argument, Schaeffer contrasted the intellectual “poverty” of the Renaissance with the Reformation’s “richness.” The Reformation refers to the sixteenth- century intellectual and religious movement emerging out of northern Europe. The movement challenged the primacy of the Catholic Church and established Protestantism. Schaeffer called the Reformation a “reaction against distortions” that had taken hold of the Catholic church.⁵¹ According to Schaeffer, John Wycliffe (1320 -1384), one of the forerunners of the Reformation, translated the Bible into English and taught his followers that the Bible was the supreme authority, not the Church. Another influence on the Reformation, John Huss of Bohemia (current day Czech Republic), objected to the church possessing equal or greater authority to the Bible. Instead, Huss called for a return to early Church teachings about the Bible where it was the “only source of final authority and that salvation comes only through Christ and his work.”⁵² As we can see here, both Wycliffe and Huss emphasize the *fundamentality* of the Bible and a Christian worldview to both moral salvation and temporal authority. Biblical authority precedes that of the church, and by extension, the state. In deferring authority to the Bible instead of to human whim, Schaeffer argued that the Reformers laid the foundations for the West’s most distinguished ethical ideals such as the rule of law and systems of checks and balances.⁵³ For Schaeffer, the ideals based in and developed in the Reformation

⁵¹ Schaeffer, 79.

⁵² Schaeffer, 80.

⁵³ Schaeffer, 110–12.

provided the stability and continuity of culture that spread to the New World and persists to this day.

A Christian Worldview as Fundamental to American Cultural Ideals

The notion that Christian ideals produced superior cultures is a trope that has existed in early fundamentalist Christian rhetoric, most notably that of William Jennings Bryan. In an address to the Winona Bible Conference in 1911 titled, “The Old Time Religion,” Bryan compared countries founded on a Christian tradition with “countries where other religions and philosophies prevail” and concluded that those countries have made “no progress in 1500 to 2000 years” except “where they have borrowed from Christianity.” He also asserted that “Christian civilization is the greatest the world has ever known because it rests on the conception of life that makes life one unending progress toward higher things, with no limit to human advancement or development.”⁵⁴ For both Bryan and Schaeffer, a Christian worldview is not only the foundation for Western and American culture, but also the basis of the only *valid* culture. In their schema of cultures, there is no room for alternatives. The contest for cultural survival is a zero-sum game that provides little space for diversity, multiculturalism, or pluralism. In *Ethos of Pluralization*, William Connolly defined one of the characteristics of fundamentalism as the desire for certainty when one’s doctrine or identity is stressed or disturbed.⁵⁵ In other words, when the underpinnings of identity are threatened, pluralism is less

⁵⁴ William Jennings Bryan, “The Old Time Religion,” in *Winona Echoes: Containing Addresses Delivered at the Seventeenth Annual Bible Conference, Winona Lake, Indiana, August 1911* (Winona Lake, IN, 1911), 50–63.

⁵⁵ Connolly, *The Ethos of Pluralization*, 106.

likely to be tolerated. One of the strategies for stabilizing identity is to name the stressor as deviant or immoral: “Everything that can be read as a sign of variety in the world is translated into the vocabulary of permissiveness, casual lifestyles, instrumentalism, willfulness, sinfulness, irresponsibility, predatory behavior, contrariness, and unnaturalness because it deviates from the conceptions of a god and nature.”⁵⁶ I would also add that when it comes to cultures, stressors to identity can translate diversity, multiculturalism, and pluralism into contests for superiority.

For a fundamentalist argument, a claim to superiority is more than psychologically gratifying. It also highlights the value of a universal identity’s distinguishing qualities and thus strengthens the impulse for purity. For Schaeffer, one of the greatest testaments to Western culture is the capacity for freedom without it descending into disorder. Schaeffer argued a Reformation-based Christian worldview enabled the West to thrive because it promoted the basis for progress and cultural development—freedom. Schaeffer argued that people living within a Reformation-based Christian framework were able to freely explore and innovate without fear of overstepping boundaries or harming others: “What the Reformation’s return to biblical teaching gave society was the opportunity for tremendous freedom, but without chaos.” According to Schaeffer, the idea of “freedom without chaos” is possible only when there are clearly defined rules—rules that are absolute, immutable, and divinely inspired. Unlike the unrestrained freedoms that lead to social pandemonium, biblically-based freedom provides a clear and absolute framework within which people could operate. In basing a society on a set of absolutes, people could be free to live their lives peacefully with the knowledge that there was some degree

⁵⁶ Connolly, 108.

of social stability. As Schaeffer argued, “an individual had freedom because there was a consensus based upon the absolutes given in the Bible, and therefore real values within which to have freedom, without these freedoms leading to chaos.”⁵⁷ Schaeffer conceptualized freedom not as a license to pursue personal peace and pleasure but as freedom from arbitrary human authority, freedom of worship, and “freedom of conscience” in relationship to the state.⁵⁸

The idea that true freedom is freedom from arbitrary human authority is an important one in Schaeffer’s defense of the unborn. Schaeffer accordingly saw *Roe v. Wade* as human authority deciding on something it had no right to legislate. In short, humanistic thought had corrupted and destroyed the purity of Christian consensus. Schaeffer argues that “[i]n our era, sociologically, man destroyed the base which gave him the possibility of freedom without chaos.”⁵⁹ Instead of reading *Roe v. Wade* as expanding the freedom of choice, Schaeffer read it as the cession of freedom to the state. In doing so, the Reformation-based conceptions of freedom upon which this nation was built were being replaced with an authoritarian elite. For Schaeffer capitulating to an elite with no divinely-inspired absolutes was dangerous because “an elite will offer us arbitrary absolutes, and who will stand in its way?”⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Schaeffer, *How Should We Then Live? The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture*, 105.

⁵⁸ Schaeffer, 106.

⁵⁹ Schaeffer, 226.

⁶⁰ Schaeffer, 226–27.

A Christian Worldview as Fundamental to Valuing the Sanctity of Life

The last foundation of culture Schaeffer attributes to Christianity is the sanctity of life. After Schaeffer establishes a Christian worldview as fundamental to the success of Western culture, he attributes the value of human life to Christianity. In an effort to motivate evangelicals to take a stronger stance against the humanism that enabled abortion, Schaeffer claimed the pro-life position as a biblical one. This move is a strategic one because it aligns the pro-life position with evangelical identity. According to Schaeffer, the sanctity of human life has been a central Western ideal for centuries. While he cites the Hippocratic Oath as an example of this ideal, he does not credit ancient Greek thought or culture for its development. Instead, Schaeffer claims that the Judeo-Christian worldview cultivated this value to what it is today: “the fully developed concept of the sanctity of human life that we have known did not come from Greek thought and culture, but from the Judeo-Christian world-view which dominated the West for centuries.”⁶¹ Moreover, he argues that the value of individual life is one endorsed in the Bible: “Knowing biblical values, [Western] people viewed human life as unique – to be protected and lived—because each individual is created in the image of God.”⁶² In contrast, Schaeffer compares the Christian value for life with humanistically-driven cultures like ancient Rome, where both abortion and infanticide were practiced. Once again, Schaeffer juxtaposes the absolute, immutable, and life-affirming values of Christian-based Western culture with Roman culture, a humanistically-driven culture that accepted the murder of innocents. In centralizing the human

⁶¹ Koop and Schaeffer, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*, 3.

⁶² Koop and Schaeffer, 4.

being, Schaeffer reasoned, humanism eventually led to the meaninglessness of human experience. In contrast, a Christian worldview that subjected humans to God's authority elevated the value of human life because humans were created in the image of God and thus imbued with innate dignity.⁶³

Fundamentalist Argument Theme: America's Christian Worldview Is Under Threat

Once the fundamentals of identity are established, the second premise of a fundamentalist argument is to identify approaching existential threats. Gabriel Almond, A. Scott Appleby, and Emmanuel Sivan called this characteristic of fundamentalism a type of "reactivity" to enemies. The enemy can be an abstract ideological force, like secularism, modernization, or humanism. Or it can be more tangible. In religious fundamentalisms, threats are feared because they are seen to result in a loss of adherents or "absorption into a pluralistic, areligious milieu."⁶⁴ Therefore, the fundamentals of identity are seen to require defenders. The idea that a fundamentalist is a "defender" harkens back to the very first use of the term by Curtis Lee Laws, who referred to fundamentalists as those "who still cling to the great fundamentals and who mean to do battle royal."⁶⁵ In volume one of *The Fundamentals*, James Orr explained the motivation behind the publication. He and his co-authors were responding to attacks on biblical inerrancy, a doctrine fundamental to evangelical Christianity. Orr wrote, "From the side of criticism, science,

⁶³ Schaeffer, *How Should We Then Live? The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture*, 86.

⁶⁴ Almond, Appleby, and Sivan, *Strong Religion: The Rise of Fundamentalism Around the World.*, 99.

⁶⁵ Laws, "Convention Side Lights," 834.

mythology, history, and comparative religion, an assault is thus made on the article long so dear to the hearts of Christians and rightly deemed by them so vital to their faith.”⁶⁶

Schaeffer utilized fundamentalist argumentation as he identified the various threats to the unborn. Schaeffer argued that biblically-based Western culture had historically respected the sanctity of life and rejected the practice of abortion. However, Schaeffer laments, “. . .in one short generation we have moved from a generally high view of life to a view low one.”⁶⁷ For Schaeffer, a diminished respect for the sanctity of life indicates that America’s Christian worldview was not only threatened but has been supplanted by a humanistic worldview. “Why has our society changed?” Schaeffer asked in *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* In answering his own question, he argued that “the consensus of our society no longer rests on a Judeo-Christian base, but a humanistic one.”⁶⁸ By replacing a Christian worldview with a human-centered ethic, Schaeffer concluded that the foundations of American culture and the lives of the unborn were threatened.

A primary concern in fundamentalist rhetoric is identifying and naming the precise sources of threat. This trope can be traced to the very first Fundamentalists. For Canon Dyson Hague, one of the authors of *The Fundamentals*, the assault on the inerrancy of the Bible came from German liberal theologians, many of whom he identified by name.⁶⁹ Clearly naming the

⁶⁶ Orr, “Holy Scripture and Modern Negations,” 8.

⁶⁷ Koop and Schaeffer, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*, 4.

⁶⁸ Koop and Schaeffer, 4.

⁶⁹ Canon Dyson Hague, “The History of Higher Criticism,” in *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*, vol. 1 (Chicago, IL: Testimony Publishing Company, 1910), 90.

threat helps prime the reader to be wary of the identified threat and their arguments. Clearly identifying the threat also inoculates the reader to the threat's arguments by preemptively discrediting the merits of their premises. Schaeffer employs this strategy when identifying the sources propagating humanism and the consequences of their advocacy: "The forces of humanism have scoffed at Christian morality and ethics as well as the Christian view of man. These theories of so-called liberation from biblical absolutes are bearing their fruit."⁷⁰ The first sources of threat are intellectual elites, especially those who privilege materialist epistemologies: "Having rejected God, humanistic scientists, philosophers, and professors began to teach that only what can be mathematically measured is real and that all reality is like a machine. Man is only one part of the larger cosmic machine."⁷¹ Paradoxically, Schaeffer argues, privileging the human over the divine has led to the elimination of the uniqueness of human beings. He writes: "With the humanist world-view everything begins with only matter; whatever had developed has developed only within matter, a reordering of matter by chance."⁷² For Schaeffer, the logical conclusion of humanism, in other words, is "the present devaluation of human life."⁷³ Humanistic intellectuals do not only influence social norms about abortion. For Schaeffer, their influence dismantles the absolutes upon which a just society is built: "What is left, therefore, is "relative" truth, and with relative truth, relative morality. Given time, even the 'certainties' of our ethical systems can be undone—the bills of rights, the charters of freedom, the principles of

⁷⁰ Koop and Schaeffer, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*, 13.

⁷¹ Koop and Schaeffer, 4.

⁷² Koop and Schaeffer, 83.

⁷³ Koop and Schaeffer, 81.

justice, everything.”⁷⁴ In short, the relativism advocated by the intellectual elites will be society’s undoing.

Schaeffer’s distrust and pessimism about intellectuals and the values they espouse demonstrate a recurring theme of anti-intellectualism in fundamentalist rhetoric. Nathan O. Hatch, in *The Democratization of American Christianity*, attributes a distrust to cultural and intellectual elites to how evangelical Christianity developed in the United States, especially during the period between 1780 and 1830. According to Hatch, when American colonists were calling for the democratization of government, they extended this sentiment to religion as well. There was an increased trust in “common” laypeople and a call for the “unlearned” to have a larger role in religious life. Hatch observed that leaders of this movement “demanded, in light of the American and French revolutions, a new dispensation free from the trammels of history, a new kind of church based on democratic principles, a new form of biblical authority calling for common people to interpret the New Testament for themselves.”⁷⁵ In addition to a desire for increased participation in religious life, early fundamentalist publications expressed deep distrust in religious intellectuals and leadership. *The Fundamentals* was organized, funded, and published by two evangelical businessmen, not pastors or theologians.⁷⁶ The title page of every volume of *The Fundamentals* states that the publications are “compliments of two Christian Laymen.”

⁷⁴ Koop and Schaeffer, 93.

⁷⁵ Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1989), 68–69.

⁷⁶ Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth Century Evangelicalism: 1870-1925*, 118.

Furthermore, one-third of the articles in *The Fundamentals* defended the inerrancy of Scripture by attacking higher criticism, an academic methodology associated with liberal theologians.⁷⁷

In addition to intellectual elites, the second group threatening the fundamentals of American culture is evangelical leadership. When it came to the struggle against abortion, Schaeffer chastised evangelical leaders for their tepid condemnation of abortion: “Many of the evangelical leadership either were totally silent about abortion or qualified what they did say about abortion to such an extent that they really said nothing, or less than nothing, as far as the battle for human life was concerned.”⁷⁸ Schaeffer claimed that humanists infiltrated all aspects of society, including the church: “Much of the church no longer hold that the Bible is God’s Word in all it teaches. It simply blends with current thought-forms rather than being the “salt” that judges and preserves the life of its culture.”⁷⁹ Chastising co-religionists and directing criticism at the in-group is another hallmark feature of fundamentalist rhetoric. Richard T. Antoun observed how fundamentalists often define themselves by what they stand against and in many cases, have both external and internal enemies. The external enemy may be secular humanists, communists, or nonbelievers, but the internal enemy is often seen as more insidious. In the evangelical and fundamentalist Christian tradition, Antoun notes that the “internal and more dangerous enemies are nonfundamentalist Christians who claim to be followers of Jesus but accept the norms laid down by the state and other nonreligious institutions in their daily lives and cavort with members

⁷⁷ Marsden, 119.

⁷⁸ Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto*, 67.

⁷⁹ Koop and Schaeffer, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*, 4.

of the secular society.”⁸⁰ Similarly, the authors of *The Fundamentals* wrote to shore up the beliefs of evangelicals, not necessarily to proselytize or spread their message to non-Christians. Three million volumes were distributed, free of charge, to pastors, missionaries, theology teachers and scholars, and others interested in evangelism.⁸¹ Furthermore, their quarrel was not with non-believers. Instead, their criticisms were aimed at liberal church leaders who questioned the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. Like early fundamentalist Christians who were willing to do battle to defend the fundamentals of faith, Schaeffer draws on this tradition of chastising the in-group to motivate other Christians to take a stronger stance in defending the unborn.

The third and perhaps most consequential threat to the sanctity of life, according to Schaeffer, is a humanist-based legal system. He writes: “Instead of a legal system that is based on biblical law that protects the sanctity and dignity of life, “we now live under arbitrary, or sociological, law.”⁸² Sociological law, according to Schaeffer, is one that is based on the will of the people, rather than on absolute truths, where the “law is only what most of the people think at that moment of history, and there is no higher law.”⁸³ Schaeffer cited US Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. to illustrate the humanist sentiment on truth: “Truth is the majority vote of that nation that could lick all others.”⁸⁴ In other words, truth is relative, situational,

⁸⁰ Richard T. Antoun, *Understanding Fundamentalism: Christian, Islamic, and Jewish Movements* (Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira, 2001), 56.

⁸¹ Dixon, Meyer, and Torrey, *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*, 4, vol. 12.

⁸² Koop and Schaeffer, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*, 6.

⁸³ Koop and Schaeffer, 6.

⁸⁴ Quoted in Koop and Schaeffer, 6.

subject to revision, and reflects the values of the majority. While a humanist process may seem to be a democratic method of legislation, Schaeffer asserted the law *actually* reflects the will of a few activist judges: “More accurately, the law becomes what a few people in some branch of government think will promote the present sociological and economic good.”⁸⁵ Schaeffer blames pro-choice activists for exploiting the legal system in anti-democratic ways to serve their own agendas: “Those who want changes to who should live and die are increasingly dependent on the courts to decide on those issues, rather than legislation or election. They do this because they can often accomplish through the courts changes, they could not achieve by the will of the majority.”⁸⁶ Once again, we see Schaeffer’s mistrust of the elites in authority, but this time it is aimed at legal authority. His assertion reflects the idea that those in power hold substantially different values from the majority of Americans because “the will and moral judgements of the majority are now influenced or even overruled by the opinions of a small group of men and women.”⁸⁷

Fundamentalist Argument Theme: Threats to Christian Worldview are Existential

The third premise of fundamentalist argumentation is that threats to the fundamentals of identity are existential. While identifying threats to the fundamentals may motivate a group towards action, it is when the fear of existential annihilation is activated that action is most likely. To sound the alarm about the existential crisis facing America, Schaeffer warns his

⁸⁵ Koop and Schaeffer, 6.

⁸⁶ Koop and Schaeffer, 7.

⁸⁷ Koop and Schaeffer, 7.

readers of impending doom. Schaeffer explicates the life-threatening consequences of replacing a Christian worldview with humanist-based sociological law. In *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*, he writes: “The shift to sociological law can affect everything in life, including who should live and who should die.”⁸⁸ Schaeffer identifies “the shift to sociological law” as the moment when decisions about life, including of the unborn, were in question. In a chapter titled “The Abortion of the Human Race,” Schaeffer describes current socially accepted cruelties that occur because of a weakened Christian consensus in the United States. These cruelties include an increase in personal cruelty between people, the abuse of genetic knowledge, and the rise of child abuse. For Schaeffer, the practice of abortion is the clearest example of the changing attitudes towards the sanctity of life: “Of all the subjects relating to the erosion of the sanctity of human life, abortion is the keystone.”⁸⁹ Schaeffer argued the shift from biblical law to sociological law led to a general disregard for life, a situation that is annihilating the human race: “Abortion-on-demand is the law of the land, and with the erosion of society’s belief in the sanctity of human life, there has followed the killing of more than 1.6 million unborn babies a year.”⁹⁰

Schaeffer’s warnings about abortion extend the existential threats of legalized abortion to not only the unborn but to children after they are born as well. In *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*, Schaeffer responded to the argument that legalized abortions would reduce

⁸⁸ Koop and Schaeffer, 7.

⁸⁹ Koop and Schaeffer, 13.

⁹⁰ Koop and Schaeffer, 15.

instances of child abuse because they would decrease the number of unwanted children.

Schaeffer responded to this claim by arguing that the legalization of abortion has led to the opposite:

[S]ince 1970 it is conservatively estimated in the United States that there are probably over ten million fewer children who would now be between the ages of one and seven. Since these ten million were ‘unwanted’ and supposedly would have been prime targets for child abuse, it would seem reasonable to look for a sharp drop in child abuse during the same period. But in fact, since the legalization of abortion-on-demand, child abuse has grown remarkably, and it is not due to just more efficient reporting.”⁹¹

In addition to citing the increase, rather than decrease, of child abuse cases, Schaeffer pointed to the “educational impact” of abortion to show how legalizing the practice leads to the abuse of children after they are born. He cited the West German Federal Constitutional Court’s (WFGC) 1975 decision banning abortion-on-demand during the first twelve weeks of pregnancy. The court reasoned that legalizing abortion in the first trimester of pregnancy would lead to the acceptance of abortions later in pregnancy. Accepting late-term abortions would eventually lead to the acceptance of harm to children after they are born.⁹² Schaeffer agreed with the WFGC Court’s reasoning: “It is not logical, after all, that if one can legally kill a child a few months before birth, that one should not feel too bad about roughing him up a bit (without killing him) after he is born?”⁹³ Through this argument, Schaeffer extends the life-threatening implications of

⁹¹ Koop and Schaeffer, 15.

⁹² Harold O. Brown, “Abortion: Rights or Technicalities? A Comparison of Roe v. Wade with the Abortion Decision of the German Federal Constitutional Court,” *Human Life Review* 1, no. 3 (1975): 73–74.

⁹³ Koop and Schaeffer, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*, 15.

legalizing abortion beyond pregnancy. By accepting the deaths of millions of fetuses, Schaeffer reasons, legalized abortion would lead to the abuse of children. This argument may potentially appeal to readers who may question the full humanhood of fetuses. If the implications of abortion extend to children after they are born, a group whose full humanity is uncontroversial, then those who are hesitant to take a pro-life stance may be more likely to support action against legalized abortion.

*Fundamentalist Argument Theme: Preserve, Protect, and Restore America's Christian
Worldview*

The third feature of fundamentalist argument is the call to preserve, protect, and restore the fundamentals of identity from existential threats. For Schaeffer, saving the unborn, and thus American culture from decline, requires preserving, protecting, and restoring America's Christian consensus. Schaeffer articulates a plan for restoring America's Christian base in the form of a manifesto. Schaeffer's third and final book in his anti-abortion trilogy is *A Christian Manifesto* (1981), a tome some anti-abortion activists credit as the inspiration for their cause. *A Christian Manifesto* reiterates many of the arguments Schaeffer presented in *How Should We Then Live?* and *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*, and it also charts specific actions evangelicals should pursue to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. Schaeffer explicitly informs the reader of his intention in writing in this genre: "The book is written not as a theoretical exercise but as a *manifesto* (emphasis in original)."⁹⁴ On the page following the preface and immediately before the title page, Schaeffer makes clear which manifestos provoked his own: *The Communist Manifesto*

⁹⁴ Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto*, 11.

(1848); *Humanist Manifesto I* (1933); and *Humanist Manifesto II* (1973). Referencing such iconic manifestos signals to his readers the political and intellectual projects to which he responds. Furthermore, Schaeffer's choice to frame his last book on abortion as a manifesto reveals how he believes the reader should relate to his message. Just like *The Communist* and the *Humanist* manifestos are founding documents for influential political movements, it is evident Schaeffer saw *A Christian Manifesto* as playing a similar role for evangelical political action.

Given that Schaeffer has written a manifesto, how do we identify the genre and what are its rhetorical features? In her study of manifestos as a genre, Janet Lyon identifies the following recurring features of manifestos: (1) truth telling; (2) rage; (3) a highly selective history of oppression; (4) a list of grievances (4) epigrammatic rhetoric; (5) prophecy or mythography.⁹⁵ *A Christian Manifesto* includes all these features. It repackages Schaeffer's previous arguments on why Christianity is the basis of Western and American culture and how the corruption of this base has brought death and destruction to both unborn children and American culture as a whole. However, the language is clearer. The sentences are shorter and more cutting in their criticisms. The overall tone is less philosophical and more stirring. Many of Schaeffer's readers, especially evangelical college students and intellectuals, were likely familiar with *The Communist Manifesto* and the *Humanist Manifestos*. Schaeffer recognized how those documents organized and energized their readers into action. By drawing on the genre of manifestos, Schaeffer invites his reader to take his own message as a blueprint for protecting the unborn and restoring America

⁹⁵ Janet Lyon, *Manifestoes: Provocations of the Modern* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1999), 14–16.

to its Christian base. Furthermore, Schaeffer's use of a manifesto to present his fundamentalist argument underscores the posture he encourages his audience to take—that of defenders.

What do preservation, protection, and restoration of the fundamentals entail? For Schaeffer, this mission involves four action items for evangelical Christians. First, Christians should aggressively advocate for “a human life bill or a constitutional amendment protecting unborn children.”⁹⁶ Second, they should work to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. Third, Christians should take “legal and political action... against hospitals and abortion clinics that perform abortions.”⁹⁷ Lastly, Schaeffer asks his readers to make the State “feel the presence of the Christian community.”⁹⁸ The first three demands, though far-reaching and deeply consequential, have clear, defined, and controlled objectives. The last demand, to make the state “feel the presence of the Christian community,” is a more pervasive and amorphous ambition for influence. Mark Allen Steiner calls this drive for influence an “impulse to hegemony,” a feature of Christian evangelical and fundamentalist rhetoric. Steiner observes that the impulse to hegemony is rooted in a distinctly Christian fundamentalist narrative of history, wherein fundamentalist Christians play in advancing God's Kingdom. This narrative of history also views people who are not advancing God's Kingdom as obstacles to be overcome.⁹⁹ The impulse to hegemony is the logical conclusion of a fundamentalist argument of rhetors that encourage their followers to

⁹⁶ Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto*, 118.

⁹⁷ Schaeffer, 118.

⁹⁸ Schaeffer, 120.

⁹⁹ Mark Allen Steiner, *The Rhetoric of Operation Rescue: Projecting the Christian Pro-Life Message* (New York, NY: T & T Clark International, 2006), 56.

preserve, protect, and restore the fundamentals of a universal identity. In a situation where the fundamentals of identity are perceived to be existentially threatened by a corrupting force, the adherents may justify political action, power, and ambition to counteract threats by gaining power and influence in society. Evangelicals and Christian fundamentalists seeking political influence view their ambitions as action to “preserve the essence of the American nation and the freedom that has characterized it.”¹⁰⁰

The themes of preservation, protection, and restoration are also apparent in how Schaeffer characterizes Christians who take up the mantle of reviving America’s Christian foundation to save the unborn. In Schaeffer’s books, Bible-believing Christians assume two personae—those of “salt” and “rebels.” These characterizations are reserved specifically for lay Christians rather than those in leadership. In *A Christian Manifesto*, Schaeffer denounces evangelical leaders for their subdued stance against abortion: “...the Christian lawyers, theologians, and educators, indeed much of the evangelical establishment, certainly have not been in there blowing the trumpet loud and clear.”¹⁰¹ He attributes this neglect to the very problem that he sees plagues American culture as a whole—the lack of adherence to the Bible: “Much of the church no longer hold that the Bible is God’s Word in all it teaches. It simply blends with current thought-forms rather than being the “salt” that judges and preserves the life of its culture.”¹⁰² Furthermore, he encourages Christians to affirm the Bible in all matters: moral,

¹⁰⁰ Steiner, 67.

¹⁰¹ Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto*, 69.

¹⁰² Koop and Schaeffer, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*, 4.

religious, historical, and scientific. Schaeffer warns that if Christians separate spiritual matters from cultural ones, or apply an existential methodology, then they will fail to be the “salt” of their generation: “we cannot be the restorative salt which Christians are supposed to be to their generation and their culture if in regard to the Scriptures we, too, are marked by the existential methodology.”¹⁰³ The metaphor of salt refers to Jesus’s description of his disciples as the “salt of the earth” (Matthew 5:13). In *The Religious Symbolism of Salt*, James E. Latham interprets this description as that of preservation, or incorruptibility.¹⁰⁴ In the same way salt preserves food from spoilage, followers of Jesus were seen to prevent their societies from decaying.

Don Garlington observes that in addition to the preventative function, the salt metaphor also refers to the “activist role” followers of Jesus take in aligning their societies with a Christian vision.¹⁰⁵ Such activism can be seen as rebellious and contrarian, positions Schaeffer encourages his readers to embrace in the fight against abortion. Schaeffer cited the earliest Christians and positioned them as the true rebels of the Roman Empire. According to Schaeffer, early Christians were rebels for two reasons— their resistance to “syncretism” and their possession of God’s revelation as an absolute moral standard. Unlike other religious groups in the Roman Empire, Schaeffer argued, Christians refused to engage in syncretism, or the attempt to combine and reconcile two worldviews. They refused to worship Caesar along with the infinite-personal

¹⁰³ Schaeffer, *How Should We Then Live? The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture*, 255.

¹⁰⁴ James E. Latham, *The Religious Symbolism of Salt* (Paris: Editions Beauchesne, 1982), 161.

¹⁰⁵ Don Garlington, “‘The Salt of the Earth’ in Covenantal Perspective,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 54, no. 4 (2011): 715.

God: “They allowed no mixture,” Schaeffer wrote, “All other Gods were seen as false gods.”¹⁰⁶ Second, early Christians were rebels because they had an absolute and universal moral standard by which to evaluate society: “No totalitarian authority nor authoritarian state can tolerate those who have an absolute by which to judge that state and its actions.”¹⁰⁷ The purity of their moral standard and refusal to compromise on their worldview made Christians, particularly those steeped in the Reformation tradition, predisposed to hold the establishment to account. Schaeffer named examples of Christians from England, Scotland, Sweden, the Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, and Switzerland standing up to a tyrannical state: “In almost every place where the Reformation had success there was some form of civil disobedience or armed rebellion.”¹⁰⁸

Casting true Christians as rebels and “salt” is a noteworthy rhetorical choice. Schaeffer was writing during the social revolts of the 1960s and 1970s. The Civil Rights, anti-war, women’s liberation, free love movements, and other progressive movements made anti-establishment rebellion in vogue among many young people, especially those whom Schaeffer ministered to at L’Abri and on college campuses in the United States. Presenting early Christians as rebels may have been a way to both appeals to such an audience to cultivate an activist Christian identity that would stand against abortion. The characterization of Christians as salt and rebels also demonstrates an important feature of fundamentalist rhetoric—the fusion of claims to orthodoxy and orthopraxis with innovative approaches. On one hand, fundamentalist

¹⁰⁶ Schaeffer, *How Should We Then Live? The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture*, 26.

¹⁰⁷ Schaeffer, 26.

¹⁰⁸ Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto*, 93.

argumentation claims the protection and preservation of sacred traditions of the past. But on the other hand, there is tremendous emphasis on adopting new processes, methods, and ideologies to overcome the challenges of the day. Furthermore, the very call for activism distinguishes fundamentalist rhetoric from calls from other conservative traditions. Traditionalism tends to seek isolated separatism, whereas fundamentalist rhetoric calls for more advocacy, action, and change. Almond, Appleby, and Sivan observe how fundamentalists often quarrel with co-religionists who want to preserve tradition without adopting innovative ways to challenge the “forces of erosion.”¹⁰⁹ Marsden makes a similar observation about fundamentalists in that they are “militant in opposition.” Fundamentalists are more than just conservatives—they are conservatives who are willing to fight.¹¹⁰

Conclusion

The influence of Francis Schaeffer on evangelical political organizing and pro-life advocacy cannot be overstated. Terry Randall, the founder of Operation Rescue, cites Schaeffer as the impetus for his work.¹¹¹ William Martin credits Schaeffer for turning Randall’s mission from evangelizing others to establishing one of the most controversial anti-abortion organizations affiliated with the Christian Right.¹¹² The success of Schaeffer’s message can be

¹⁰⁹ Almond, Appleby, and Sivan, *Strong Religion: The Rise of Fundamentalism Around the World.*, 92.

¹¹⁰ George M. Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991), 1.

¹¹¹ William Martin, *With God on Our Side: The Rise of the Religious Right in America* (New York: Broadway Books, 1986), 196–97.

¹¹² Martin, 196–97.

attributed, at least in part, to his fundamentalist argumentation. In his attempt to galvanize evangelicals to engage in pro-life activism, Schaeffer's fundamentalist argument links legalized abortion with threats to the fundamentals of American culture. To make this argument, he identified the fundamentals of cultural survival—an ethic of good treatment of others rooted in divinely-inspired, absolute, and immutable ideals. To argue this case, he compared ancient Roman culture with early Christian cultures. He concluded that the inadequacy of Rome's ideological foundation led to its fall, whereas the strength of the Christian foundation led to its rise, spread, and survival.

Yet despite their perseverance, Schaeffer made the case that Christian-based cultures are vulnerable to decline if their foundation is corrupted by human distortions, as was illustrated by the Renaissance. For Schaeffer, the sources of human distortions range from intellectual elites to the legal system, to other Christians. However, according to Schaeffer's reasoning, American culture can credit its survival and success to the Christianity of the Reformation, a movement that emphasized the authority of the Bible over that of the human. Because of their emphasis on biblical absolutes, Reformers were able to cultivate the most distinct features of Western culture such as the rule of law, democracy, and freedom. Yet despite its virtues, Schaeffer insisted that contemporary American culture has succumbed to the corruptions of humanism, liberalism, and other human distortions, the results of which have undermined America's Christian consensus and replaced it with a humanistic worldview that values the personal peace and affluence of individual humans above all else. The consequences of such a worldview are existential to both culture and humans, which culminated in the literal abortion of the human race. To stop the annihilation of both unborn humans and reverse the decline of American culture, Schaeffer calls for Christians to get involved politically to restore America to its Christian consensus.

Schaeffer's argument exhibited the characteristics of fundamentalist argument. He established the fundamentals (a Christian worldview) of a universal identity (American culture). The fundamentals were authorized by a transcendent authority, in this case, God, who communicated the absolute standards of morality for a Christian worldview through an inerrant Bible. Schaeffer's argument also demonstrated another important feature of fundamentalist argument—the presence of a threat to the purity of the fundamentals of identity. Since the fundamentals were threatened with contamination and vulnerable to corruption from enemies inside and outside of the community, Schaeffer's argument reaches its conclusion of calling on his adherents to preserve, protect, and restore the fundamentals of American society.

Schaeffer's rhetoric on anti-abortion action reveals several things about fundamentalist arguments as a genre. Firstly, the evangelical ancestry of fundamentalist argumentation is clear in Schaeffer's case. This is not surprising since he participated in fundamentalist debates and controversies early in his career as a pastor.¹¹³ Nevertheless, the flexibility of fundamentalist argumentation allowed Schaeffer to extend a debate about theological doctrine to accommodate one about culture, humanity, history, and politics. The flexibility of fundamentalist argumentation can be attributed to the selectivity of its users when it comes to history, rhetorical strategies, and even the genres from which rhetors draw upon. Fundamentalism scholars have observed how fundamentalists strategically emphasize certain elements of doctrine, culture, or

¹¹³ Hankins, *Francis Schaeffer and the Shaping of Evangelical America*, 2008.

the past to serve their agendas.¹¹⁴ Strategic selectivity also suggests the rhetoricity of any fundamentalist project.

Secondly, Schaeffer's case demonstrates the centrality of rationality in fundamentalist argumentation. One would expect an argument about how a Christian worldview is fundamental to American culture to feature a multitude of biblical references, yet Schaeffer's reliance on biblical evidence is minimal in all three of the books analyzed in this chapter. Instead, he relies primarily on comparisons between cultures and historical analyses to bolster his claims. Unlike provincial historians who claim that all history is a narrative of a divine plan, Schaeffer uses history as evidence of the merits of one ideology over another. The rationality of his argument appeals to the intellectuals of his audience, those who want to be civically engaged while being ethically motivated.

Lastly, Schaeffer's narrative of the "rise and fall" of Western thought and culture as a hostile rivalry between humanism and Christianity points to the totalizing force of fundamentalist argumentation. Schaeffer did not want his readers to view instances of peace and stability or instances of violence and chaos to be disconnected or isolated events. Instead, his grand narrative of Western culture casts the conflict between humanism and Christianity as total and encompassing: "The basic problem of Christians in this country...is that they have seen things in bits and pieces instead of totals."¹¹⁵ By arguing that both Christianity and humanism

¹¹⁴ Almond, Appleby, and Sivan, *Strong Religion: The Rise of Fundamentalism Around the World.*, 95.

¹¹⁵ Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto*, 17.

possess the power of building and destroying societies, he raises the stakes for his audience to choose which side to support.

Chapter Two: Fundamentalist Argument in Thomas Brady's *Black Monday*

Mr. President, it is the law of nature, it is the law of God, that every race has both the right and the duty to perpetuate itself. All free men had the right to associate exclusively with members of their own race, free from governmental interference, if they so desire. Free men have the right to send their children to schools of their own choosing, free from governmental interference. These rights are inherent in the Constitution of the United States and in the American system of government, both state and national, to promote and protect this right.

-Senator James O. Eastland (R-MS), speaking on the Senate floor on May 27, 1954

On May 17th, 1954, the United States Supreme Court struck down the legality of segregation in American public schools in the landmark case, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*.¹ In the ruling, state-sanctioned segregation of public schools, was rendered unconstitutional on the basis that such a practice violated the Fourteenth Amendment.² *Brown v. Board of Education* overturned the "separate but equal" precedent set by the Supreme Court in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896).³ *Brown v. Board of Education* was also one of the catalyzing events of the Civil Rights Movement, sparking widespread change in public schools all over the nation.

The response to the Supreme Court ruling from southern states was swift and largely negative. Representative John Bell Williams (D-MS) called the date of the decision "Black Monday."⁴ In a special joint meeting of the Mississippi legislature, Governor Hugh L. White (D)

¹ *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954)

² US Constitution, amend. 14, sec. 1

³ *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537 (1896)

⁴ *US Congressional Record*, 83rd Cong., 2 sess., 1954, 6857.

captured the state's defiant mood to the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling. "There were no overt demonstrations [on Black Monday]," he acknowledged, "but I know I am correct in saying that there was a universal resolution not to abide by such an unreasonable decision if lawful means could be found by which to avoid it."⁵

Following the Supreme Court decision, white supremacist organizations known as "Citizens' Councils" were established to resist the implementation of the Court's ruling and to preserve the segregation of public schools. Citizens' Councils were segregation associations founded in several states across the South. They were organizations that catered to a socially respected class of southern whites (i.e., not Ku Klux Klansmen) for the purpose of circumventing and resisting federal mandates to desegregate public schools.⁶ Charles Payne observed that Citizens' Councils were seen as "pursuing the agenda of the Klan with the demeanor of the Rotary."⁷ Citizens' Councils were most active from 1954 through the late 1960s. The first Citizens' Council, called the White Citizen's Council of Mississippi (later renamed the Citizen's Council of America), was an organization that successfully prevented the desegregation of Mississippi public schools for over a decade. Committed to maintaining racial segregation in all

⁵ "Extraordinary Sessions of 1954 and 1955," in *Journal of the Senate of the State of Mississippi* (Jackson: Hederman Brothers, 1955), 8.

⁶ Neil R. McMillen, *The Citizen's Council: Organized Resistance to the Second Reconstruction, 1954-64* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1971), viii.

⁷ Charles M. Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle*, 2nd ed (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 34.

aspects of life, Council members would use methods just short of violence to intimidate Black businesses, voters, and activists who challenged the racial order.⁸

The mission and objectives of many Citizens' Councils were first articulated by Judge Thomas Pickens Brady in an address delivered to the Greenwood Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) in 1954. At the behest of the SAR, Brady expanded and published the address in a book titled *Black Monday: Segregation or Amalgamation. America Has Its Choice* (1954).⁹ Born in Brookhaven, Mississippi, in 1903, Brady received a bachelor's degree from Yale and a law degree from the University of Mississippi. In 1954, he was serving his second term as a Circuit Court judge of the fourteenth Judicial District and was the vice president of the Mississippi Bar Association.¹⁰ In his obituary, the *New York Times* called Brady the "intellectual godfather" of the Citizens' Council movement.¹¹

Black Monday was especially inspirational to Robert "Tut" Patterson, the founder of the White Citizens' Council of Mississippi. This organization would prompt the formation of similar groups all over the South. In only five months after the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, 17 Citizens' Councils were established in the South. Patterson recalled that few attendees of their first meeting anticipated their group would "expand miraculously into a virile and potent

⁸ Cobb, *The South and America Since World War II*, 35.

⁹ McMillen, *The Citizen's Council: Organized Resistance to the Second Reconstruction, 1954-64*, 17.

¹⁰ *Who's Who in the South and Southwest*, 9th ed. (Chicago: Marquis-Who's Who, 1965), 112.

¹¹ "Thomas P. Brady, Mississippi Judge," 38.

organization.”¹² In a meeting with Judge Brady years later, Patterson credited *Black Monday* to his decision to dedicate his life to resisting desegregation.¹³ *Black Monday* was important to Citizens’ Councils not only because it inspired their formation, but because it shaped their vision for organized resistance. So much so, it provided the basis for the first handbook of the Citizens’ Council Movement.¹⁴ Given its influence on the Citizens’ Council movement, Neil R. McMillen called *Black Monday* a “veritable compendium of segregationist thought.”¹⁵

This chapter demonstrates how Thomas Brady’s defense of segregation in *Black Monday* was an exercise in fundamentalist argumentation. His argument is a fundamentalist one not just because it anchors American identity in the Bible or because it belongs within the evangelical rhetorical tradition. Brady’s argument is also fundamentalist because he galvanizes his audience into action by identifying an existential threat to what is *fundamental* to their identity—whiteness. Brady frames *Brown v. Board of Education* as a danger to white racial purity. As such, his appeals to white identity provided a compelling motive for massive resistance against desegregation. This chapter advances our understanding of fundamentalist argument as a genre because it extends the use of fundamentalist argument to non-religious contexts. While Brady addresses an overwhelmingly Christian audience and even makes biblical references in his

¹² “Annual Report: August 1955” (Winona, MS: Association of Citizens’ Councils of Mississippi, 1955), 1.

¹³ McMillen, *The Citizen’s Council: Organized Resistance to the Second Reconstruction, 1954-64*, 18.

¹⁴ McMillen, 17.

¹⁵ McMillen, 18.

claims, the bulk of his argument is supported with evidence from anthropology and ethnological pseudoscience.

To understand Brady's use of fundamentalist argument, I first situate Brady's argument in a post-Civil War era of the Jim Crow South. Next, I examine how he constructed the situation to which he responded. Third, I parse out how Brady argues for the centrality of whiteness to American civilization. Fourth, I identify how Brady defines the existential threats to white racial purity and the consequences of such threats. Lastly, I explore his calls to action to restore the social and legal mechanisms that preserve and protect white racial purity. Throughout the chapter, I analyze Brady's use of fundamentalist argumentation as it relates to the contexts of culture, situation, and genres from which it emerges. Through this analysis, my hope is to provide a fuller understanding of how fundamentalist arguments shape and are shaped by the contexts in which they are used.

Maintaining White Supremacy in Mississippi

To understand *Black Monday's* appeal to Mississippians, it would be useful to briefly review Mississippi's long history of resisting federally mandated changes to its race relations. With President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, enslaved people were legally emancipated in Mississippi on January 1, 1863. Despite the change in status, newly freed Black Americans faced an onslaught of laws and statutes designed to maintain pre-Civil War race relations. In 1865, Mississippi legislators passed the Act to Confer Civil Rights on Freedmen, and for Other Purposes, later known as the Black Codes. The penal code of the act declared that "all penal and criminal laws now in force of this State, defining the offenses, and prescribing the mode of punishment for crimes and misdemeanors committed by slaves, free Negroes, or mulattoes, be and the same are hereby enacted, and declared to be in full force and effect, against

freedmen, free Negroes, and mulattoes, except so far as the mode and manner of trial and punishment have been changed or altered by law.”¹⁶ In other words, slavery may have been prohibited, but much of its legal mechanisms remained in effect in Mississippi.

In a state where the Black population outnumbered the white population, Mississippi legislators sought to uphold white supremacy by limiting the civic participation of newly freed Black Americans. Furthermore, ideas of the racial superiority of whites motivated legislators to implement laws to compel otherwise “lazy” freedmen into employment and to protect Mississippians from the “innate bestiality” of Black Americans.¹⁷ In other words, progressive action for Black Americans generated a reactionary response to Black people’s equality. According to Corey Robin, such a response would be evidence of a conservative mindset. Conservatism, according to Robin, is organized around a desire to maintain social hierarchies. When people who have been traditionally subordinate in a hierarchy attain some measure of equality, a conservative backlash often ensues. Robin argues that conservatism provides the “most consistent and profound argument as to why the lower orders should not be allowed to exercise their independent will, why they should not be allowed to govern themselves or their polity.”¹⁸

¹⁶ *Laws of the State of Mississippi: Passed at a Regular Session of the Mississippi Legislature: Held in the City of Jackson, October, November, and December 1865* (Jackson, MS: J.J. Shannon, State Printers, 1866), 167.

¹⁷ Rembert Patrick, *The Reconstruction of the Nation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 40–41.

¹⁸ Robin, *The Reactionary Mind*, 7–8.

In a demonstration of conservative control, vagrancy laws were passed in Mississippi to maintain labor pools and regulate racial mixing and socializing. To keep the labor pool stable and uphold employer rights, all nonwhite people over the age of 18 were required to maintain lawful employment or risk the charge of vagrancy.¹⁹ To protect the employer-worker relationship, steep fines were levied against any white person who offered alternate employment to a Black worker under contract. These statutes also empowered any person to arrest “deserting” workers for a reward.²⁰ In effect, vagrancy laws permitted employers, neighbors, and the community to surveil Black Americans for “delinquency.” Stephen Berrey defines surveillance to include more than state-sponsored “formalized and regimented” observation. Surveillance also includes “the ways in which people are regularly monitored and disciplined in their everyday routines.”²¹ Subjecting Black Americans to a constant state of social surveillance permitted white Mississippians to preserve the social relationships of white supremacy even if slavery was abolished.

Vagrancy laws, and the surveillance they entailed, also aimed to prevent social mixing between the races and interracial relationships. Inter-marriage between white and non-white

¹⁹ *Laws of the State of Mississippi: Passed at a Regular Session of the Mississippi Legislature: Held in the City of Jackson, October, November, and December 1865*, 90.

²⁰ *Laws of the State of Mississippi: Passed at a Regular Session of the Mississippi Legislature: Held in the City of Jackson, October, November, and December 1865*, 82–93, 165–67.

²¹ Stephen A. Berrey, *The Jim Crow Routine: Everyday Performances of Race, Civil Rights, and Segregation in Mississippi* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 103.

people was prohibited at the risk of imprisonment for life.²² Furthermore, any white person found to be unlawfully assembling with “freedmen, free Negroes, or mulattoes, or usually associating with freedmen, free Negroes, or mulattoes on terms of equality, or living in adultery or fornication with a freedwoman, a free Negro, or mulatto” were subject to fines of up to two hundred dollars. A charge of vagrancy also risked jail time that ranged from six days for a nonwhite person to *six months* for a white person.²³ Jail sentences for nonwhite “vagrants” may have generally been shorter than those of white offenders to punish the social mixing of races while keeping Black workers available for labor. Conversely, the heavier fines and sentences for white vagrants attested to the severity of their offenses in the eyes of lawmakers. White people who mixed socially with freed Black people did not just break the law—they were seen as traitors to their race.

In 1868, the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution was ratified, conferring citizenship upon every person born in the United States, including formerly enslaved peoples. The amendment also granted Black Americans equal protection under the law as citizens.²⁴ Once

²² *Laws of the State of Mississippi: Passed at a Regular Session of the Mississippi Legislature: Held in the City of Jackson, October, November, and December 1865*, 82.

²³ *Laws of the State of Mississippi: Passed at a Regular Session of the Mississippi Legislature: Held in the City of Jackson, October, November, and December 1865*, 82–93, 165–67; Avery Craven, *Reconstruction: The Ending of the Civil War* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1969), 119–20; W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction: An Essay Toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1935), 170–75; Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America’s Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 199; John Franklin, *Reconstruction after the Civil War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 48.

²⁴ US Constitution, amend. 14, sec. 1.

again, despite this affirmation of their citizenship, Black Americans in Mississippi continued to face legal barriers to full participation in civic life. The Black Codes enacted during Reconstruction laid the groundwork for Jim Crow laws, or laws and policies that segregated many public spaces by race. “Jim Crow” commonly refers to a system of laws, norms, and social expectations that preserved white supremacy from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century. Jim Crow laws were enacted to establish “legal differences” between the white population and the newly freed Black population.²⁵ The first Jim Crow laws were passed in Mississippi and as early as 1865 to segregate railroad cars.²⁶ While Jim Crow laws are most closely associated with the South, the norms and policies related to Jim Crow were practiced in every state in the nation, with some regional variations.²⁷ Public spaces like waiting rooms, trolleys, public restrooms, taxis, and busses were segregated by race. Black and white patients in hospitals kept in separate quarters were tended by nurses of their own race. Segregation even extended to the penitentiary system, where Black and white inmates were incarcerated in different prisons.²⁸

²⁵ Vernon Lane Wharton, *The Negro in Mississippi, 1865-1890* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 230.

²⁶ *Laws of the State of Mississippi: Passed at a Regular Session of the Mississippi Legislature: Held in the City of Jackson, October, November, and December 1865*, 231.

²⁷ Berrey, *The Jim Crow Routine: Everyday Performances of Race, Civil Rights, and Segregation in Mississippi*, 3.

²⁸ Neil R. McMillen, *Dark Journey: Black Mississippians in the Age of Jim Crow* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 8.

Public Education under Jim Crow

For most of Mississippi's history, Black and white school children did not attend the same schools.²⁹ When Mississippi's 1868 constitution created the public education system in the state, schools were segregated by race.³⁰ While some attempts to allow equal access to education were codified by statute in 1878, Mississippi's legislature rendered the measure unconstitutional in 1890.³¹ The Supreme Court's landmark decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) upheld the constitutionality of "separate but equal" accommodations based on race, thereby strengthening justifications for segregating Mississippi's public schools.³²

Despite the Supreme Court's affirmation of segregated education, Mississippi lawmakers continued to restrict civic education for Black students. In 1920, a state statute was passed prohibiting the "printing, publishing or circulating" of general information about or arguments in favor of "social equality or of intermarriage."³³ In 1940, a Jim Crow measure was proposed to exclude all references to voting, elections, and democracy from civics textbooks taught in Black public schools. Although the proposed bill was narrowly rejected by the Mississippi state senate, measures like these made public schools the sites of controversy on how citizenship would be fostered among the Black and white students educated within them.

²⁹ McMillen, 8.

³⁰ Wharton, *The Negro in Mississippi, 1865-1890*, 244-45.

³¹ McMillen, *Dark Journey: Black Mississippians in the Age of Jim Crow*, 8.

³² *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537 (1896)

³³ McMillen, *Dark Journey: Black Mississippians in the Age of Jim Crow*, 8-9.

Under Jim Crow, segregationists viewed public education as a place to cultivate a citizenry that deemed the defense of segregation a national duty. Education reformers like Mildred Lewis Rutherford worked to overhaul civics and history curriculums in southern schools to “collapse any distinction between support for segregation and the obligations and duties of national citizenship.”³⁴ The primary mechanism of shaping civics education was textbook control. Since 1893, Mississippi had established the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Information. This government-funded organization monitored textbooks for anti-South sentiments and promoted texts that presented historical narratives sympathetic to the South and the segregationist agenda.³⁵ One of the state-approved texts was *The Ku Klux Klan*, by Laura Martin Rose. In it, Rose argued that the KKK emerged in response to newly freed African Americans refusing to work after the end of the Civil War. Furthermore, Rose argued that the KKK was necessary to prevent Black men from marrying white women. She claimed that the “best citizens of our country” were Klansmen and praised them for preserving the “purity and domination of the Anglo-Saxon race.”³⁶ Rose’s claims about the KKK reflect an idea known as the “Lost Cause,” which was a concerted effort, spearheaded by the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC), to redefine and memorialize the Confederacy in favorable terms.³⁷

³⁴ Elizabeth Gillespie McRae, *Mothers of Massive Resistance: White Women and the Politics of White Supremacy* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018), 42.

³⁵ McRae, 44.

³⁶ Laura Martin Rose, *The Ku Klux Klan or Invisible Empire* (New Orleans, LA: L. Graham Company Limited, 1914), 1–80.

³⁷ Karen Cox, *Dixie’s Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2003), 1.

Attempts to salvage the memory of the Confederacy as a Lost Cause were often led by women and indicate the role of gender in upholding white supremacy in the South.³⁸ Therefore, it stands to reason why Rose's book rehabilitating the image of the KKK was endorsed as reading material appropriate for Mississippi's schoolchildren. It was yet another demonstration of the centrality of white supremacy and segregation to white conceptions of ideal citizenship.

Disciplining Black Citizenship

Jim Crow laws, segregated schools, and revisionist civic curriculums represented some of the reactionary responses to Black citizenship. According to Alison Piepmier, extending citizenship to Black Americans "triggered a more intense cultural differentiation of Blackness and whiteness as whites strove to fortify the color line and consolidate white identity in order to protect white supremacy."³⁹ Towards these ends, discriminatory laws were passed as the legal means by which to curtail Black citizenship and maintain the status quo of race relations. On the other hand, racialized violence was the extra-legal means of disciplining Black Americans into adhering to the racial order.

Mississippi witnessed decades of racialized violence from the Ku Klux Klan. This organization terrorized Black Americans for a variety of offenses such as being "disrespectful," committing crimes, joining the military, or belonging to political or advocacy organizations like

³⁸ Cox, 1.

³⁹ Alison Piepmier, *Out in Public: Configurations of Women's Bodies in Nineteenth Century America* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 137.

the Union League.⁴⁰ The KKK was most infamous for lynching Black Americans to intimidate them into submitting to the racial order. Oliver Cox defines lynching as an act of “homicidal aggression committed by one people against another through mob action for the purpose of suppressing either some tendency in the latter to rise from an accommodated position of subordination or for subjugating them further to some lower social status.”⁴¹ Ersula Ore argues that lynching functioned as a performance of citizenship for white Americans, a statement on who was a member, and not a member, of American democracy.⁴² Lynching and racialized violence were not merely the prerogative of the KKK or unruly mobs; instead, racialized violence was tacitly and explicitly supported by the legislative and judicial systems. In Mississippi and other southern states, lynching was not a crime, nor were perpetrators always prosecuted for murdering and brutalizing Black Americans.⁴³ Ore argues that the act of lynching does not represent an instance in which the law is momentarily suspended, but rather “represents instances in which the logic and spirit of American democracy are enacted.”⁴⁴

Racial Purity in Segregationist Rhetoric

Preserving the racial order was so central to Mississippi’s political culture that potential threats to segregation were often met with hostile rhetoric. Mississippi governor (and former

⁴⁰ David M. Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism: The History of the Ku Klux Klan*, 3rd ed. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1981), 10.

⁴¹ Oliver Cox, “Lynching and the Status Quo,” *Journal of Negro Education* 14 (1945): 576.

⁴² Ersula Ore, *Lynching: Violence, Rhetoric, and American Identity* (Jackson, MS: University of Mississippi Press, 2019), 11

⁴³ Cox, “Lynching and the Status Quo,” 579.

⁴⁴ Ore, *Lynching: Violence, Rhetoric, and American Identity*, 15.

Klansmen) Theodore Bilbo attained national notoriety for his demagogic defenses of segregation.⁴⁵ One of his most notable speeches was delivered to the Mississippi legislature, titled, “World War II: Increasing Racial Tensions.” The speech was delivered in 1944, during a time when the U.S. involvement in World War II required an increased level of military service from Black Americans. The irony of America’s purported fight for democracy and freedom while its own Black citizens endured racial discrimination under Jim Crow laws was not lost on Black activists. Black activists demanded better treatment and social equality, which increased racial tensions throughout the United States. In 1943, Detroit witnessed the most violent race riot in America since Reconstruction.⁴⁶

In his “World War II” speech, Bilbo railed against increased equalitarian rhetoric in American public discourse. He called on his audience to counter the calls for social equality and to ensure segregation prevailed in the South. He trafficked in fears about miscegenation by describing how white women would attend social functions with Black soldiers. He asked his audience whether “our soldiers” were fighting to save the nation or were they fighting overseas so “that we may become a mongrelized people?” For Bilbo, social equality between the races, or the end of white and Black distinctions in American society, was “the surest way to destroy the culture of the white race...”⁴⁷ Bilbo’s warnings about the destruction of American culture

⁴⁵ Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism: The History of the Ku Klux Klan*, 69; Patricia Roberts-Miller, *Rhetoric and Demagoguery* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2019), 145.

⁴⁶ I. A. Newby, *The Development of Segregationist Thought* (Homewood, IL: The Dorsey Press, 1969), 134.

⁴⁷ Theodore Bilbo, “World War II: Increasing Racial Tensions,” in *The Development of Segregationist Thought*, ed. I. A. Newby (Homewood, IL: The Dorsey Press, 1969), 140.

represented the typical, albeit hyperbolic, position of many segregationists in the South. For many in Mississippi, segregation was a system by which southern fears about Black citizenship, interracial marriage, and the dilution of white racial purity were assuaged.

Mississippi's defiant response to *Brown v. Board of Education* made visible the importance of segregation in maintaining the southern social system. It also reminded the nation of Mississippi's historical reluctance in adopting federally mandated equality measures. Against this situational and cultural backdrop, Thomas Brady articulates an argument for why maintaining segregation is crucial to upholding American democracy. To make his case, he turns to fundamentalist argument themes to show how white racial purity is central to American culture.

Brady's Construction of the Situation

Brady's choice of fundamentalist argument develops in part from his reading of the situation. Conversely, his use of fundamentalist argument constructs the situation to which he responds. The interlocking dynamic between how Brady understands the situation and how he chooses to respond to it illustrates the reciprocal relationship between genres and situations. As Amy Devitt observes, "it is genre that determines situation as well as situation that determines genre."⁴⁸ As the name of his treatise suggests, Brady responded negatively to the day on which the Supreme Court rendered segregation unconstitutional. He writes: "'Black Monday' is indeed symbolic of the date. Black denoting darkness and terror. Black signifying the absence of light

⁴⁸ Devitt, *Writing Genres*, 23.

and wisdom.”⁴⁹ For Brady, “Black Monday” signaled the dominance of a “socialistic” judicial branch, as well as an encroachment on the delicate, yet fraught, relationship between the federal government and states. Brady declares May 17th, 1954, as the day upon which a “socialistic doctrine was officially proclaimed throughout this nation.” Furthermore, it was also the day on which the Supreme Court, Brady claimed, “usurped the sacred privilege and right of respective states of this union to educate their youth.”⁵⁰ By reading the Supreme Court decision in terms of loss, Brady engages in what Corey Robin describes as a “reactionary” response to the situation. According to Robin, a reactionary, or conservative, response emerges out of the experience of possessing power, viewing it as threatened (or usurped), and then taking action to restore it.⁵¹ Brady frames the decision as one ushering in the loss of a fundamental right – the loss of which necessitates the need for fundamentalist argumentation to restore.

Despite his reactionary response to the integration of public schools, Brady claims his intended audience is not just southern whites. Rather, he issued *Black Monday* “with the fervent desire that it will be of material benefit to both the white and colored people of this country.” Brady identifies the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision to be a concern for every American “irrespective of race” who “loves our Constitution, our Government and our God-given American way of life.” Brady dedicated *Black Monday* to anyone who maintains that the “Federal Government was constructed by the States for the benefit of the States, and that the

⁴⁹ Thomas P. Brady, *Black Monday: Segregation or Amalgamation. America Has Its Choice* (Winona, MS: The Association of Citizens’ Councils, 1954), foreword.

⁵⁰ Brady, foreword.

⁵¹ Robin, *The Reactionary Mind*, 4.

states were not created for the establishment and advancement of a paternalistic or totalitarian Government.” For Brady, the decision was evidence that the federal government was working to advance the “lethal messes” that are socialism and communism. In the face of such threats, Brady writes his treatise to those who refuse to sell their “sacred birthright” to socialism and communism.⁵² As the rest of his argument demonstrates, the “sacred birthright” to which Brady refers is the right to preserve the integrity of white racial purity. In the following pages, I will explicate Brady’s fundamentalist argument through the themes defined in this project. Those themes include establishing the fundamentals of a universal identity, emphasizing the importance of purity to the fundamentals, presenting an existential threat to the fundamentals, and calling for the preservation, protection, and restoration of the fundamentals.

Fundamentalist Argument Theme: Whiteness as Fundamental to American Civilization

As with most fundamentalist argumentation, the primary function of the argument is to identify the fundamentals of a universal identity. For an argument protesting the legitimacy of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, one might expect to hear that the fundamentals of American identity are the Constitution or the Bible. However, for Brady, the foundation of American civilization is whiteness. According to Brady, civilizations are products of the races that built them, and thus superior civilizations (like American culture) signify superior races (like the white race). For Brady, race is also the determining factor for civilizational “progress.”⁵³ In other words, the evolutionary stage of a race directly coincides with the developmental stage of

⁵² Brady, *Black Monday: Segregation or Amalgamation. America Has Its Choice*, foreword.

⁵³ Brady, 2.

its culture. For Brady, the more evolved a race becomes, the more advancements its culture attains. Conversely, the more primitive a culture appears on the linear path of civilizational progress, the more antecedent the evolutionary stage its respective race is currently undergoing. Therefore, according to Brady, American civilization is advanced in large part due to the evolutionary maturity of the white race.

The argument connecting race and civilization was hardly new or unique to Brady.⁵⁴ Much of the scientific discourses about race throughout the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth century in North America and Europe were concerned with explaining the variations of human bodies and cultures. Such emphasis on difference led to hierarchical schemas that almost always placed Anglo-Saxon or “Nordic” races on top. What we now call race realism and scientific racism were the prevailing paradigms of their day. “Race realism” was foundational to anthropology, sociology, psychology, ethnology, and eugenics. Scientists in these fields produced theories of racial superiority, racial hygiene, and the genetic basis of degeneracy. These theories, among others, shaped national policies on segregation, miscegenation, immigration, scientific testing, and even forced sterilization.⁵⁵ Scientific racism was so accepted in the United States that the “spiritual fathers” of eugenics, Madison Grant and Theodore Lothrop Stoddard,

⁵⁴ For examples of the arguments about the influence of race on civilization, see Frank H. Hankins, *The Racial Basis of Civilization* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1926); Friedrich Otto Hertz, *Race and Civilization* (Oxford, England: Macmillan, 1928).

⁵⁵ In the 1927 Supreme Court case *Buck v. Bell*, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes cited degeneracy theory, a product of eugenics, to rule in favor of states being allowed to forcibly sterilize “feebleminded and socially inadequate” people. See Paul A. Lombardo, *Three Generations, No Imbeciles: Eugenics, the Supreme Court, and Buck v. Bell* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010).

had extensive access to the Harding administration.⁵⁶ Eugenics informed American social policy to the extent that Nazi racial hygienists modeled some of their racist legislation on American laws.⁵⁷

However, by the 1940s, faith in popular theories about race began to wane. Anthropologist Franz Boas questioned the validity of accepted scientific axioms about racial differences, their meaning, and their influence on human society, psychology, and history.⁵⁸ In 1935, Boas started a campaign to rally prominent anthropologists, geneticists, and population scientists to sign a petition against Nazi race policies.⁵⁹ Additionally, the invaluable service of Black American soldiers provided to the Allied front in World War II led to increased support for the egalitarian treatment of Black Americans and the removal of all obstacles to their full citizenship.⁶⁰ In 1944, economist and sociologist Gunnar Myrdal noted that these social conditions rendered it “difficult for even popular writers to express other views than the ones of

⁵⁶ Both Madison and Lothrop Stoddard were instrumental in the passing of the Emergency Immigration Act of 1921, which restricted the influx of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe after World War I. See Stefan Kuhl, *The Nazi Connection: Eugenics, American Racism, and German National Socialism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 38–43.

⁵⁷ Stefan Kuhl, 38–43. For example, the German Law on Preventing Hereditarily Ill was modeled after the California’s 1901 Asexualization Act, a law that allowed state institution to involuntarily sterilize the “unsocial,” “feebleminded,” and “unfit.” See Kuhl, *The Nazi Connection*, 17.

⁵⁸ McMillen, *The Citizen’s Council: Organized Resistance to the Second Reconstruction, 1954-64*, 163.

⁵⁹ Stefan Kuhl, *The Nazi Connection: Eugenics, American Racism, and German National Socialism*, 68.

⁶⁰ McMillen, *Dark Journey: Black Mississippians in the Age of Jim Crow*, 287–88.

racial equalitarianism and still retain intellectual respect.”⁶¹ In the aftermath of World War II, the Nuremberg trials, and the horrors revealed at the hands of Nazi racism, UNESCO conducted a study of the “scientific materials concerning questions of race.” In 1950, several sociologists and anthropologists from the United States, Europe, India, and Brazil presented the study’s findings on behalf of UNESCO. In their statement, the authors declared that scientists reached a general agreement “that mankind is one” and that all humans “belong to the same species, *Homo sapiens*.” Furthermore, the authors directly contradicted notions of racial purity and its role in cultural progress or decline. The statement declares: “There is no evidence that race mixture as such produces bad results from the biological point of view. The social results of race mixture whether for good or ill are to be traced to social factors.”⁶²

Considering the intensifying public discourse in favor of racial equality and the declining credibility of traditional race science, Brady recognized the need to distinguish his defense of whiteness from the arguments of traditional eugenicists. Yet in *Black Monday*, Brady demonstrated how dubious race theories could still appear to enjoy intellectual respectability. However, maintaining an image of intellectual respectability while defending race-based segregation, particularly in a post-Nuremberg trials world, was a challenging task. Brady attempted to garner some intellectual credibility for segregation by citing scholars from esteemed institutions such as James Henry Breasted, Egyptologist and founder of the Oriental Institute of

⁶¹ Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy*, vol. 1 (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944), 96.

⁶² Ashley Montagu et al., “The Race Question,” *UNESCO and Its Programme* 1, no. 3 (1950), <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000128291>.

the University of Chicago. Brady also relied heavily on respected Washington D.C. attorney and Librarian of the Supreme Court, Charles Wallace Collins, the author of *Whither Solid South* (1947).⁶³ By citing anthropologists and historians like Breasted and Collins, rather than eugenicists like Grant and Stoddard, Brady was able to utilize scientific idioms, “the most authoritative languages through which meaning was encoded” to support his claims while attempting to evade an undesirable association with Nazis.⁶⁴

In addition to citing more respectable sources, Brady also based his defense of segregation less on the superiority of whiteness and more on the inferiority of Blackness. In fact, he explicitly claimed that “[t]here is no racial superiority in this treatise.” He further distinguished himself from eugenicists by defining whiteness more broadly than Anglo-Saxon or Nordic peoples. Brady cites James Henry Breasted’s book *The Conquest of Civilization*, which claims that the inhabitants of Europe, Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey), the Middle East (which includes the Levant and the Arabian Peninsula), and north Africa are members of “the Great White Race, Homo Caucasius.”⁶⁵ Whiteness, in Breasted’s formulation, is “less a construct of skin color, and more of a construct of *achievement* and *control*” (emphasis in original).⁶⁶ In other words, members of the “Great White Race” were varied and diverse in skin color and physical

⁶³ Charles Wallace Collins papers, Special Collections, University of Maryland Libraries. <http://hdl.handle.net/1903.1/1724> Accessed November 28, 2021.

⁶⁴ Nancy Leys Stepan and Sander L. Gilman, “Appropriating the Idioms of Science: The Rejection of Scientific Racism,” in *The “Racial” Economy of Science: Towards a Democratic Future*, ed. Sandra Harding (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 171.

⁶⁵ Brady, *Black Monday: Segregation or Amalgamation. America Has Its Choice*, 2.

⁶⁶ Lindsay Ambridge, “Imperialism and Racial Geography in James Henry Breasted’s “Ancient Times, A History of the Early World,” *Journal of Egyptian History* 5 (2012): 29.

features, in Breasted's estimation. What united them was "their achievement of writing" and "control of material resources" necessary for civilized society, such as "centralized government, monumental architecture, and long-distance commerce."⁶⁷ According to Lindsay Ambridge, Breasted's racial categorization scheme was predicated on identifying the "material forms of civilization" over the genetic or physical markers of race.⁶⁸ By defining whiteness by the materials of culture, both Breasted and Brady were able to claim the achievements of more cultures for whiteness while attempting to circumvent accusations of white supremacy.

In his fundamentalist argument about the significance of whiteness to human progress, Brady makes a case for how Western civilization and culture represent the pinnacle of human achievement. Brady argues that white people possess special characteristics and inclinations that enabled them to uniquely engage in science, technology, art, philosophy, and exploration. "The white man," writes Brady, "established the arts and sciences and had conquered the oceans... The white race had evolved into a somewhat respectable piece of humanity, quite worthy of admiration."⁶⁹ Brady lists prominent names in Western thought and culture, like Leonardo da Vinci, Charles Darwin, and John Locke, to illustrate the civilizational contributions of the white race. Brady claims that these geniuses could not have been "accidental"; rather, "it is the same old story repeated over and over again—figs produce figs and from thistles come thistles."⁷⁰ In

⁶⁷ Ambridge, 29.

⁶⁸ Ambridge, 29.

⁶⁹ Brady, *Black Monday: Segregation or Amalgamation. America Has Its Choice*, 10.

⁷⁰ Brady, 14.

Brady's metaphor, the figs of civilization are products of the figs of race, thus affirming the idea that biology is fundamental to culture.

In addition to the "Great White Race," Brady identifies two other categories of human beings, "Homo Mongoloideus" and "Homo Africanus," respectively the inhabitants of Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Brady claims that both "Homo Caucausius" and "Homo Mongoloideus" proceeded on the path of evolutionary advancement, while "Homo Africanus" lagged behind. Brady asserts that "[a]lthough they started at approximately the same time, startling differences of development soon became irrefutably apparent." On the path towards evolutionary and civilizational progress, European cultures west of the Caucasus, like the "Anglos, the Britains, the Slavs, the Teutons, and the Huns," were the first to dutifully pursue the "evolutionary march." Next on the path were "Homo Mongoloideus," whom Brady congratulates on their culture "rapidly reaching adolescence." According to Brady, the impulse for advancement, growth, and development emerged from a "consciousness" inherent to each racial category: "In each instance, race consciousness was the definite factor in this marvelous and complex evolutionary development."⁷¹

In Brady's narrative of human development, the impulse for advancement was not universal nor equally evident in each racial group. Brady observed that "[w]hile the other two species of man were in the violent throes of chance and growth...the negro remained in a primitive status."⁷² Brady claimed that Black people sidestepped "the marvelous struggle for

⁷¹ Brady, 2.

⁷² Brady, 2.

development” and was “impervious to the Divine urge and yearning for advancement.”⁷³ Since the Black people did not demonstrate the “triumphs” of civilization –achievement and control—Brady reasoned, Blackness was, therefore, “handcuffed by heredity” or developmentally delayed.⁷⁴ With a rhetorical question, Brady asks: “While the sons of other races were being educated in schools and colleges, while Parliaments and Versailles were being constructed, what of our negroid brother?”⁷⁵ The unstated implication to Brady’s question was clear—if civilization were an evolutionary race, “Homo Africanus” was losing.

Whereas whiteness was the fundamental source of innovation for Western culture, according to Brady, Blackness was the fundamental source of obstacles for Black culture. According to Brady, “Homo Africanus” was evolutionarily delayed, and thus Black cultures were stunted in their advancement. The evidence Brady provides in support of his claim is cannibalism, a practice neither widespread, continuously practiced, nor exclusive to the African continent. Despite the scarcity of his proof, Brady claimed “cannibalism was an expected risk in the life of a negro,” even though the other races had outgrown and tabooed the practice for some.”⁷⁶ Brady attributed this “developmental delay” to essential characteristics of Black people. According to Brady, a Black person could not evolve past the biological limits of his source in the same way water does not rise above its source:

⁷³ Brady, 11.

⁷⁴ Brady, 11.

⁷⁵ Brady, 10.

⁷⁶ Brady, 2.

*Water does not rise above its source, and the negro could not by his inherent qualities rise above his environment as had the other races...His inheritance is wanting. The potential did not exist (emphasis added).*⁷⁷

Brady's water metaphor reveals his attempt to naturalize his thesis. By comparing the consequences of Blackness to another natural process, like Earth's gravitational force on water, he attempts to establish the ontological dependence of civilization on racial distinctions. Furthermore, in grounding the fundamentals of culture in biological race, Brady designates biological race as factual, unchangeable, and amoral. "This is neither right nor wrong," he asserts, "it is simply stubborn biological fact."⁷⁸ The capitulation to fact is a common feature of scientific language. The reference to fact in scientific language tends to support the illusion of its projects being impartial, objective, and amoral. Brady presents the "facts" of race as objective truths, no matter how inequitable they may seem. For Brady, these facts are immutable to human desires and impervious to the demands of justice and morality. To challenge these facts is to challenge the order upon which life exists, Nature.

For Brady, Blackness presented such an evolutionary obstacle to Black people that not even proximity to whiteness allowed them to overcome its shortcomings. He claims that slavery, while "morally wrong," conferred upon a portion of the Black people "the greatest benefit one man ever conferred upon another."⁷⁹ Despite its brutality, slavery exposed Black people to civilization, in Brady's estimation. Closeness to whiteness bestowed upon Black people "the

⁷⁷ Brady, 2.

⁷⁸ Brady, 2.

⁷⁹ Brady, 11.

benefits derived for the necessary evolutionary steps...in the twinkling of an eye.”⁸⁰ However, the fast track to civilization, according to Brady, proved to be ultimately fruitless because “nothing of true and lasting value is achieved in this world without real labor and sacrifice.”

Brady elaborates on the connection between labor and true cultural development by arguing that:

Since the negro could and did not think of labor, since he would not sacrifice, his reception of the benefits offered by those who did, was and has been extremely limited. The veneer has been rubbed on, but the inside is fundamentally the same. His culture is yet superficial and acquired, not substantial and innate.⁸¹

In an argument in defense of segregation, it is useful for Brady to maintain the cultural deficiencies of Blackness despite the educational, social, economic, and artistic achievements of Black Americans. In his narrative of human progress, the means by which culture is obtained is just as important to the achievement itself. It is not enough for a group of people to have acquired the emblems of civilization. Rather, it must have struggled independently for its material culture to be legitimate. This condition for civilization advances Brady’s fundamentalist argument because it undermines the substance of Black culture by undermining what Brady sees as its fundamentals—Blackness. This argument allows Brady to deny the achievements of Black culture on the basis that the means by which Black people attained that progress were deficient.

Fundamentalist Argument Theme: The Importance of Purity to Whiteness

In his fundamentalist argument, Brady sought to establish the ontological basis for civilization by attempting to demonstrate its dependence on whiteness for success. Once the

⁸⁰ Brady, 11.

⁸¹ Brady, 11–12.

fundamentals of civilization are established, Brady argues for another hallmark of fundamentalist argumentation—the importance of *purity* to the fundamentals. Brady claims that racial purity is paramount to the survival of civilizations. To make his argument, Brady uses Judaism as an example of a culture that is great because it mandates racial purity. He cites long passages from John Denson Sayers' *Can the White Race Survive?* (1929), to support this position. Sayers asserts that Jewish people are “the purest surviving portion of the White race.”⁸² Despite brandishing unabashed anti-Semitic tropes in his discussion of Jewish people, Sayers claims that “Jews are second to none in the purity of white ancestry.”⁸³ Including Jewish people under the umbrella of whiteness also permits Brady to make another departure from eugenicist and Nazi racist ideologies, wherein Jewish people were not considered white.

In Sayers and Brady's construction of whiteness, Jews are the model for whiteness because of their supposed genetic purity. Sayers claimed that Mosaic law prohibits intermarriage between Jewish people and “alien elements.” This prohibition, according to Sayers, emerged out of concerns over the “mongrelization of the Jewish race through amalgamation with the negro slaves and negroid hybrid stock of adjacent nations.”⁸⁴ Preserving the purity of Jewish heritage was important, according to Sayers, because Jewish people were tasked with a sacred mission of “preserving” their group as the people responsible of teaching and blessing “all the families of the earth” at a future time. To fulfill this mission, according to Sayers, God created a group of

⁸² James Denson Sayers, *Can the White Race Survive?* (Washington, DC: The Independent Publishing Company, 1929), 205..

⁸³ Sayers, 208.

⁸⁴ Sayers, 208.

“God’s peculiar people” through the patriarch Abraham’s lineage. Of Abraham’s two sons, according to Sayers, it was Isaac’s descendants who were pure enough to fulfill their sacred mission. Sayers cites Genesis to explain why Abraham’s other son, Ishmael, was denied such an honor. Sayers writes: “Ishmael, Abraham’s son by the doubtless Egyptian mongrel Hagar, could not inherit the benefits of the covenant and be the perpetrator of the pure race.”⁸⁵ Characterizing Hagar as an Egyptian mongrel appears to contradict Sayers’ (and Brady’s) claim of Egyptian civilization for the white race. However, in their logic, her “mongrel” status was not a function of her whiteness or lack thereof. Rather, it was a function of her status as a non-Jewish person. Mongrelization, in their estimation, is the hybridity of two races, whatever they may be. For Sayers and Brady, it is a status that is worse than the purity of any other race, even inferior ones. Mongrelization was often seen as a “more insidious evil even than black domination.”⁸⁶ People of mixed race, or “mulattos,” were often characterized as troublemakers because it was believed they inherited the least desirable traits of both whiteness and Blackness.⁸⁷ For Sayers and Brady, Mosaic law recognized the danger of race mixing and thereby imposed upon Jewish people the solemn and nondelegable duty of Jews to maintain the purity of their race.⁸⁸ They concede that although modern Jews rarely abide by mandates against intermarriage, the importance of purity

⁸⁵ Sayers, 208.

⁸⁶ St. Clair Drake, “Anthropology and the Black Experience,” *The Black Scholar* 11, no. 7 (1980): 10.

⁸⁷ Drake, 10.

⁸⁸ Sayers, *Can the White Race Survive?*, 208.

to their sacred destiny still stands. In referring to a biblical example discouraging intermarriage between two groups, Brady implies that segregation is authorized by God.⁸⁹

In addition to purity being important for the survival of races, Brady also warns his readers of the dangers of reproducing specifically with Black people. Brady claims Blackness contaminates gene pools and weakens civilizations. Once again, he cites Sayers to argue that all ancient civilizations fell because of their “amalgamation” with the Black people. Sayers attributes the decline of Egypt, India, and even Mayan civilization to intermarriage with Black people, a claim that is both ahistorical and thoroughly unsupported by historical records. Despite the flimsiness of his evidence, Sayers cites the measures ancient civilizations took to prevent “sexual intermingling” between races. According to Sayers, Pharaoh Sesostri III in the Twelfth Dynasty, “learned to fear infiltration of the negro and took measures to prevent it.” One measure he took was barring the entry of “negroes” through Egypt’s southern border.⁹⁰ These measures did not prove to be effective because, according to Sayers, Egypt continued to witness a gradual increase in racial mixing and thus: “that civilization which built the Great Temple of Karnak—the pyramids, that produced a Ramses II, whose finely moulded features show no trace of the negroid—sank beneath the black waves of mongrel mixture—sank never to rise again.”⁹¹ In Brady’s treatise, Egypt’s decline is not defined nor were its consequences explained.

⁸⁹ For more on how southern evangelicals developed a theology of segregation, see Hawkins, *The Bible Told Them So: How Southern Evangelicals Fought to Preserve White Supremacy*, 43–67.

⁹⁰ Sayers, *Can the White Race Survive?*, 69.

⁹¹ James Denson Sayers, *Can the White Race Survive?*, 69.

Furthermore, neither Brady nor Sayers account for any other factors that may have contributed to Egypt's supposed decline. Despite the inadequacy of his analysis, Brady ominously warns his readers of a desolate future should they normalize racial "amalgamation:"

Whenever and wherever the white man has drunk the cup of black hemlock, whenever and wherever his blood has been infused with the blood of the negro, the white man, his intellect and his culture have died. It is as true as two plus two equals four. The proof is that Egypt, India, the Mayan civilization, Babylon, Persia, Spain and all the others, have never and can never rise again.⁹²

With this dire warning, Brady suggests the existential stakes of "contaminating" the source. In an argument defending racial segregation in public schools, privileging racial purity justifies the need to keep white children away from Black children. This was not the first time the notion of racial purity, or "racial hygiene" was used to justify racial segregation. First introduced in 1895 by German physician and eugenicist Alfred Ploetz, racial hygiene theory was used to describe the importance of racial purity for the preservation and advancement of human civilization. Racial hygiene theory was later adopted in Nazi Germany, most notably in the Nuremberg Laws. One of the laws was the "Law for the Safeguard of German Blood and German Honor," which prohibited marriages and sexual relations between Germans and Jews.⁹³ While it was unlikely that Brady was a Nazi sympathizer, he did share one fundamental premise of Nazi ideology – the purity of whiteness was paramount to the preservation of culture.

⁹² Brady, *Black Monday: Segregation or Amalgamation. America Has Its Choice*, 7.

⁹³ "Nuremberg Laws" (Collection: George S. Patton, Jr. Papers, 1933 - 1945), 18501106, National Archives at College Park.

Fundamentalist Argument Theme: Threats to Whiteness are Existential

As shown above, Brady was deeply concerned about miscegenation and its potential to “mongrelize” whiteness. According to Brady’s race ideology, the mongrelization of whiteness has existential implications beyond racial integrity. Brady’s argument implies that whiteness, when “contaminated” by the genes of other races, especially by Black people, is in danger of eradication. The fear of the eradication of identity is common in fundamentalist argumentation. Gabriel Almond, R. Scott Appleby, and Emmanuel Sivan observed that fundamentalist leaders often act in the name of “defending and preserving a hallowed identity.”⁹⁴ While traditionally the hallowed identities these authors studied were religious identities, Brady’s rhetoric demonstrates how whiteness can be constructed to be the most fundamental basis of identity. For a fundamentalist argument to motivate action, it must position the identity as facing an existential catastrophe, often articulated as disintegration or decline. For example, Jerry Falwell, a self-identified Christian fundamentalist, called for fellow fundamentalist believers to confront the “disintegration of our social order.”⁹⁵ Evidence of America’s supposedly crumbling social order was Ellen DeGeneres, who came out as a lesbian in 1997 on the ABC show, *Ellen*. In response to her coming out, Falwell expressed his belief in her contribution to the destruction of social order by misnaming her “Ellen DeGenerate.”⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Almond, Appleby, and Sivan, *Strong Religion: The Rise of Fundamentalism Around the World.*, 10.

⁹⁵ Almond, Appleby, and Sivan, 26.

⁹⁶ Bruce Handy, “He Called Me Ellen Degenerate?,” *Time*, April 14, 1997, <https://web.archive.org/web/20070428222149/http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,986189-2,00.html>.

Similarly, concerns for the disintegration and degeneracy of humanity have long been connected to race realism and eugenics. Degeneracy theory, an idea popular in the late 1800s, was predicated on the notion that “lower races” and social classes possessed genetic dispositions to crime, immorality, and mental illness. Max Nordau defined degeneracy as “a morbid deviation from an original type.”⁹⁷ Cesare Lombroso, an anthropologist who studied the root causes of criminality, considered degenerates to be regressive iterations of human development.⁹⁸ In other words, degenerates are a return to, or degeneration towards, an antecedent evolutionary stage. According to these theorists, since degeneracy was genetic, marriage between members of two racial categories would produce offspring that would taint the more advanced (white) group, thus impeding the human evolutionary progress.⁹⁹ Theories of degeneracy often underpinned anti-miscegenation laws and stoked fears about mixed-race peoples or mulattos.¹⁰⁰

Brady extends his fundamentalist argument by warning of the existential danger racial miscegenation presents to whiteness and Western civilization. For Brady, the specific danger of de-segregating public schools was its potential to lead to miscegenation. According to Brady, miscegenation, or interracial marriage and sexual relationships, was deemed unacceptable because it could potentially involve white women, “the loveliest and purest of God’s creatures”

⁹⁷ Max Nordau, *Degeneration* (London: William Heinemann, 1898), 6.

⁹⁸ Paolo Mazzarello, “Cesare Lombroso: An Anthropologist between Evolution and Degeneration,” *Functional Neurology* 26, no. 2 (2011): 97–101.

⁹⁹ Catherine R. Squires, “‘Hybrid Degenerates’ to ‘Multiracial Families’: Discourses of Race Mixing in America,” in *Dispatches from the Color Line: The Press and Multiracial America* (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 2007), 30–31.

¹⁰⁰ Squires, 40–41.

in producing non-white children.¹⁰¹ Because of their role in promoting racial purity by reproducing with white men, white womanhood represented the most important issue in race relations in the South. For Brady, the guarantee of pure white womanhood is what has kept race relations in the South “harmonious.” Brady claims that “a peaceful and harmonious relationship” between both Black people and white people was only possible because of the “inviolability of Southern Womanhood.”¹⁰² For Brady, segregation was the mechanism by which pure white womanhood was ensured, the absence of which risked moral degeneracy, civilizational decline, and civil disorder. Brady’s defense of white womanhood reveals the tension between the belief in the immutability of race and the painful realization of both its fragility and fluidity. Brady’s fundamentalist argument is hinged on the centrality of whiteness to American civilization. On the other hand, whiteness, in Brady’s estimation, is so fragile and vulnerable to contamination that it requires the protection of its custodians—white women. In this formulation, whiteness is so changeable that it ceases to exist once integrated with other racial categories. Therefore, white womanhood must be staunchly defended from threats of miscegenation. For Brady, and other segregationists, defending white womanhood is necessary for whiteness to continue to underwrite American civilization.

For Brady, segregation is positioned to be the system that shields the South against the lawlessness and moral decay of miscegenation. Without segregation to regulate the social relations of Black and white children, white people may grow to socialize with Black people and

¹⁰¹ Brady, *Black Monday: Segregation or Amalgamation. America Has Its Choice*, 45.

¹⁰² Brady, 45.

disregard the traditional mores of race relations in the South. Brady warns his readers that without segregation, “a small segment of whites [will]... violate the sacred customs and Southern mores, as is happening in the North and East, and socially accept the negro with his inferior mentality, deficient moral code and habits.”¹⁰³ According to Brady, such free association between the races has led to “cases of moral leprosy and degeneracy” which have produced “negro hybrids” or mixed-race people, the ultimate sign of civilizational decay in Brady’s race logic.¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, removing the legal barriers to social segregation, Brady reasons, would only embolden the “supercilious, glib young negro” to perform “an obscene act or make an obscene remark, or a vile overture or assault upon some white girl.”¹⁰⁵

In addition to the existential threat miscegenation poses for whiteness, Brady warns of the literal dangers to life that will result from desegregating public schools. According to Brady, the Supreme Court’s decision to impose racial integration on the South will lead young Black people to argue that the Supreme Court should “abolish every vestige of segregation and racial differences.” This logic, warns Brady, is what “produces bloodshed, raping and revolutions.” Brady’s warning reveals how threats to the purity of whiteness are read as a danger to the nation. For the possibility of contaminating whiteness risks upending the nation beyond recognition. At first glance, it may appear that Brady’s warnings about violence emerge out of fear for the white citizens of the South. After all, his argument positions whiteness as vulnerable to the onslaughts

¹⁰³ Brady, 87.

¹⁰⁴ Brady, 45.

¹⁰⁵ Brady, 64.

of Blackness. Upon scrutiny, Brady's warning also appears to be a veiled threat of violence aimed at Black Americans. By Brady's logic, desegregation would expose white children to the corrupting influences of Black children. Brady accordingly predicted a forceful revolt from white parents would ensue: "No true, loyal, Southern man will ever agree to this or permit it...the profanity, vulgarity, and obscenity which will take place in these classrooms and on the playground, will produce violence and bloodshed."¹⁰⁶ The subtext here is that Black people will be killed if schools were integrated.

Furthermore, Brady places the blame of potential future violence on the Supreme Court, rather than on the perpetrators. He cites Major Fredrick Sullens, editor of the *Jackson Daily News*, who declared: "Human blood may stain Southern soil in many places because of this decision, but the dark red stains of that blood will be on the marble steps of the United States Supreme Court building."¹⁰⁷ Brady places the responsibility on the Supreme Court because, in his view, it failed to consider the science of segregation in its *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. Brady stated that he expected the Supreme Court to have "at least a working knowledge" of fields of "anthropology, ethnology, biology, social evolution and the science of society" and chastised the court for ignoring scientific evidence in favor of partisanship. Brady asks cynically if it was "expecting too much" to anticipate that the court would take into consideration "the great truths which these scientific studies have established" given the "inestimable destruction" the nation would incur at the violation of "basic laws" found in those

¹⁰⁶ Brady, 87.

¹⁰⁷ Major Fredrick Sullens, "Bloodstains on White Marble Steps," *Jackson Daily News*, May 18, 1954.

studies.¹⁰⁸ In the context of Brady's fundamentalist argument, segregation is the system that preserves the vital, yet vulnerable, bedrock of society—whiteness. This truth is validated through various fields of science. As such, any threats to the system of segregation also signal existential threats to all white Americans who are invested in the continued development of American civilization.

Fundamentalist Argument Theme: Identifying the Threats to Whiteness

With whiteness established as the fundamental basis of culture and civilization and threats to it imminently clear, Brady's fundamentalist argument turns to identify the sources of the threat. Often, the threat to the fundamentals is understood to originate from external, corrupting forces that seek to contaminate the fundamentals of the community.¹⁰⁹ For example, the first evangelical fundamentalists in the early 1900s accused liberal theologians of corrupting orthodox Christian doctrine with critical methodologies foreign to traditional Christian scholarship, like higher criticism. The threats, in that case, were external on two accounts. First, many of the theologians who developed and endorsed liberal theology were German, not American. Therefore, the source of the corrupting theology was coming in from outside American Protestantism. Second, the methods used to question the fundamentals of Christian doctrine, like higher criticism, were from disciplines outside of the Christian tradition. In both cases, an external corrupting force was seen as threatening the fundamentals of the community.

¹⁰⁸ Brady, *Black Monday: Segregation or Amalgamation. America Has Its Choice*, 43–44.

¹⁰⁹ Almond, Appleby, and Sivan, *Strong Religion: The Rise of Fundamentalism Around the World.*, 36.

A similar dynamic can be observed in Brady's construction of the threats to white racial purity. It is clear from his polemics that Black people represent the ultimate threat to the "integrity" to whiteness. However, Brady distinguishes between southern Black Americans and Northern "race agitators," the true outsiders. In *Black Monday*, Brady reminds his readers that their Black neighbors are grateful and loyal, despite the perceived shortcomings of Blackness: "It should be remembered that the majority of the negro race in the South has the highest sense of loyalty and devotion to white men, who are their friends and benefactors."¹¹⁰ In a speech delivered to the Commonwealth Club of California, Brady elaborates on the "affection" he observes between the Black and white people in the South. Brady extolled the goodness of Black people by claiming them to be "among finest characters" he had ever known."¹¹¹ For Brady, any goodwill between the races was a function of the care white people had extended the Black population: "We have nurtured the Negro, taught him, provided for him, educated him, and endeavored to make him a worthwhile citizen. The Negro has made great strides and the Southern white man is largely responsible for these advancements."¹¹² Furthermore, true loyal southern Black people, according to Brady, want to maintain segregation. Brady claimed that "95 percent or more of the negro race in the south do not want to be integrated with the white people in their schools, their churches, their restaurants, their swimming pools and their municipal

¹¹⁰ Brady, *Black Monday: Segregation or Amalgamation. America Has Its Choice*, 71.

¹¹¹ Thomas P. Brady, "Segregation and the South" (Association of Citizens' Councils, 1957), 5, UC Davis Library Special Collection.

¹¹² Brady, 5.

clubs.”¹¹³ In reminding his audience of the loyalty of Black southerners, Brady is able to position threats to segregation as coming from outside the South.

Yet despite his confidence in Black support for segregation, he issues a grim reminder to those who might seek to challenge a segregated South. Brady urges his readers to remind Black people of the frailty of their social progress:

These negroes should likewise be told, in no uncertain terms, what a contest can produce for the negro in the South. The fable of the dog with a bone which was crossing a stream on a log and saw its reflection in the water should be brought indelibly to their mind, with specific illustrations.¹¹⁴

Brady references an Aesop fable about a dog who dropped a piece of meat from his mouth when trying to obtain the one in the mouth of his reflection. Brady’s reminder to southern Black Americans of this fable sends a clear message about the status of Black freedom in the South: Asking for more only risks the progress already obtained.

While the threat of amalgamation of the races within the South is ever-present, for Brady, the most disquieting threats to racial harmony in the South originate from outside of it. Brady identifies the threats to be communists, racial advocacy organizations, and mixed-race southerners. “Integration,” writes Brady, “is urged by the NAACP, a few southern mulattoes, Northern Communist-front organizations, and left-wing labor groups who would use the unsuspecting Negro as their tool.”¹¹⁵ For Brady, the project of racial integration is a conspiracy started by communists to spread the “mental illness” of communism and thus undermine

¹¹³ Brady, *Black Monday: Segregation or Amalgamation. America Has Its Choice*, 71.

¹¹⁴ Brady, 71.

¹¹⁵ Brady, “Segregation and the South,” 4.

American democracy.¹¹⁶ Racial integration, for Brady, is the means by which communists recruit southern Black support to their cause and thus destroy American democracy:

The great threat to this Nation is that of creeping Socialism and Communism. The inter-racial angle is but a tool, a means to an end, in the overall effort to socialize and communize our Government. The grading down of the intelligence quotient of one-third of the people of this country though amalgamation of the white and negro race would be a great asset in the communizing of our Government.”¹¹⁷

In *Black Monday*, Brady calls on to the “Sovereign States” of America and alerts them of the motives behind *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling: “The Communists of America have been trying since 1936 to destroy the South. The bait which attracts them is the negro population.”¹¹⁸

Brady combines the Cold War fears of communist expansion with anxieties about racial displacement to claim that communist policies would place the Black population in control and the white population would be “driven out.” According to Brady, communism in America would eventually lead to “[a] black empire...to be established in the Southern States of this nation, ruled by negroes.”¹¹⁹ For Brady, the communist-led Black majority rule in the South would threaten American democracy itself: “If the South, the stronghold of democracy, could be destroyed,” Brady warns, “then the nation could be destroyed.”¹²⁰

In addition to communists, racial advocacy organizations like the NAACP represented another threat. According to Brady, organizations like the NAACP want to advance the interests

¹¹⁶ Brady, 11.

¹¹⁷ Brady, 67–68.

¹¹⁸ Brady, *Black Monday: Segregation or Amalgamation. America Has Its Choice*, 60.

¹¹⁹ Brady, 61.

¹²⁰ Brady, 61.

of Black people by enriching the group with whiteness. In his polemic, Brady bemoans how “these Northern negroes are determined to mongrelize America!”¹²¹ The motive behind the project to “mongrelize” America, according to Brady, was to accelerate the evolutionary advancement of Blackness: “The American negro, like any intelligent white man, knows his weaknesses and shortcomings. He senses and appreciates his basic inferiorities. He furthermore realizes that he can ameliorate these inherent deficiencies by intermarriage.”¹²² Brady argues that northern Black people view natural evolutionary advancement, “the only way in which a substantial lasting contribution to their race and to this country can be made” to be a process too “tedious and slow” for their ambitions.¹²³ Thus, northern Black people are “unwilling to try to evolve and develop through growth and struggle, as has the white man,” according to Brady.¹²⁴ Instead of the usual path to evolutionary progress, “these new deal, square deal, liberated black qualified electors” descend upon the South to “indoctrinate the Southern negro with this ideal” and motivate southern Black people to implement northern Black people’s “social program for the amalgamation of the two races.”¹²⁵

As introduced above, mulattos represent the ultimate outcome of racial “amalgamation” and thus were seen as a threat to whiteness of America. In Brady’s race logic, people of mixed-race are disqualified from whiteness due to the “one-drop rule.” This rule designates anyone with

¹²¹ Brady, 64.

¹²² Brady, 66.

¹²³ Brady, 64.

¹²⁴ Brady, 64.

¹²⁵ Brady, 64.

as little as “one drop” of Black heritage to be outside the realm of whiteness.¹²⁶ As segregation goes by the wayside, Brady argues, so will anti-miscegenation laws that have preserved the integrity of American civilization. For Brady, the results of this perceived impending rise of intermarriage will be the emergence of a “hybrid yellow mulatto.”¹²⁷ According to Brady, this distinct species of human, a designation also rooted in racial hygiene and eugenics theories, will be “despised” and in “a caste all by himself.” Since neither the Black nor white race will claim the mixed-race person, Brady reasons, people of mix-race heritage will be the “most fertile source for the Communist growth in this country...[they] will be the battering ram which will splinter our government.”¹²⁸

As we have seen above, Brady views the intermarriage of the races to be beneficial to Blackness. However, in Brady’s estimation, any benefits to Blackness would be at the expense of whiteness. Brady compares intermarriage to animal breeding, a common trope in racial hygiene rhetoric, to illustrate the price of race mixing for whiteness. He claims that Blackness can be improved by mixing with whiteness “just as the strain of a long horn can be improved by being bred with a white-faced Hereford.” However, what is “disastrous to the white-face” is at once “fine for the long horn.”¹²⁹ With this metaphor, Brady gestures to the perceived genetic cost of intermarriage for whiteness and therefore for the advancement of civilization. According to

¹²⁶ Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 1994), 53.

¹²⁷ Brady, *Black Monday: Segregation or Amalgamation. America Has Its Choice*, 87.

¹²⁸ Brady, 87–88.

¹²⁹ Brady, 66–67.

Brady, political leaders, especially those backed by communists and the left-wing, are always “interested in grading down, never in grading up the moral and intellectual potential of this country.”¹³⁰ Once again, Brady associates the purity of whiteness with the cultural advancement of the nation. As such, he affirms that whiteness it is the source of American identity, strength, and success.

Fundamentalist Argument Theme: Preserve, Protect, and Restore Whiteness

Thus far in Brady’s fundamentalist argument he has established whiteness to be fundamental to American culture and civilization and presented evidence of a “conspiracy” to compromise its whiteness through miscegenation. By establishing the premises of his fundamentalist argument, he is then able to present his conclusion—a call for defending segregation in the name of preserving, protecting, and restoring what is truly fundamental of American identity—whiteness. This theme of “defending the fundamentals” harkens back to the very first fundamentalist evangelicals in the United States. Martin Marty observes that fundamentalism is characterized by calls from leaders and followers to “take steps consciously to react, to innovate, to defend, and to find new ways to counter what they perceive as threats to the traditions they would conserve.”¹³¹ In his treatise, Brady presents an argument predicated on two premises: that American civilization was determined by whiteness and that segregation was the only way to protect and preserve the pure of whiteness. He claimed that “segregation exists not

¹³⁰ Brady, 66–67.

¹³¹ Martin E. Marty, “Fundamentals of Fundamentalism,” 19.

merely because we prefer it, but because we must maintain it.”¹³² For Brady, maintaining segregation was an act of self-preservation, an imperative imposed by life itself: “Self-preservation, the first law of life requires that we do so. [Segregation] is our shield and buckler—our refuge, our fortress. It is the first commandment and not the last.”¹³³ Here, Brady is evoking the authority of Nature to justify his commitment to the integrity of whiteness. Since segregation had been undermined and threatened by the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, the logical conclusion of this argument is to restore segregation to preserve and protect whiteness, and by extension American civilization and culture.

Towards these goals, Brady suggests fifteen courses of action to counter the assault on a segregated South. The suggested actions can be characterized as five strategies that reinforce the fundamentalist objectives of preservation, protection, and restoration. These strategies are *indoctrination, separation, revelation, consolidation, and representation*. *Indoctrination*, a practice whose name James Arthur concedes to be “pejorative,” is defined as teaching “something that is true or universally accepted regardless of evidence to the contrary or in the absence of evidence at all.”¹³⁴ Brady recommends the strategy of indoctrination when he calls for teaching children the “truth about communism, its infiltration of our country, and the facts of ethnology.”¹³⁵ Furthermore, he recommends children be taught John T. Flynn’s *The Road*

¹³² Brady, “Segregation and the South,” 4.

¹³³ Brady, 4.

¹³⁴ James Arthur, *Education with Character: The Moral Economy of Schooling* (London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2003), 37.

¹³⁵ Brady, *Black Monday: Segregation or Amalgamation. America Has Its Choice*, 68.

Ahead, Charles Wallace Collins' *Whither Solid South*, Stuart O. Landry's *The Cult of Inequality*, and James Denson Sayers' *Can the White Race Survive?*¹³⁶ In educating children about both communism and the primacy of whiteness, Brady argues, children could be inoculated from the communist "propaganda," "Marxian Christians" messages about the "propriety of the amalgamation of the white and negro races," and arguments for racial equality from the NAACP.¹³⁷

Indoctrination as a strategy for preservation and protection also goes hand in hand with the second strategy Brady advocates—*separation*. Separation as a strategy for self-preservation has long been associated with fundamentalist communities, often manifesting in the formation of distinct churches and organizations.¹³⁸ Brady encourages southerners to separate from both the Black population and communists through the following actions: 1) halting the "influx" of communists immigrants to the United States, and thus limiting the number of socialist agitators in the country, 2) creating an additional state, what at the time would be the 49th state, wherein America's Black population can be relocated, 3) boycotting and engaging in a "cold war" against Black workers should they continue to push for equality, and 4) abolishing public schools if "all other methods fail."¹³⁹ For Brady, separation measures not only preserve the integrity of whiteness, but they also discipline the Black population for challenging the segregated order. For

¹³⁶ Brady, 69.

¹³⁷ Brady, 69–69.

¹³⁸ Jonathan J. Edwards, *Superchurch: The Rhetoric and Politics of American Fundamentalism* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2015).

¹³⁹ Brady, *Black Monday: Segregation or Amalgamation. America Has Its Choice*, 68–83.

example, abolishing public schools, Brady promises, “will leave the negro the problem of educating himself, and it will be a dark day for the negro...”¹⁴⁰

While the strategy of separation is most visibly associated with fundamentalism, two other strategies also meet the objectives of preservation, protection, and restoration: *revelation* and *consolidation*. Revelation refers to the unmasking or exposing of enemies for the purpose of strengthening the community. Fundamentalists interested in fortifying the community will often seek to include within it only the truly committed. Marty observes that fundamentalists will often use symbols, insignia, codewords, and behavior patterns to recognize those committed to the cause and to “oppose outsiders, infidels, waverers, and adapters.”¹⁴¹ Brady seeks to fortify southern ranks when he demands that “neo-socialist” and “Marxian” Christians be publicly exposed to the rest of the congregants of southern churches.¹⁴² According to Brady, Marxist Christianity has been “infiltrating” church leadership and thus promulgating religious arguments for racial equality.¹⁴³ By identifying Marxists, Brady reasons, the community would purge such Christians from among its ranks, and thus cease financing enemies and “race agitators.”¹⁴⁴ To aid in the community purification process, Brady calls for the establishment of a special court to try and punish “all undesirables, perjurers, subversives, saboteurs, and traitors.”¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁰ Brady, 83.

¹⁴¹ Martin E. Marty, “Fundamentals of Fundamentalism,” 21.

¹⁴² Brady, *Black Monday: Segregation or Amalgamation. America Has Its Choice*, 69.

¹⁴³ Brady, 50–55.

¹⁴⁴ Brady, 70.

¹⁴⁵ Brady, 85.

Consolidation, another strategy Brady utilizes in his calls to action, also fortifies and strengthens the community. Here, consolidation involves unifying disparate branches of the community towards the shared goals of preserving, protecting, and restoring the fundamentals of identity. Brady's consolidating calls to action include establishing an organization called the "National Federation of Sovereign States of America" comprising the seventeen southern states that officially practice segregation. These states would also be united in their shared purpose of resisting integration and "stopping and destroying the Communist and Socialists movements in this country."¹⁴⁶ Brady envisioned the National Federation of Sovereign States resisting socialist and communist activity in politics, education, and religion.

To Brady, consolidation also involves white Southerners cooperating with Black Southerners in a shared effort to maintain a segregated South. As demonstrated earlier, Brady is suspicious of Black citizenship and the Black community's capacity to resist communist advocacy. He views calls for integration and racial equality as evidence of communist ideas infiltrating the Black community. Brady pleads with his readers to work with southern Black leaders to thwart the efforts of communists and race agitators: "Above all, the negro of the South should be thoroughly convinced of the tremendous effort which has been made, and is being made, to socialize and communize the minority groups of this country. The Southern negro is a loyal American and nothing should be left unturned to see that he remains so."¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ Brady, 72.

¹⁴⁷ Brady, 72.

The last strategy Brady utilizes in his calls to action is the most far-reaching—*representation*. Here, the strategy of representation refers to efforts seeking to maximize southern representation at the federal levels of U.S. government. This strategy aligns with what Steiner calls the fundamentalist “impulse for hegemony.”¹⁴⁸ This impulse often emerges in response to a perceived loss of hegemony, sometimes articulated by fundamentalist rhetoric as being in “exile” or feeling like “aliens in their own land.”¹⁴⁹ Corey Robin calls this perceived loss of hegemony a reactionary response that underpins much of conservative politics. Robin defines conservatism as “a meditation on—and the theoretical rendition of—the felt experience of having power, seeing it threatened, and trying to win it back.”¹⁵⁰ In many ways, Brady’s treatise and the subsequent formation of Citizens’ Councils represent a conservative response to *Brown v. Board of Education*. For Brady, conservative southerners, though they may be beaten now, will prevail in the end. In the face of ridicule and apparent media misrepresentation, Brady assures his audience that southerners can “take it” because they are waiting for a not-so-distant day when “all the conservative Americans will unite” and rise in the “lonely fight to protect and preserve America from Godless Communism!”¹⁵¹

To counter the loss of southern hegemony and to reinforce the conservative bloc, Brady calls for increased southern representation in the federal government through several avenues.

¹⁴⁸ Steiner, *The Rhetoric of Operation Rescue: Projecting the Christian Pro-Life Message*, 65.

¹⁴⁹ Almond, Appleby, and Sivan, *Strong Religion: The Rise of Fundamentalism Around the World.*, 24–26.

¹⁵⁰ Robin, *The Reactionary Mind*, 4.

¹⁵¹ Brady, “Segregation and the South,” 4.

First, he calls for changing the way Supreme Court justices and attorney generals are chosen. Instead of those positions being appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, Brady proposes they be elected positions. This measure would subject those offices to the “checks and balances” of the American voter. Second, Brady called for more stringent qualifications for nominees to the Supreme Court, qualifications that would be ensured in an amendment to the U.S. Constitution. According to Brady, eligible nominees must be native-born Americans and hold bachelor’s and law degrees from reputable colleges or universities. They would also be required to have been actively involved in law practice for at least 12 years and have served as a judge for at least 12 years in the circuit, district, or federal courts.¹⁵² These requirements would disqualify younger, presumably more liberal candidates, thereby limiting the pool of eligible candidates. Fewer opponents may make southern representatives more likely to secure seats on the Supreme Court. Third, Brady also sought an increase in southern representation by calling for another amendment to the U.S. Constitution, one to “protect the sovereign rights of the States.” Lastly, he encouraged southern states to utilize the Electoral College to “prevent the executive branch of our Government from speeding us on the communist road of destruction.”¹⁵³ These proposals demonstrate Brady’s willingness to use the lawful mechanisms of American democracy to restore and preserve southern hegemony, yet another point of departure from himself and the KKK.

¹⁵² Brady, *Black Monday: Segregation or Amalgamation. America Has Its Choice*, 81.

¹⁵³ Brady, 78.

Brady's Fundamentalist Persona

In his argument and calls to action, Brady is careful to cast himself and other conservative segregationists as *respectable* defenders of American culture and democracy. As a southerner and a Mississippian, Brady is aware of how previous defenders of segregation, like Theodore Bilbo, often trafficked in hyperbole and demagoguery.¹⁵⁴ His concern with respectability is evident in his attempts to distinguish Citizens' Councils from the KKK. In "Segregation and the South," Brady assures his audience that there are "no Ku Klux Klan in Mississippi...the Klan is negligible in the South." Instead, Brady assures his audience, the people who have organized to resist integration in public schools, are respectable members of their communities. According to Brady, Citizens' Councils comprise "lawyers, doctors, ministers, industrialists, merchants, employees, farmers, plantation owners, and laborers."¹⁵⁵ Furthermore, Brady distances council members from the KKK by emphasizing how Citizens' Councils include "Jews, Catholics, and Protestants alike." By accepting two groups historically targeted by the KKK—Jews and Catholics—Brady attempts to show how Citizens' Councils are representative of the diversity of their communities. Brady is also keen on highlighting the lawfulness of Citizens' Council advocacy. He argues that council members are not motivated by the old bigotry of the KKK. Rather, they "subscribe to an oath of non-violence and pledge to support in every legal way possible the maintenance of segregation and the preservation of the rights of the

¹⁵⁴ Jason Morgan Ward, *Defending White Democracy: The Making of a Segregationist Movement and the Remaking of Racial Politics, 1936-1965* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 68.

¹⁵⁵ Brady, "Segregation and the South," 10–11.

States of this Union.”¹⁵⁶ In *Black Monday*, Brady reminds his readers to be firm in their resistance to integration but to stay lawful in their actions against it. He instructs his readers to “[b]e determined, yes, but not impulsive. Be resolute, yes, but not violent.”¹⁵⁷ By casting Citizens’ Council members as lawful and respectable defenders of American whiteness, Brady is able to legitimize their agenda, despite its similarity to that of the KKK.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined how fundamentalist argumentation can be visible in discourses unrelated to religion. In Thomas Brady’s argument in favor of segregation, whiteness was fundamental to the success of American civilization. His argument exhibited all the usual themes of fundamentalist argumentation: he established the fundamentals (whiteness) of a universal identity (American culture). For Brady, the fundamentality of whiteness to civilizational progress was authorized by both God and Nature. For Brady, whiteness is implemented through the immutable and natural processes of cultural evolution and thus is not subject to the whims of judicial rulings. As with many other fundamentalist arguments, Brady presents the purity of whiteness as necessary for the success of civilization. Brady insisted, however, that the integrity of whiteness is threatened by outsiders like communists, northern Black equality activists, and people he defined as of “mixed race.” Brady argues that these threats aim to contaminate the white race through miscegenation, thus crippling white democracy

¹⁵⁶ Brady, 11.

¹⁵⁷ Brady, *Black Monday: Segregation or Amalgamation. America Has Its Choice*, 88.

and American civilization. To preserve and protect whiteness, he concluded, segregation must be restored in the South.

Brady's fundamentalist argument reveals the importance of respectability in this genre of argument. While Brady's segregationist agenda may share many of the aims of racists, eugenicists, and the KKK, Brady's concern for intellectual respectability demonstrates an attempt to cultivate a rational and respectable persona. Brady's concern for respectability also reveals his appeals to a universal audience and his attempt to persuade an audience that is more encompassing than southern segregationists. For an argument that seeks to establish the fundamentals of a universal identity, appealing to the rationality of the universal audience is paramount.

Chapter Three: Fundamentalist Argumentation in Barry Commoner's *The Closing Circle*

“We have met the enemy and he is us.”
-Pogo¹

In the 1970s, concerns about the environment obtained heightened levels of visibility in American public discourse and policy. In February of 1970, *TIME* magazine observed that the growing national concern about the environment had “reached an unprecedented level of intensity.”² In the same issue, *TIME* declared the environment to be “the gut issue that can unify a polarized nation in the 1970s.”³ Apprehension about the state of the environment was verbalized in both national and local public discourses. In his 1970 State of the Union Address, President Richard Nixon (R) proclaimed that the “great question” of the decade was whether Americans would “surrender” to their surroundings or whether we would “make our peace with nature and begin to make reparations” for the damage done to the environment. In this speech, Nixon called the objective of “restoring nature to its natural state” a bipartisan one, a concern for every American, “beyond party and beyond factions.” Nixon urged the nation to act swiftly so that clean air, clean water, and “open spaces” could once again be the “birthright of every

¹ Walt Kelly, *Pogo: We Have Met the Enemy and He Is Us* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), 6. Pogo was an animated possum and a character created by cartoonist and satirist Walt Kelly. Pogo appeared on several Earth Day posters in 1970. See Stefan Kanfer, “Going Pogo,” *City Journal*, Autumn 2011, <https://www.city-journal.org/html/going-pogo-13429.html>.

² Henry R. Luce, “A Letter from the Publisher,” *TIME Magazine* 95, no. 5 (February 2, 1970): 5.

³ “Fighting to Save the Earth from Man.”

American.”⁴ On a policy level, 1970 was the year Nixon signed the National Environmental Policy Act.⁵ He also signed amendments and extensions to the Clean Air Act of 1970.⁶ Furthermore, Nixon issued an executive order establishing the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to enforce “environmental protection standards consistent with national environmental goals.”⁷

On April 22, 1970, the first Earth Day was observed in several cities across the United States.⁸ In New York City, Union Square was closed off to automobile traffic and more than 100,000 people attended Earth Day teach-ins or participated in peaceful rallies.⁹ In Washington, D.C. alone, an estimated 10,000 people attended an Earth Day rally and rock music concert at the Washington Monument.¹⁰ People held signs that featured anti-war slogans like, “War is the

⁴ Richard Nixon, “Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union,” The American Presidency Project, January 22, 1970, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/241063>.

⁵ *National Environmental Policy Act of 1969*, Public Law 91-190, *U.S. Statutes at Large* 83 (1970): 852-856.

⁶ *Clean Air Act; Solid Waste Disposal Act, Amendments*, Public Law 91-316, *U.S. Statutes at Large* 84 (1970): 416.

⁷ Government’s Environmentally Related Activities—Message from the President of the United States on July 9, 1970 (H. Doc. No. 91-366), 91st Cong., 2^d sess., *Congressional Record* 116, pt. 17: 23530

⁸ Fred Ferretti, “Broadcasters Give Earth Day Special Attention: Networks, Public TV and Local Stations to Emphasize Ecological Problems,” *The New York Times*, April 22, 1970, 73.

⁹ Joseph Lelyveld, “Mood Is Joyful as City Gives Its Support: Millions Join Earth Day Observances Across the Nation,” *The New York Times*, April 23, 1970, 30.

¹⁰ Gladwin Hill, “Activity Ranges from Oratory to Legislation,” *The New York Times*, April 23, 1970, 1.

worst pollution.”¹¹ Other signs expressed concern about the overpopulation and encouraged families to “Stop at two” (children).¹²

The increased national interest in protecting and restoring the environment can be credited to many voices of the growing environmentalist movement. One of those voices was that of Barry Commoner. In February of 1970, *TIME* magazine published its first issue of its newly established environment section. Commoner was featured on both the front cover and the cover story of that issue. Choosing Commoner to represent the magazine’s inaugural environment issue highlighted his role in the burgeoning environmental movement.¹³ *TIME* called Commoner the “Paul Revere of ecology” and “a voice of reason in a lunatic world.”¹⁴ Yet until *TIME*’s cover story, Commoner was relatively unknown outside of academic and ecologically-minded circles.¹⁵ However, by 1970, Commoner gained national attention for being one of the leading voices in the movement to protect the environment from degradation.

Commoner published several books on the relationship between ecology and human society, including, *Science and Survival* (1966), *The Closing Circle* (1971), *The Poverty of Power* (1976), and *Making Peace with the Planet* (1990). *The Closing Circle* was a national bestseller and one of the first environmental texts to introduce the public to the idea of

¹¹ Lelyveld, “Mood Is Joyful as City Gives Its Support,” 30.

¹² Luther J. Carter, “Earth Day: A Fresh Way of Perceiving the Environment,” *Science* 168, no. 3931 (May 1, 1970): 558, <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.168.3931.558>.

¹³ Luce, “A Letter from the Publisher,” 5.

¹⁴ “Paul Revere of Ecology,” 58.

¹⁵ Luce, “A Letter from the Publisher,” 5.

sustainability as a strategy for environmental rehabilitation. Its popularity was due, in part, to the way Commoner articulated environmental problems, like pollution, as systemic issues that required the restructuring of society. Unlike other environmental or nature writers at the time, Commoner viewed the degradation of nature as a synecdoche for a system that was fundamentally at odds with human life. In an interview with the *Scientific American*, Commoner asserted that “the environmental crisis arises from a fundamental fault: our systems of production—in industry, agriculture, energy and transportation—essential as they are, make people sick and die.”¹⁶ In *The Closing Circle*, Commoner approached the environmental problem as a function of economic, technological, and social forces, rather than the result of increased demand from a booming global population. Commoner’s attention to the structures underpinning environmental crises earned him the title as one of the founders of the environmental justice movement.¹⁷

In this chapter, I argue that Commoner’s message in *The Closing Circle* (1971) is a demonstration of fundamentalist argumentation. This case is noteworthy because it illuminates the use of fundamentalist argument in what is widely understood to be a progressive discourse – environmentalism. Yet, Commoner’s argument features many, if not all, the hallmarks of fundamentalist argumentation— identifying the fundamentals of a universal identity (the earth and ecosphere as the foundation of human life on earth), emphasizing the importance of keeping the fundamentals pure (free of human-made pollution), linking threats to the fundamentals with

¹⁶ Alan Hall, “Interview with Barry Commoner,” *Scientific American*, June 23, 1997.

¹⁷ McGowan, “Remembering Barry Commoner.”

threats to the existence of the universal identity (the destruction of the ecosphere threatens human existence on earth), and calls to preserve, protect, and restore the fundamentals of identity (we must return the earth and ecosphere to a balanced state).

Despite Commoner's use of fundamentalist argument, studying environmentalism as a fundamentalist discourse may seem out of place. It is often thought that fundamentalism is most closely associated with conservative positions and causes, as is evident in this project so far.¹⁸ However, if we go by Corey Robin's notion of "conservatism" as a reactionary response to progress, we can see how environmentalist rhetoric, especially that of Barry Commoner's discourse, fits the mold. Commoner, and other postwar environmentalists, critiqued the direction and pace of scientific and technological progress. They argued that the degradation of nature not only destroyed plant and animal species but posed a significant threat to human survival on earth.¹⁹ Michael Egan characterized American environmentalism as "reactionary" in many instances largely because it addressed "pressing issues of survival."²⁰ In addition to its critique of progress, environmentalist discourse is reactionary in order to adapt to constantly evolving information landscape. For example, in his study of the history of radiation safety, Scott Kirsch

¹⁸ Robin, *The Reactionary Mind*.

¹⁹ See Fairfield Osborn, *Our Plundered Planet* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1948); William Vogt, *Road to Survival* (New York: William Sloane Associates, Inc., 1948); Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (Greenwich, CT: Fawcett Publications, 1962); Paul Ehrlich, *The Population Bomb* (Binghamton, NY: Vail-Ballou Press, 1970); Barry Commoner, *Science and Survival* (New York: The Viking Press, 1967).

²⁰ Michael Egan, *Barry Commoner and the Science of Survival* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007), 3.

argues that the response to radiation risks has been a “largely a reactionary one” in order to accommodate “new scientific knowledge of environmental health risks.”²¹

Although environmentalism is most closely aligned with liberal and progressive causes, it has had its champions on both sides of the political spectrum. After all, Richard Nixon, a Republican and conservative president, signed pivotal environmental protection legislation. Theodore Roosevelt, another Republican, advocated for environmental conservation and established the national park system. Conservation rhetoric, one of the earliest iterations of environmentalist discourse, utilized conservative ideas about resource management and proper human stewardship of the earth. Conservation rhetoric often idealized rural and arcadian ways of life, expressing a longing for a time when the corrupting forces of urban modernity were kept at bay.²² Furthermore, anti-environmentalist rhetoric often appealed to progressive ideology to discredit environmentalist critique as hyperbolic and fanatical.²³ M. Jimmie Killingsworth and Jaqueline S. Palmer observe that American conservatism, at least since the Reagan era, had embraced the idea of progress as “the ideology of the status quo.” Because of modern conservatism’s defense of technological progress, Killingsworth and Palmer observe that

²¹ Scott Kirsch, “Harold Knapp and the Geography of Normal Controversy: Radioiodine in the Historical Environment,” *Osiris* 19 (2004): 170.

²² See Peter J. Schmitt, *Back to Nature: The Arcadian Myth of Urban America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969).

²³ M. Jimmie Killingsworth and Jacqueline S. Palmer, “Millennial Ecology: The Apocalyptic Narrative from Silent Spring to Global Warming,” in *Green Culture: Environmental Rhetoric in Contemporary America*, ed. Carl G. Herndl and Stuart C. Brown (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 24.

ecological radicalism “appears to embrace something very much like traditional conservatism.”²⁴ Environmentalism’s complicated relationship with progress and its concern with human survival in nature makes it an exemplary case for exploring fundamentalist argument.

In this analysis of Commoner’s fundamentalist argument, I situate *The Closing Circle* in its post-World War II context. I then explore how *The Closing Circle* related to, and diverged from, other environmentalist writers at the time. Against this backdrop, I explore how Commoner utilized fundamentalist argumentation to make a case for preserving and protecting the environment.

Barry Commoner: The Father of Modern Ecology

Barry Commoner was a microbiologist at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. He was born in Brooklyn, New York on May 28, 1917, to parents of Russian Jewish immigrant experience.²⁵ He studied zoology at Columbia University and earned a Ph.D. in biology from Harvard University in 1941. In 1966, Commoner founded the Center for the Biology of Natural Systems to support ecological research.²⁶ He was also the founder of *Environment*, a magazine for science, policy, and sustainable development.²⁷ In 1980, Commoner made an unsuccessful

²⁴ Killingsworth and Palmer, 42.

²⁵ “Paul Revere of Ecology.”

²⁶ The center now resides at Queens College in New York. In 2014, the center was renamed The Barry Commoner Center for Health and Environment. See “Re-Naming CNBS to the Barry Commoner Center of Health and the Environment,” The Barry Commoner Center of Health and the Environment, 2012, <https://web.archive.org/web/20141219204636/http://commonercenter.org/>.

²⁷ McGowan, “Remembering Barry Commoner.”

bid for the presidency by running on an ecological platform for the Citizen's Party.²⁸ At his death in 2012, Peter Dreier of *The Nation* called Commoner "the most prominent modern environmentalist" second only to Rachel Carson.²⁹ ³⁰ The *New York Times* hailed Commoner as "planet Earth's lifeguard" and the "founder of modern ecology."³¹

The Post War Period: Its Triumphs and Disasters

Commoner wrote *The Closing Circle* amidst tremendous demographic, economic, and technological change, all of which had consequences on the environment. After World War II, the United States experienced a rapid increase in its population. The steady increase in births between the years of 1946 until 1964 earned the moniker of the "Baby Boom."³² In 1957, at the peak of the Baby Boom, there were 4.3 million births. In comparison, there were 2.89 million births in 1945.³³ The increase in the population has been attributed to several causes. Richard

²⁸ Stanley Weiss, "The Shocking Campaign Ad That Put a Third-Party Candidate on the Political Map," *TIME Magazine*, December 2, 2016, <https://time.com/4584919/barry-commoner-shocking-ad/>.

²⁹ Peter Dreier, "Remembering Barry Commoner," *The Nation*, October 1, 2012, <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/remembering-barry-commoner/>.

³⁰ Given Rachel Carson's importance to the American environmentalist movement, the reader may wonder why she is not the focus of this chapter. I chose Commoner for this project because fundamentalist argument is more visible in his writings than in Carson's.

³¹ "Scientist, Candidate and Planet Earth's Lifeguard," *New York Times*, October 1, 2012, <https://www.proquest.com/blogs-podcasts-websites/scientist-candidate-planet-earth-s-lifeguard/docview/2215622033/se-2?accountid=14696>.

³² Landon Y. Jones, *Great Expectations: America and the Baby Boom Generation* (New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1980).

³³ N. Gregory Mankiw and David. N Weil, "The Baby Boom, the Baby Bust, and the Housing Market," *Regional Science and Urban Economics* 19 (1989): 235.

Easterlin argued the increase in births among the urban white population was due to an expansion of the economy and low unemployment rates following World War II.³⁴ Jan Van Bevel and David Reher also found that the marriage boom after World War II was a significant contribution to the increase in postwar births. They found that not only did more marriages occur, but often at younger ages, with higher levels of marital fertility.³⁵ In other words, more couples were getting married and having more children per family.

Predictably, the population boom created an increased demand for housing. In response, the Housing Act of 1949 was passed to expand Federal Housing Administration (FHA) loans and provided federal funds to build 800,000 public housing units.³⁶ Leo Grebler found that between 1951 and 1957, up to 51 percent of the homes purchased in the United States were a result of FHA and VA loans.³⁷ Kenneth Jackson notes that these programs stipulated terms that favored suburban construction over urban living. Between 1940 and 1960, home ownership in America grew by 20 percent and most of those homes were in the suburbs.³⁸ With the increase in suburbanization came a dependence on automobiles and automobile dependent infrastructure like an extensive highway network. The Transportation Research Board found that suburbanization

³⁴ Richard A. Easterlin, "The American Baby Boom in Historical Perspective," *The American Economic Review* 51, no. 5 (1961): 898–99.

³⁵ Jan Van Bavel and David S. Reher, "The Baby Boom and Its Causes: What We Know and What We Need to Know," *Population and Development Review* 39, no. 2 (2013): 278–79.

³⁶ *Housing Act of 1949*, Public Law 81-171, *U.S. Statutes at Large* 63, (1949): 413-414.

³⁷ Leo Grebler, *Housing Issues in Economic Stabilization Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 6.

³⁸ Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 203–8.

development patterns have enormous costs to the environment, such as the use of vast quantities of undeveloped land, an increased dependence on imported petroleum, and an increase in greenhouse gas emissions, all of which pollute the earth and contribute to climate change.³⁹

In addition to the increase in suburbanization, the postwar period was characterized by a culture of consumerism. Lizabeth Cohen observes that the United States experienced a “fundamental shift” to its economy, politics, culture after World War II. This shift entailed major consequences to how Americans “made a living, where they dwelled, how they interacted with others, [and] what and how they consumed.”⁴⁰ Following the experiences of the Great Depression and World War II, the American public embraced a return to peace and the “promise of restored individual and national affluence.”⁴¹ This promise was accompanied with a wide array of affordable and mass-produced consumer goods. These products included significant purchases like automobiles and household appliances, items which were not previously as accessible at such a wide scale. Additionally, the postwar period saw the increased development and use of synthetic detergents, fertilizers, textiles, and other manufactured goods. Manufacturing these goods was cheaper and more efficient than ever and Americans were encouraged to consume more and dispose of more. For example, in 1960, Coca-Cola began

³⁹ National Research Council (U.S.). Committee for the Study on the Relationships Among Development Patterns Vehicle Miles Traveled, and Energy Consumption. “Driving and the Built Environment: The Effects of Compact Development on Motorized Travel, Energy Use, and Co2 Emissions” (Washington, D.C.: Transportation Research Board, 2009).

⁴⁰ Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumer's Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Knopf, 2006), 8.

⁴¹ Egan, *Barry Commoner and the Science of Survival*, 15.

bottling their drinks in cans, instead of glass bottles that could be returned to the store and reused.⁴² However, disposable items like cans, plastics, synthetic fabrics, and other nonbiodegradable items filled landfills with waste that resisted breaking down over time.

Technological advancements during the postwar period were not limited to consumer goods and industrial chemicals. The postwar technological revolution included a rapid expansion of nuclear weapons development and testing. Following the use of atomic bombs against Japan during World War II, the United States created and tested even more potent nuclear weapons. Between 1945 and 1961, the United States tested nuclear weapons both in the atmosphere and underground. Most of the testing occurred at the Nevada Test site and the Marshall Islands. Other testing sites included New Mexico, Colorado, Mississippi, Alaska, Christmas Island, Johnston Atoll, and over the South Atlantic Ocean.⁴³ At the time, the Atomic Energy Commission publicly deemed the tests safe for humans.⁴⁴ However, it was eventually discovered that the fallout from the tests fell out of the atmosphere much sooner than expected and with higher levels of radioactivity.⁴⁵ As I will elaborate later, Barry Commoner was involved with this discovery as well as its impact on the trajectory of the environmental movement.

⁴² Methodologie, *125 Years Sharing Happiness: A Short History of the Coca-Cola Company* (Richmond, British Columbia: Blanchette Press, 2011), 16, <https://www.coca-colacompany.com/content/dam/journey/us/en/our-company/history/coca-cola-a-short-history-125-years-booklet.pdf>.

⁴³ “United States Nuclear Tests: July 1945 through September 1992” (Las Vegas, NV: U.S. Department of Energy, Nevada Operations Office, December 2000), vii.

⁴⁴ Atomic Energy Commission, “The Thirteenth Semiannual Report of the Atomic Energy Commission” (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, January 1, 1953), 124.

⁴⁵ Herbert M. Clark, “The Occurrence of an Unusually High-Level Radioactive Rainout in the Area of Troy, N.Y.,” *Science* 119 (May 7, 1954): 619–22.

The Idea of Progress & Its Limits

Despite some of the negative consequences of technological advances, Americans have historically expressed an unwavering faith in science and technology. In *The Idea of Progress*, historian Charles Beard expressed this optimism by declaring technology “the supreme instrument of modern progress” and the “fundamental basis of modern civilization.”⁴⁶ Progress represented one of the ideological engines driving what Commoner called the “technological revolution.” In his discussion of the concept, historian J.B. Bury defines the idea of the progress as the notion that “civilization has moved, is moving, and will move in a desirable direction.”⁴⁷ The idea of progress assumes that the present stages of history are improvements upon the past. Nannerl Keohane describes the idea of progress as a “durable myth” and a “rhetorically persuasive ideology that allows people to make sense of the past experiment and face the future armed with hope.”⁴⁸

The impulse to view human developments as moving towards a more desirable condition is not a new one. Arthur Lovejoy and George Boas found early references to the notion of progress in Greek and Roman philosophies.⁴⁹ However, it was in the Enlightenment that the idea

⁴⁶ Charles A. Beard, “Introduction,” in *The Idea of Progress: An Inquiry into Its Origin and Growth*, by J.B. Bury (New York: Macmillan, 1932), xxii, xx. Also, see Charles A. Beard, ed., *A Century of Progress* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1933), 3–19.

⁴⁷ J.B. Bury, *The Idea of Progress: An Inquiry into Its Origin and Growth* (New York: Macmillan, 1932), 2.

⁴⁸ Nannerl O. Keohane, “The Enlightenment Idea of Progress Revisited,” in *Progress and Its Discontents*, ed. Gabriel A. Almond, Marvin Chodorow, and Roy Harvey Pearce (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 22.

⁴⁹ Arthur O. Lovejoy and George Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1935).

of progress flourished and from which it became the “dominant doctrine in Western culture” until the middle of the twentieth century.⁵⁰ The idea of progress is built upon several convictions that originate in the Judeo-Christian tradition. The most central tenant of progress is the belief that human beings were given license by God to dominate nature and develop the earth. This belief privileges control, power, and domination as the logical conclusions to increased human knowledge about nature.⁵¹ The scientific objective of understanding variables to predict and control outcomes can be traced to the belief that humans are authorized to dictate nature.

In addition to the desire to dominate nature, progress has historically been marked by humans’ separation from nature. In the eighteenth century, “progress” was closely associated with refinement and civility, whereas “primitive” was synonymous with crudity and savagery.⁵² Keohane argues this conception of human civilization and culture came from the eighteenth-century ideal of “artifice” that was the “highest natural achievement of our species” because it motivated humans to strived to ascend from “raw nature.”⁵³ Benjamin Lincoln, an American Revolutionary general, expressed this sentiment in 1792 when he declared that “civilization directs us to remove as fast as possible that natural growth from the lands.”⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Keohane, “The Enlightenment Idea of Progress Revisited,” 21.

⁵¹ Keohane, 27.

⁵² Keohane, 24.

⁵³ Keohane, 24.

⁵⁴ Quoted in Roy Harvey Pearce, *The Savages of America* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1953), 68.

Another Judeo-Christian belief that undergirds the idea of progress is the belief in revelation, or the conviction that over time, truths will be revealed to humanity. Robert Merton argues that image of the modern scientist standing “on the shoulders of giants,” is rooted in the belief of continuous revelation. This metaphor credits the scholars and thinkers of the past for their contributions to cumulative human knowledge. The image also propagates the idea that our contemporaries can see more of the world than past scholars and thinkers ever did. When it comes to the doctrine of progress, the belief in revelation assumes the more knowledge humans accumulate, the better they will be in making decisions that would maximize happiness and quality of life. Keohane elegantly conveys the relationship between revelation and progress by stating:

In its most robust and purest form, the belief in progress affirms that increase in human knowledge, the establishment of human control over nature, and the perfecting of moral excellences of the species will guarantee one another, with a concomitant increase in human happiness.⁵⁵

In addition to revelation, faith in progress is also predicated on the Judeo-Christian belief that history will ultimately end with happiness prevailing on earth, at least for the chosen few.⁵⁶ When applied to progress, this belief explains America’s persistent faith in progress and its vehicles—science and technology. Even in times of unrest and uncertainty, such as during the Civil War, pandemics, the World Wars, and the Depression, Americans have historically viewed the future as more abundant, more efficient, and happier than the present or the past. This optimism was especially evident at the start of the twentieth century. On January 1, 1901, the

⁵⁵ Keohane, “The Enlightenment Idea of Progress Revisited,” 26.

⁵⁶ Keohane, 27.

New York World declared that it was “optimistic enough to believe that the twentieth century...will meet and overcome all perils and prove to be the best this steadily improving planet has ever seen.”⁵⁷

By the middle of the twentieth century, the shiny promises of progress began to dull. While Americans were dazzled with the miracles of science and technology, they were also horrified by their unexpected consequences. Perhaps the most precarious example of the unintended consequences of progress was radioactive fallout from nuclear weapons testing. In fact, Barry Commoner’s first foray into environmentalism was investigating the impact of radioactive fallout on public health.⁵⁸ In the 1950s, there was concern that nuclear weapons testing in the deserts of Nevada was depositing radioactive fallout and debris hundreds, if not thousands, of miles away. Despite official assurances of the safety of the testing sites, Commoner and the Great St. Louis Citizens’ Committee for Nuclear Information (CNI) investigated the question for themselves. The CNI designed and conducted the “Baby Tooth Survey” to test the levels and geographic distribution of a radioactive element called strontium-90 in the “deciduous teeth” (baby teeth) of thousands of children. The CNI organized a campaign to collect 50,000 baby teeth of all kinds per year from the greater St. Louis area for ten years. The campaign included working with pharmacies and dental schools to collect teeth and organize tooth drives. To encourage community participation in the collection campaign, a button with a

⁵⁷ Quoted in Joel Colton, “Foreword,” in *Progress and Its Discontents*, ed. Gabriel A. Almond, Marvin Chodorow, and Roy Harvey Pearce (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1982), x.

⁵⁸ McGowan, “Remembering Barry Commoner.”

cartoon child's head smiling widely with a gap-tooth grin was sent to each person who contributed a tooth to the survey. The button featured the phrase, "I gave my tooth to science," a slogan that would become synonymous with the campaign.⁵⁹

The results of the results of the survey were alarming. The study found that children born after 1954, after the advent of the weapons testing, had significantly higher levels of strontium-90 in their teeth than children born before 1945.⁶⁰ Dangerous levels of strontium-90 in bones and teeth had the potential to cause cancer and other negative health outcomes for those affected. When these results of the Baby Tooth Survey reached the press, a national uproar ensued. Following the publication of the Baby Tooth Survey results, the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union signed the Limited Test Ban Treaty of 1963, a treaty that placed a moratorium on all forms of atmospheric nuclear testing by the three powers. Commoner and the CNI are credited to have been partially responsible for providing evidence for the public health implications of nuclear weapons testing and thus garner public pressure for the treaty.⁶¹

The Voices of Dissent

Commoner was one of many voices in a genre of nature writing that Frederick Buell calls "crisis conceptualization" literature. The most famous text in this genre is Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962). M. Jimmie Killingsworth and Jaqueline S. Palmer describe Carson's book as the

⁵⁹ Louise Zibold Reiss, "Strontium-90 Absorption by Deciduous Teeth," *Science* 134, no. 3491 (1961): 1672.

⁶⁰ Louise Zibold Reiss, "Strontium-90 Absorption by Deciduous Teeth," *Science* 134, no. 3491 (1961): 1673

⁶¹ Egan, *Barry Commoner and the Science of Survival*, 53.

one to have “inaugurated the modern environmental movement.”⁶² In her book, Carson’s account of the environment features an ecosystem devastated by pollution. Pesticides and other man-made chemicals not only contaminated the water and soil, but also poisoned plants, animals, and humans. Carson equated the danger of pesticides with that of nuclear annihilation: “Along with the possibility of the extinction of mankind by nuclear war, the central problem of our age has therefore become the contamination of man’s total environment with substances of incredible potential for harm.”⁶³ Carson’s eerie descriptions of nature being “silenced” by human-made pollutants warned the American public of the possible end of nature and the human species.⁶⁴

Another significant environmental crisis text of the postwar period was Paul Ehrlich’s *The Population Bomb* (1970). Ehrlich approached the environmental crisis through the lens of overpopulation. In his book, Ehrlich presented a future where the full consequences of the Baby Boom were realized. The overpopulated earth would be heavily urbanized, covered with slum-like cities and blighted with vermin and disease. The overpopulated earth would witness a “per capita shortage of medical personnel” and “populations of disease-harboring organisms such as rats.” Ancient diseases eradicated by modern medicine, like bubonic plague and cholera, would reappear and ravage whole communities.⁶⁵ Instead of promising happiness and an improved

⁶² Killingsworth and Palmer, “Millennial Ecology: The Apocalyptic Narrative from Silent Spring to Global Warming,” 18.

⁶³ Carson, *Silent Spring*, 18.

⁶⁴ Carson, 213.

⁶⁵ Ehrlich, *The Population Bomb*, 60–61.

quality of life, Ehrlich's vision of progress, like Carson's, painted a forbidding picture of what the future holds.

Commoner's Construction of the Situation

With regards to the environment, the postwar world can be characterized as struggle between two equally compelling forces—the drive for progress, consumerism, and hegemonic power, and the grim, but growing, awareness of the earth's limits to those ambitions. In 1971, Barry Commoner wrote *The Closing Circle* to explain that struggle, why it existed, and offer a way for humanity to move forward without forfeiting its survival on earth. In *The Closing Circle*, Commoner articulated the situation as one in need of two things: the need for the American public to understand the systemic causes of the environmental crisis, and the need to rethink the dominant scientific paradigms of the day. Commoner acknowledged that while the public was invested in saving nature, it needed to understand the structural causes of nature's destruction. Commoner wrote: "Earth Week convinced me of the urgency of a deeper public understanding of the origins of the environmental crisis and its possible cures. This is what this book is about. It is an effort to find out what the environmental crisis *means* (emphasis in original)."⁶⁶ In a time when the theories about the causes of environmental crisis were varied (and sometimes contradictory), Commoner sought to provide clarity about the roots of the issue.

In his introduction, Commoner asks the reader to consider the possible sources of the crisis:

By which weapon? By whose hand? Are we driving the ecosphere to destruction simply by our growing numbers? By our greedy accumulation of wealth? Or are the machines which we have built to gain this wealth—the magnificent

⁶⁶ Barry Commoner, *The Closing Circle: Nature, Man, and Technology*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: Bantam Books, 1974), 7.

technology that now feeds us out of neat packages, that clothes us in man-made fibers, that surrounds us with new chemical creations—at fault?⁶⁷

In asking those questions, Commoner alludes to an uncomfortable truth—that the conveniences of modern life may possibly be its destruction.

For Commoner, the environmental crisis was not merely a manifestation of greed, waste, or rampant fertility. Instead, the environmental crisis was a consequence of unrestrained progress. In his reflection on the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty of 1963, Commoner proclaimed that the treaty “established that nuclear weaponry is a *scientific* failure (emphasis in original).⁶⁸ To put it more precisely, Commoner critiqued the scientific community’s blind devotion to progress and its fixation on technological development without regard to the environmental or human consequences. For Commoner, radioactive fallout was evidence that science can threaten the survival of humans on earth. Commoner writes:

Our experience with nuclear power tells us that modern technology has achieved a scale and intensity that is beginning to match that of the global system in which we live. It reminds us that we cannot wield this power without deeply intruding on the delicate environmental fabric that supports us. It warns us that our capability to intrude on the environment far outstrips our knowledge of the consequences. It tells us that every environmental incursion, whatever its benefits, has a cost—which, from the still silent testimony of the world’s nuclear weapons, may be survival.⁶⁹

With human life on earth at stake, Commoner presents a fundamentalist argument in defense of the environment in his 1971 book *The Closing Circle*. In the following pages, I

⁶⁷ Commoner, 9.

⁶⁸ Commoner, 53.

⁶⁹ Commoner, 61.

explicate the fundamentalist premises present in Commoner's rhetoric. Furthermore, I show that despite his use of a fundamentalist argument, Commoner uses his message to encourage more deliberation when it comes to science and society.

Fundamentalist Argument Theme: The Earth and Ecosphere are Fundamental

The first task in Commoner's fundamentalist argument is to establish the fundamentals of a universal identity. In the context of environment, the universal identity to which Commoner refers and seeks to preserve is the human species. In his fundamentalist argument, Commoner identifies two separate, but interrelated, fundamentals of life: the earth and the ecosphere. The first fundamental Commoner identifies is the earth, or the "source of life itself."⁷⁰ By earth, Commoner is referring to the planet's raw resources and conditions that support life, "earth's thin skin of air, water, and soil, and the radiant solar fire that bathes it."⁷¹ Under those conditions, the first organisms were able to appear on the planet millions of years ago, develop into more complex species, and build the habitats that support the diversity of life. "As it grew," Commoner narrates, "life evolved, its old forms transforming the earth's skin and new ones adapting to these changes."⁷²

For Commoner, the fundamental for life on earth is the ecosphere. The ecosphere is the complex system of interdependent relationships between organisms that sustain life. The ecosphere is designed by living organisms and sustained by them. According to Commoner, the

⁷⁰ Commoner, 7.

⁷¹ Commoner, 7.

⁷² Commoner, 7.

ecosphere is separate from the earth, but dependent on its resources to build a habitable ecosystem for plants, animals, and humans. While the earth provides the raw materials necessary for life, the ecosphere provides the symbiotic context within which life is born, thrives, reproduces, declines, and dies. For example, plants take nutrients from the air and soil and combine them with energy from the sun to grow. Insects may feed on those plants, which in turn pollinate those plants in the process, helping them reproduce. Insects are also nourishment to larger animals, who may end up becoming the nourishment for even larger animals or humans. When each of those organisms die, they are integrated back into the soil, thereby enriching it with nutrients for plants to use. Thus, the interdependent ecospheric cycle continues, evolves, and adapts to changing conditions. In his narrative on the origins of life on earth, Commoner describes the ecosphere as a function of “[l]iving things [who] multiplied in number, variety, and habitat until they formed a global network.” As Commoner explained, “[t]his is the *ecosphere*, the home that life has built for itself on the planet’s outer surface (emphasis in original).”⁷³

How do humans fit into the ecosphere? According to Commoner, there should be no contradiction between human activity and the ecosphere. As biological organisms, human beings are participants in the environmental system, “a subsidiary part of the whole.”⁷⁴ According to Commoner, the ethos of being in a mutually dependent relationship with the environment existed in humans before industrialization, urbanization, and modernity. Commoner argues that in “primitive” times, before the idea of progress separated humans from nature, a person would be

⁷³ Commoner, 7.

⁷⁴ Commoner, 11.

seen as ‘a dependent part of nature, a frail reed in a hard world governed by natural laws that must be obeyed if he is to survive.’⁷⁵ In abiding by those natural laws, humans are able to successfully survive the sometimes-harsh conditions of their ecosphere. For example, Commoner cites the Ju/’Hoansi San people, a nomadic hunter/gatherer community indigenous to southern Africa.⁷⁶ According to Commoner, the San people have been able to successfully thrive off land because of their close connection to it. According to Commoner, because of the San people’s intimate knowledge of the land, they can locate a single underground tuber if in need of water during the dry season.⁷⁷ For Commoner, the San people’s ability to survive difficult conditions is only possible because they acknowledge their dependence on the environment and thus strive to be familiar with it.

In contrast to the San people, Commoner finds people who uncritically subscribe to the tenets of modernity and progress less likely to recognize their fragile dependence on the environment. Commoner chides his readers: “We who call ourselves advanced seem to have escaped this [i.e., the San people’s] kind of dependence on the environment.”⁷⁸ For Commoner, progress-minded humans operate within a fallacy—the illusion that humans can depend on science and technology more than the environment: “In an eager search for the benefits of

⁷⁵ Commoner, 11.

⁷⁶ Commoner calls the San people “African Bushmen.” I have replaced this nomenclature with the naming conventions acceptable to the San people today. See Shane Moran, *Representing Bushmen: South Africa and the Origin of Language* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2009), 4.

⁷⁷ Commoner, *The Closing Circle: Nature, Man, and Technology*, 12.

⁷⁸ Commoner, 12.

modern science and technology we have become enticed into a nearly fatal illusion: that through our machines we have at last escaped from dependence on the natural environment.”⁷⁹ Bringing attention to the centrality of the environment to human life suggests that Commoner sees “Nature,” in an abstract sense, to be the source of authority on how the environment functions. He acknowledges that human faculties are limited when it comes to the environment. Implied in his argument is the belief that humans must abide by the Nature’s “laws” to continue to enjoy its benefits.

According to Commoner, not only are the earth and ecosphere the fundamental bases of life on earth, but they are also the foundations for human civilization, achievement, and productivity. As members of the ecosphere, humans require the ecosphere to sustain their livelihoods, and “everything they do.”⁸⁰ In fact, Commoner calls the ecosphere “the setting in which civilization has done its great—and terrible—deeds.”⁸¹ For Commoner, the ecosphere is more than the scene within which civilization unfolds. Instead, Commoner likens the ecosphere to a machine, “a huge, enormously complex living machine.” He also calls the ecosphere “our biological capital” and “the basic apparatus” upon which all human activity— “our total productivity”—depends. ⁸² In fact, Commoner credits the earth’s resources for humanity’s greatest achievements. Commoner asserts that “[w]ithout the earth’s natural environmental

⁷⁹ Commoner, 12.

⁸⁰ Commoner, 8.

⁸¹ Commoner, 9.

⁸² Commoner, 13.

constituents—oxygen, water, fuel—the airplane, like man, could not exist.”⁸³ Commoner uses the airplane as an example because it is the clearest example of man’s attempt to escape nature’s limitations. Here, Commoner reminds his readers that human technology, like humans themselves, originates from Nature. Furthermore, all forms of human production are rendered impossible without the earth and the ecosphere. Commoner declares the ecosphere, “together with the earth’s mineral resources,” as “the source of all the goods produced by human labor or wealth.”⁸⁴

In his explanation of the ecosphere, Commoner uses the metaphor of a home or an abode to illustrate the ecosphere’s relationship with the organisms it shelters. Commoner describes the environment as “the house created on the earth *by* living things *for* living things (emphasis in original).”⁸⁵ As the house that sustains all of life, the ecosphere has set of laws to maintain balance, laws by which all organisms abide. Commoner asserts that “any living thing that hopes to live on earth must fit into the ecosphere or perish.”⁸⁶

Commoner offers the “four laws of ecology” by which humanity must abide, should people wish to continue living on earth. Commoner notes that these laws are not as codified in scientific literature as other laws of nature, like those of physics. Instead, the four laws of ecology are an informal set of generalizations ecologists have observed about nature and how it

⁸³ Commoner, 13.

⁸⁴ Commoner, 110.

⁸⁵ Commoner, 29.

⁸⁶ Commoner, 7.

functions.⁸⁷ The first law of ecology is “everything is connected to everything else,” or an acknowledgement of reality that all organisms are interconnected with other species, other populations, and their “physicochemical surroundings.”⁸⁸ The second law of ecology is “everything must go somewhere.” According to Commoner, there is no such thing as “waste.” All things discarded by humans go somewhere, with often disruptive consequences at their destinations.⁸⁹ The third law of ecology is “nature knows best.” This law postulates that human interference in the ecosphere is rarely beneficial. Commoner asserts: “Stated baldly, the third law of ecology holds that any major [hu]man-made change in a natural system is likely to be *detrimental* to that system” (emphasis in original).⁹⁰ The fourth law of ecology is “there is no such thing as a free lunch.” This law affirms that most advancements in science and technology come at the expense of the environment. Commoner writes: “In ecology, as in economics, the law is intended to warn that every gain is won at some cost.”⁹¹

The third law of ecology – nature knows best—is the most coherent expression of the fundamentalist claim that the environment (comprised of the earth and ecosphere) is fundamental to human life on earth. Here, Commoner contradicts progress’s impulse to “improve on nature.”⁹² Commoner observes that the third law of ecology is the one most likely to “encounter

⁸⁷ Commoner, 29.

⁸⁸ Commoner, 29.

⁸⁹ Commoner, 36.

⁹⁰ Commoner, 37.

⁹¹ Commoner, 47.

⁹² Commoner, 37.

considerable resistance” because it negates a “deeply held idea about the unique competence of human beings.”⁹³ In Commoner’s estimation, Nature operates as a transcendent authority on life on earth, similar to conceptions of God in many religious traditions. For Commoner, Nature needs no improvement because it has already selected the most optimal outcomes for all life sustaining processes. Commoner describes Nature as being in constant state of trial and error, wherein advantageous traits in each organism are allowed to propagate, and disadvantageous traits are screened out of existence. This process of natural selection had been happening for billions of years and thus, Commoner argues, “the current ecosystem is likely to be the ‘best’ in the sense that it has been so heavily screened for disadvantageous components that any new one is very likely to be worse than the present ones.”⁹⁴

To further illustrate his point, Commoner compares Nature to a carefully calibrated watch. According to Commoner, watchmakers invest considerable time and effort into “research and development” to design the most finely-tuned watches available: “over the years, numerous watchmakers...have tried out a huge variety of detailed arrangements to watch works, have discarded those that are not compatible with the over-all operation of the system, and retained the better features.”⁹⁵ Should a person open up the back of a watch, Commoner reasons, and randomly poke a pencil into the watch’s mechanisms, it is unlikely that the pencil’s intrusion would be beneficial to the overall operations of the watch: “Any random change made in the

⁹³ Commoner, 37.

⁹⁴ Commoner, 39.

⁹⁵ Commoner, 38.

watch is likely to fall into a very large class of inconsistent, or harmful, arrangements which have been tried out in past watch making experience and discarded.” Therefore, when it comes to watch making, Commoner concludes, “[o]ne might say, as a law of watches, that ‘the watchmaker knows best.’”⁹⁶ Similarly, Commoner views Nature as the organizing force behind a perfectly calibrated system designed to maximize the best outcomes for the organisms it sustains.

In essence, Commoner appeals to an argument by design to make a case for trusting the intelligence of Nature’s process. Design arguments, specifically “organismic” design arguments, claim that the existence of organisms perfectly adapted to their environments indicates the existence of an intelligent designer.⁹⁷ The intelligent designer typically referenced is a god or some other divine entity. However, according to R.G. Swinburne, any “powerful, free non-embodied rational agent” can be deemed responsible for the order observed in the world.⁹⁸ In comparing the process of natural selection to the “R&D” process of watchmakers, Commoner alludes to the idea that Nature is not a random and purposeless natural process. Rather, Nature operates according to a logic that intentionally seeks to optimize outcomes.

Furthermore, Commoner’s watchmaker analogy references a widely used metaphor in design arguments seeking to prove the existence of God. The watchmaker metaphor appears in design arguments as early as 1802 in William Paley’s Christian apologetic, *Natural Theology*.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ Commoner, 38.

⁹⁷ Elliot Sober, “The Design Argument,” in *The Blackwell Guide to the Philosophy of Religion*, ed. William E. Mann (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 117.

⁹⁸ R. G. Swinburne, “The Argument from Design,” *Philosophy* 43, no. 165 (1968): 199.

⁹⁹ William Paley, *Natural Theology*, ed. David Knight and Matthew D. Eddy (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1956).

However, rather than seeking to prove the existence of God, Commoner uses the watchmaker analogy to demonstrate the inerrancy of a natural process undisturbed by human interventions. According to Commoner, failing to recognize that “nature knows best” often leads to “catastrophic results.” For Commoner, the environmental devastation caused by detergents, insecticides, herbicides, and nuclear weapons is evidence of humans operating outside of Nature’s inerrant system.¹⁰⁰ Appealing to the inerrancy of the fundamentals is a common feature in fundamentalist arguments. For example, one of the central claims of the first Christian Fundamentalists of the early twentieth century was the inerrancy of the Bible as authorized by God.¹⁰¹ Similarly, Commoner makes a case for the inerrancy of the earth and ecosphere as organized by Nature to persuade his readers to approach all man-made organic compounds with caution and prudence.¹⁰²

Fundamentalist Argument Theme: The Earth and Ecosphere Must Be Pure

Like other fundamentalist arguments, the purity of the fundamentals is of utmost importance in Commoner’s defense of the environment. Protecting the environment from pollutants and man-made contaminants is a central concern in environmentalist rhetoric. For Commoner, the environment remains pure when all substances within an ecosystem can degrade naturally. Commoner explains that in a healthy environment, every organic substance “produced

¹⁰⁰ Commoner, *The Closing Circle: Nature, Man, and Technology*, 41.

¹⁰¹ Orr, “Holy Scripture and Modern Negations.”

¹⁰² Commoner, *The Closing Circle: Nature, Man, and Technology*, 41.

by a living organism” has “an enzyme capable of breaking that substance down.”¹⁰³ However, the natural decomposition process can be disrupted whenever substances foreign to that specific ecosystem intrude upon it: “Any productive activity which introduces substances foreign to the natural environment runs a considerable risk of polluting it.”¹⁰⁴

According to Commoner, intrusions to the natural decomposition cycle come from two sources: man-made synthetic substances and misdirected human waste. Unlike other organisms, Commoner observes, human beings “are uniquely capable of producing materials not found in nature” like plastics, insecticides, and unnaturally high levels of lead.¹⁰⁵ The problem with synthetic substances, Commoner argues, is that they are produced with molecular structures that may not have a corresponding enzyme to break them down. When “no degradative enzyme exists,” Commoner explains, “the material tends to accumulate.”¹⁰⁶ According to Commoner, pollution occurs when synthetic or substances foreign to the ecosystem fail to decompose naturally. Commoner explains that:

Pollution by man-made synthetics, such as pesticides, detergents, and plastics, and by the dissemination of materials not naturally part of the environmental system, such as lead and artificial radioactive substances, is a sign that these materials cannot be accommodated by the *self-purifying* capabilities of the natural system and therefore accumulate in places harmful to the ecosystem and to man (emphasis added).¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ Commoner, 41.

¹⁰⁴ Commoner, 123.

¹⁰⁵ Commoner, 124.

¹⁰⁶ Commoner, 41.

¹⁰⁷ Commoner, 120.

Similarly, when naturally occurring human waste is misdirected away from its intended destination, pollution occurs. Commoner argues that in the ecological cycle, waste cannot accumulate because “nothing is wasted.” Bacteria and naturally occurring enzymes break down all wastes into materials that will be reused by the rest of the system: “Thus, a living thing that is a natural part of an ecosystem cannot, by its own biological activities, degrade that system.”¹⁰⁸ This process applies to human waste as well: “Human beings, as animals, are no less tidy than other living organisms.”¹⁰⁹ Pollution occurs only when humans have “broken out of the closed, cyclical network in which all other living things are held.”¹¹⁰ Humans break out of their ecosystem when they are concentrated within relatively small geographical locations, like cities. Commoner explains that once humans are separated from the ecosphere’s self-purifying cycle, bodily wastes are directed away from the soil and deposited into lakes and rivers. Commoner writes that those “wastes become external to the aquatic system on which they intrude, overwhelm the system’s self-adjustment, and pollute it.”¹¹¹

In fundamentalist argumentation, contaminating or corrupting forces are often presented as external to the fundamentals of identity. For example, the purity of Christian doctrine was important to the first Fundamentalists. For them, Christian doctrine was pure when it was free from the corrupting influences of German theories about the historicity of the Bible or foreign

¹⁰⁸ Commoner, 123.

¹⁰⁹ Commoner, 123.

¹¹⁰ Commoner, 123.

¹¹¹ Commoner, 123.

methods of higher criticism.¹¹² In Commoner's argument, externality refers to substances foreign to an ecosystem. It also refers to the ways humans relate to the environment. Human activity becomes external (and thus a threat to the fundamentals) when it operates outside the cycles dictated by Nature: "...anything that fails to fit into the ecosphere is a threat to its finely balanced cycles; those wastes are not only unpleasant, not only toxic, but, more meaningfully, evidence that the ecosphere is being driven to collapse."¹¹³

Fundamentalist Argument Theme: Threats to the Earth and Ecosphere are Existential

Fundamentalist argumentation is activated when threats to the fundamentals of identity represent existential demise. For Commoner, pollution not only disrupts the earth and ecosphere, but also risks the survival of the human species on earth. Commoner warns his readers: "To survive on the earth, human beings require the stable, continuing existence of a suitable environment."¹¹⁴ However, the earth's prognosis appears grave. According to Commoner, the existence of pollution in the air, water, and soil is evidence that the ecosphere has been destabilized: "Environmental pollution is often a sign that the ecological links have been cut and that the ecosystem...[is] more vulnerable to stress and to final collapse."¹¹⁵ If the ecosphere collapses, humanity collapses with it. For Commoner, no amount of technology will ensure humanity's survival on earth: "If we destroy [the ecosphere], our most advanced technology will

¹¹² Hague, "The History of Higher Criticism."

¹¹³ Commoner, *The Closing Circle: Nature, Man, and Technology*, 8–9.

¹¹⁴ Commoner, 11.

¹¹⁵ Commoner, 34.

become useless and any economic and political system that depends on it will founder. The environmental crisis is a signal of this approaching catastrophe.”¹¹⁶

In framing the environmental crisis as one of impending destruction and catastrophe, Commoner utilizes apocalyptic rhetoric to illustrate the magnitude and urgency of the threat on the environment. According to Stephen D. O’Leary, *apocalypse* is the Greek word for revelation or unveiling.”¹¹⁷ Specifically, apocalyptic rhetoric is concerned with revealing end-of-time events. O’Leary defines the apocalyptic as the discourse that that “reveals or makes manifest a vision of ultimate destiny, rendering immediate to human audiences the ultimate End of the cosmos in the last Judgement.”¹¹⁸ The specter of the apocalypse has been an important theme of the Christian theology for over two-thousand years. References to apocalyptic rhetoric have appeared throughout history in Catholic, Protestant, Puritan, and contemporary evangelical discourses.¹¹⁹

In the 1890s, millenarianism, a theological movement especially concerned with the apocalypse, gained some prominence in American evangelical churches. Millenarianism was focused the imminent second coming of Christ, or the history-ending event wherein believers and sinners would face divine judgement.¹²⁰ Millenarian evangelicals were concerned with

¹¹⁶ Commoner, 13.

¹¹⁷ Stephen D. O’Leary, *Arguing the Apocalypse: A Theory of Millennial Rhetoric* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 5.

¹¹⁸ O’Leary, 5–6.

¹¹⁹ O’Leary, 7.

¹²⁰ Ernest R. Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism*, xv–xvi.

calling others to repent before the second coming of Christ.¹²¹ According to Ernest Sandeen, millenarianism was not widely accepted in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century evangelical circles. Yet despite the limits of its influence, millenarian thought provided the philosophical foundation for the evangelical Fundamentalist movement in the United States.¹²² Evangelical Fundamentalism emerged in defense of what was believed to be Christianity's essential doctrines. However, "it is millenarianism which gave life and shape to the Fundamentalist movement," according to Sandeen.¹²³ Millenarian anticipation of the second coming of Christ was premised on the belief in the inerrancy of the biblical prophecy. Biblical inerrancy is one of the Christian doctrines the Fundamentalist movement sought to defend. This shared theological foundation is what led Sandeen to argue that "Fundamentalism ought to be understood partly if not largely as one aspect of the history of millenarianism."¹²⁴ Given the prominence of millenarianism and its fixation on the apocalypse to the history of Fundamentalism in America, it is not surprising that apocalyptic rhetoric appears in other fundamentalist arguments, including environmentalist discourse.

Apocalyptic rhetoric helps audiences make sense of a crisis by contextualizing it within an imagined cosmic history. O'Leary finds that "[a]s argument, apocalypse seeks to situate its audience at the end of the particular pattern of historical time."¹²⁵ Furthermore, apocalyptic

¹²¹ Ernest R. Sandeen, xvii.

¹²² Ernest R. Sandeen, xv.

¹²³ Ernest R. Sandeen, xv.

¹²⁴ Ernest R. Sandeen, xix.

¹²⁵ O'Leary, *Arguing the Apocalypse: A Theory of Millennial Rhetoric*, 13.

rhetoric gives communities the “symbolic resources that enable societies to define and address the problem of evil.”¹²⁶ Amidst the ecological crises of 1960s and 1970s, apocalyptic rhetoric was deployed to warn the public of the imminent environmental catastrophe should society continue on its current path of environmental destruction. In fact, apocalyptic rhetoric is a common feature in postwar environmentalist discourse.¹²⁷ M. Jimmie Killingsworth and Jacqueline S. Palmer find apocalyptic rhetoric to be especially prominent in what they call “millennial ecology.” Millennial ecologists evoke the “literal possibility of the world ending” to critique and dismantle the ideology of progress. Millennial ecologists deployed apocalyptic rhetoric to “dislodge from power its primary perpetrators and beneficiaries in big business, big government, and big science.”¹²⁸ As a critique of the ideology of progress, Killingsworth and Palmer observe that apocalyptic prophecies have existed “throughout modernity as a kind of rhetorical and ideological counterweight to the scientific worldview, technological development, and liberal democracy that characterizes the dominant culture.”¹²⁹

¹²⁶ O’Leary, 6.

¹²⁷ Thomas R. DeGregori, “Apocalypse Yesterday,” in *Apocalyptic Vision in America: Interdisciplinary Essays on Myth and Culture*, ed. Lois Parkinson Zamora (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1982), 206–21. See also Frederick Buell, *From Apocalypse to Way of Life: Environmental Crisis in the American Century* (New York: Routledge, 2003); and M. Jimmie Killingsworth and Jacqueline S. Palmer, “Millennial Ecology: The Apocalyptic Narrative from Silent Spring to Global Warming,” in *Green Culture: Environmental Rhetoric in Contemporary America*, ed. Carl G. Herndl and Stuart C. Brown (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 21–45.

¹²⁸ Killingsworth and Palmer, “Millennial Ecology: The Apocalyptic Narrative from Silent Spring to Global Warming,” 22.

¹²⁹ Killingsworth and Palmer, 24.

Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* provides a defining example of apocalyptic genre of environmentalist discourse. Like Commoner, Carson argues that the speed and direction of scientific and technological progress threaten the existence of all life on earth, including human existence. Carson argues that the "the heedless pace of man" and "man's inventive mind" created the tools of humanity's destruction—nuclear weapons and man-made pesticides.¹³⁰ Should humanity continue its course of environmental destruction, the extinction of the human species would be inevitable. Carson prophesized that human life on earth would either end abruptly because of nuclear war, or slowly because man-made contaminants would adulterate the genetic integrity of the human species beyond recognition. Carson writes:

For mankind as a whole, a possession infinitely more valuable than individual life is our genetic heritage, our link with past and future. Shaped through long eons of evolution, our genes not only make us what we are, but hold in their minute being the future—be it one of promise or threat. Yet genetic deterioration through man-made agents is the menace of our time, 'the last and greater danger of our civilization.'¹³¹

Carson's apocalyptic rhetoric demonstrates how the image of approaching catastrophe was utilized early in the environmental movement. At this time, apocalyptic rhetoric marked one as an outsider to hegemonic progressive ideology and urged others into "the open air of political rebellion."¹³² In contrast to Carson, Commoner's description of the looming environmental crisis, while urgent, was more temperate in tone. In *The Closing Circle*, Commoner's prediction

¹³⁰ Carson, *Silent Spring*, 17.

¹³¹ Carson, 186.

¹³² Killingsworth and Palmer, "Millennial Ecology: The Apocalyptic Narrative from *Silent Spring* to Global Warming," 41.

about the pending environment disaster is essentially the same as Carson's. Commoner concludes that "[u]nawittingly, we have created for ourselves a new and dangerous world."¹³³ However, Commoner's apocalyptic warning exhibits some restraint. For example, he qualifies his apocalyptic tone by explaining that his predictions are estimations rather than prophecies. Commoner states that "one can try to guess at the point of no return—the time at which major ecological degradation might become irreparable. In my own judgement, a reasonable estimate for industrialized areas of the world might be from twenty to fifty years, but it is only a guess."¹³⁴

Commoner discourages his readers from jumping to alarmed conclusions about humanity's chances on earth. Commoner may have tempered his alarmist rhetoric to maintain his credibility as a source of reliable scientific information. He may have also found the alarmist language to be unnecessary or excessive given the status of environmentalism in American public discourse. Killingsworth and Palmer found that apocalyptic narrative appeared in environmental movement whenever it sought to recruit new members of the public.¹³⁵ Commoner published *The Closing Circle* in 1971, almost a decade after Carson's *Silent Spring*. In that time, the American public had awakened to the ecological crisis and was motivated to address it. By 1971, Earth Day was a nationally celebrated holiday and environmentalism achieved mainstream status. Killingsworth and Palmer observe that by the 1970s, environmentalists could afford to adopt the rhetoric of "peace-making and consensus" expected

¹³³ Commoner, *The Closing Circle: Nature, Man, and Technology*, 231.

¹³⁴ Commoner, 232.

¹³⁵ Killingsworth and Palmer, "Millennial Ecology: The Apocalyptic Narrative from *Silent Spring* to Global Warming," 41.

from cautious scientists, instead of the “war-like” and “oppositional” rhetoric of apocalyptic writers.¹³⁶ Furthermore, Commoner’s balance between presenting the seriousness of the crisis and maintaining the audience’s sense of hope in a solution may have been more effective than a doom-laden approach to apocalyptic rhetoric. In their analysis of Helen Caldicott’s anti-nuclear weapons rhetoric, J. Michael Hogan and Sara Ann Mehlretter found the more intense the apocalyptic imagery presented in Caldicott’s speeches, the less effective it was in persuading her audience into action.¹³⁷ As such, apocalyptic rhetoric, while effective in bringing attention and support for a growing movement, may prevent the audience from fully identifying with the apocalyptic vision if it presents a hopeless future.

Fundamentalist Argument Theme: Human Civilization is the Threat to the Ecosphere

It is clear from Commoner’s argument so far that he views the environmental crisis as an existential threat to human life on earth. The question becomes then, who is the source of the environmental crisis? Paul Ehrlich, the author of *The Population Bomb*, blamed the environmental crisis on the growing global population. According to Ehrlich, a larger population requires more production of food, clothes, and other consumer goods. Therefore, the larger a population, the more pollution it contributes to the earth. Ehrlich argues that “too many cars, too many factories, too much detergent, too much pesticide, multiplying contrails, inadequate

¹³⁶ Killingsworth and Palmer, 35.

¹³⁷ J Michael Hogan and Sara Ann Mehlretter, “Helen Caldicott, ‘Stop the Nuclear Madness’ (17 April 1986),” *Voices of Democracy* 3 (2008): 104.

sewage treatment plants, too little water, too much carbon dioxide—all can be traced easily to too many people.¹³⁸

Commoner agrees with Ehrlich that human activity is the root cause of the environmental crisis. However, for Commoner, the problem is not an excess of humans. Rather, the problem lies in the underlying social and economic structures that society has chosen to support its human population. In response to Ehrlich, Commoner writes:

Those who are so concerned with ‘overpopulation’ often regale us with figures that describe the galloping progression of human beings that inhabited the earth...It is worth remembering that a similarly rapid growth can be seen in the number, variety, and usefulness of machines, buildings, conveyances, and cooking utensils...The earth has experienced not only a ‘population explosion’ but a ‘civilization explosion.’¹³⁹

For Commoner, a progress-minded culture is the source of the environmental crisis. Commoner argues that “the chief reason for the environmental crisis...is the sweeping transformation of productive technology since World War II.”¹⁴⁰ According to Commoner, the problem with the technological revolution is its goal of wealth building at any cost—even at the expense of the environment. He writes that human society is “designed to *exploit* the environment as a whole to produce wealth” (emphasis in original).¹⁴¹ Industries like agriculture, forestry, fishing, and others “directly exploit the productivity of a particular ecosystem.”¹⁴² For

¹³⁸ Ehrlich, *The Population Bomb*, 44.

¹³⁹ Commoner, *The Closing Circle: Nature, Man, and Technology*, 111.

¹⁴⁰ Commoner, 175.

¹⁴¹ Commoner, 11.

¹⁴² Commoner, 123.

Commoner, the wealth acquired though the earth's natural resources are not used at subsistence levels "to satisfy immediate human needs" or to "produce people." Instead, natural resources are used to produce all manner of "devices, tools, factories, transportation, communication systems, hospitals, museums, works of art—or weapons of war."¹⁴³

The problem with the progress-minded direction of technology, according to Commoner, is that it is not sustainable for the continuation of human life on earth. The drive for progress is inherently antithetical to earth's ecological balance. Commoner calls the quest for progress a "fundamental paradox" for humans' activity on earth. Commoner argues that a progress-minded culture is built upon "a series of interdependent processes" that will eventually run out of the raw materials sustaining it.¹⁴⁴ According to Commoner, for the current economy to sustain itself, it depends on ever-advancing technology, which depends on ever-developing in science, which depends on constant investments of wealth, which in turn depends on a growing economy. For Commoner, the bases of this ever growing and expanding "man-made system"—the ecosphere and the earth's mineral resources—are "incapable of continued growth or expansion."¹⁴⁵ Commoner proclaims that it is "a fundamental fact of nature, then that the base of human existence represented by the ecosphere and mineral resource is limited in size and rate of activity."¹⁴⁶ At the rate progress is going, the ecosphere and the earth itself will be drained of

¹⁴³ Commoner, 113.

¹⁴⁴ Commoner, 117.

¹⁴⁵ Commoner, 117.

¹⁴⁶ Commoner, 117.

their life-sustaining capacities. For Commoner, the rampant exploitation of the environment in the advancement of civilization will ultimately lead to humanity's demise.

Additionally, Commoner attributes the overpopulation “problem” to the economic and political forces that worked to build Western industrial capitalist societies—such as colonialism. As far as its negative impact on the environment, Commoner was not convinced that overpopulation was a major factor in the degradation of the environment. In fact, he asserts that there are “no *ecological* grounds to speak of the United States as “overpopulated” (emphasis in original).”¹⁴⁷ However, he does concede that in developing countries “there does seem to be an immediate relation between the rate of population growth and the well-being of their peoples.”¹⁴⁸ Unlike Ehrlich, Commoner attributes population growth in developing countries to economic conditions and colonialism, rather than uncontrolled fertility. Commoner references anthropologist Clifford Geertz in support of his argument that colonialism was one of the major reasons behind increasing populations in the developing world.¹⁴⁹ In his study of Indonesia's colonial relationship with the Netherlands, Geertz found that before World War II, the Dutch helped foster Indonesia's population growth because it provided the labor force required to exploit Indonesia's raw natural resources, like natural rubber. However, the wealth produced by Indonesian labor did not stay in Indonesia or grow its economy. Instead, it went to the Netherlands where it produced massive economic growth and affluence. Commoner observed

¹⁴⁷ Commoner, 231.

¹⁴⁸ Commoner, 233.

¹⁴⁹ Commoner, 243–44.

that population growth tends to decline over time when the economic conditions of a country improve.¹⁵⁰ A similar dynamic happened in the Netherlands—the country experienced a period of population stability and then eventually population decline after it enriched itself from its colonial experiment in Indonesia and elsewhere. The Indonesian population, on the other hand, continued to grow, in part due to unrelentingly poor economic conditions. The population also continued to grow in anticipation of demands on its labor.¹⁵¹

However, contrary to production expectations, the post-World War II period brought about the rise of synthetic fabrics and materials in manufacturing largely because they were cheaper and more accessible than natural materials. As a result, the trade in raw materials like rubber declined all over the world.¹⁵² Commoner observes that the decline of the natural rubber trade “further depleted the opportunities for the economic advancement that might support [Indonesia’s] motivation for population control.”¹⁵³ Commoner concludes that replacing natural materials for synthetic ones intensified the environmental crisis on two fronts. First, it increased the amount of nonbiodegradable materials polluting the ecosphere. Second, the switch to synthetic materials worsened the economic conditions in developing countries thereby obstructing developing countries from meeting the needs of their growing populations.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵⁰ Commoner, 174–75.

¹⁵¹ Commoner, 244.

¹⁵² Commoner, 244.

¹⁵³ Commoner, 244.

¹⁵⁴ Commoner, 244.

Fundamentalist Argument Theme: Restore Nature's Balance

In this analysis of Commoner's *The Closing Circle*, it is clear that Commoner utilized fundamentalist argument premises to establish the earth and the ecosphere as the fundamental bases of human life on earth. Furthermore, he made a case for the importance of the purity of the ecosphere and how pollution was an existential threat to human survival on earth perpetuated by a progress-driven culture that privileges profit over the environment. Commoner concludes his argument with a call to action to restore the ecosphere to balance by giving Nature its rightful place as the primary authority of human activity on earth. He reasons that "human beings have broken out of the circle of life, driven not by biological need, but by the social organization which they have devised to 'conquer' nature."¹⁵⁵ As such, human beings, in a global effort, must "close the circle" and return once more to a harmonious relationship with the Nature.¹⁵⁶

Commoner writes that for human beings to survive, "we must learn how to restore to nature the wealth that we borrow from it."¹⁵⁷

Yet despite his call to restore the earth and ecosphere to balance, Commoner hesitates to prescribe a specific program for the earth's recovery. Commoner argues that it is impossible for any singular "expert" to provide a comprehensive plan to restore the environment: "In our progress-minded society, anyone who presumes to explain a serious problem is expected to solve it as well. But none of us—singly or sitting in a committee—can possibly blueprint a specific

¹⁵⁵ Commoner, 298–99.

¹⁵⁶ Commoner, 299.

¹⁵⁷ Commoner, 299.

‘plan’ for resolving the environmental crisis.”¹⁵⁸ In fact, he admonishes other environmental crisis writers for reducing the crisis to a singular cause. Commoner argues that to pretend that the solution is a singular one is to “evade the real meaning of the environmental crisis.”¹⁵⁹ Instead, he encourages his readers to understand that:

[T]he world is being carried to the brink of ecological disaster not by a singular fault, which some clever scheme can correct, but by the phalanx of powerful economic, political, and social forces that constitute the march of history. Anyone who proposes to cure the environmental crisis undertakes thereby to change the course of history.¹⁶⁰

With this gargantuan task in mind, Commoner offers three paradigm shifts that he sees humans must make to ensure their survival on earth.

The first paradigm shift Commoner calls for is the reorganization of the global economy to abide by the limits of the earth and ecosphere. For Commoner, respecting the limits of the earth does not necessarily mean abandoning technological advancement or even giving up affluence.¹⁶¹ Rather, being conscious of the limits of the ecosphere and the earth is a mindset that requires technology to be “derived from a scientific analysis that is appropriate to the natural world in which technology intrudes.”¹⁶² In other words, for humans to survive, they must ensure that technology is developed in alignment with Nature. Furthermore, to return to environmental balance, Commoner recommends reversing the trends brought about by the postwar

¹⁵⁸ Commoner, 299.

¹⁵⁹ Commoner, 299.

¹⁶⁰ Commoner, 299.

¹⁶¹ Commoner, 294.

¹⁶² Commoner, 187.

technological revolution—specifically the reliance on synthetic goods. Commoner writes that the “advanced countries” will need to depend “less on ecologically costly synthetics and more on goods produced from natural products—a process which, on both ecological and economic grounds, ought to be concentrated in the developing regions of the world.”¹⁶³ A return to natural products makes it more likely that those products will eventually reintegrate into the environment and thus integrate better with the ecosystem. Furthermore, a return to manufacturing with natural materials will help enrich poor countries, thereby leading them towards better environmental outcomes for their respective populations. This approach acknowledges the social costs of the environmental crisis and strives to rectify it. Commoner writes that “environmental deterioration is caused by human action and exerts painful effects on the human condition. The environmental crisis is therefore not only an ecological crisis, but a social one.”¹⁶⁴ For Commoner, this approach will require reconfiguring old economic and political relationships for the sake of human survival on earth.

The second paradigm shift Commoner calls for is for scientific inquiry to align with ecological principles, —specifically “everything is connected to everything else.” Commoner argues that the prevailing paradigm in scientific research at the time is reductionism—or the “view that effective understanding of a complex system can be achieved by investigating the properties of its isolated parts.”¹⁶⁵ Commoner finds many faults with this scientific approach, one

¹⁶³ Commoner, 244–45.

¹⁶⁴ Commoner, 109.

¹⁶⁵ Commoner, 187.

of which is because it tends to “isolate scientific disciplines from the problems that affect the human condition.”¹⁶⁶ Instead, Commoner advocates for a holistic approach to science wherein science seeks to understand the complex relationships of all nature’s constituent parts in concert, as well as their relationship with human beings.¹⁶⁷ Commoner writes that scientists need to strive to “understand science and technology that is *relevant* to the human condition (emphasis in original).”¹⁶⁸

The third paradigm shift Commoner calls for is the cultivation of a deliberative and democratic ethic between the scientific community and the public. Commoner dismisses the assumption that scientists are objective researchers independent of the whims of society or their beneficiaries. Commoner proclaims “objectivity” as a “difficult and perhaps illusory goal.”¹⁶⁹ He encourages his readers to understand that science and technology “are not an independent source of information to be used or ignored by the social system, but rather are subject to considerable social direction.”¹⁷⁰ As such, Commoner believes the public should have a considerable voice in directing science and technology. Since the public collectively bears the costs of environmental crisis caused by science and technology, Commoner argues there should be a public deliberation process on decisions that have implications on human life. Commoner argues that “if [the environmental crisis] is to be resolved, these costs must be made explicit and

¹⁶⁶ Commoner, 188.

¹⁶⁷ Commoner, 187–88.

¹⁶⁸ Commoner, 190.

¹⁶⁹ Commoner, 83.

¹⁷⁰ Commoner, 114.

balanced against the benefits of technology in open, public debate.”¹⁷¹ Commoner argues that we should allow a democratic process to decide what human beings as a society require from science and technology. Commoner states that “in a democracy, [value judgements] do not belong in the hands of ‘experts,’ but in the hands of the people and their elected representatives.”¹⁷² In this new paradigm of deliberative science, the role of scientists, according to Commoner, is to “unearth” the relevant information on the topic of concern and disseminate it to the public.¹⁷³ Commoner reasons that when armed with the facts, “citizens were ready to weigh the benefits against the risks and make the moral judgement which is the spark to political action.”¹⁷⁴ When reflecting on moments of successful collective political action in defense of the environment, Commoner called the Limited Test Ban Treaty of 1963, “an early indication of the collaborative strength of science and social action.”¹⁷⁵

Conclusion

In this chapter, I explored how fundamentalist argumentation is utilized in environmentalist discourse, specifically in Barry Commoner’s *The Closing Circle*. Commoner’s argument for restoring human harmony with the environment was achieved through his application of fundamentalist premises. First, he effectively established the earth and the ecosphere as the fundamental bases to human life on earth. Second, Commoner showed how a

¹⁷¹ Commoner, 196.

¹⁷² Commoner, 196.

¹⁷³ Commoner, 196.

¹⁷⁴ Commoner, 202.

¹⁷⁵ Hall, “Interview with Barry Commoner.”

healthy ecosystem, free of contaminants, effectively maintains its balance. By showing the disruptive impact of pollution and destruction of natural resources on public health, Commoner demonstrated the importance of purity in maintaining the integrity of the fundamentals—the earth and ecosphere. Third, Commoner showed how the fundamental basis for all life on earth—the environment—was in crisis, thereby threatening the survival of humans. According to Commoner, the precarious state of the environment is due to how humans have organized their productive activities, privileging progress and profit over the environment. In other words, human activity has contaminated its fundamental base (the earth and ecosphere) by operating *outside* of the laws of Nature that govern all life. In his formulation, Nature is the transcendent authority, analogous to the divine authority of God, from whom the fundamentals of identity are imbued with meaning. Historically, Nature has been construed to be a source of meaning for humans, especially in informing their rights and responsibilities to others. For example, John Locke viewed the natural right to freedom to be derived from Nature as decreed by God.¹⁷⁶ Similarly, Commoner views the earth and ecosphere to be the foundation of human life, as decreed by Nature. He concludes that the only way the human species will continue on earth is if it restores its relationship with its authoritative source, Nature, and abides by its laws.

Commoner's use of the argument form demonstrates its flexibility in accommodating various causes in American public discourse. Furthermore, it also demonstrates how themes like the apocalyptic are enduring themes in fundamentalist rhetoric. Environmentalist rhetoric that uses fundamentalist argument challenges common understandings of reactionary politics,

¹⁷⁶ Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, 6.

especially when it emphasizes issues of survival. As a critique of progress, environmentalism expands the definition of reactionary to accommodate causes believed to be “progressive” in the contemporary political arena. Furthermore, the intensity of Commoner’s rhetoric depended on the status of environmentalism in American public discourse. In contrast to the hyperbolic apocalypticism of the 1960s, *The Closing Circle* presented a more sober (and sobering) calculation of the environmental crisis. As the environmental movement became more widely accepted among Americans, Commoner could afford to call for public deliberations and debate. In juxtaposing Commoner with other crisis writers at the time, we can see the how public acceptance tempers the aesthetic tones of fundamentalist rhetoric.

Conclusion

I have made the case in this project that fundamentalism and ideas *about* fundamentalism are significant obstacles to dialogue and deliberation. Even though many may agree that fundamentalist arguments are problematic because of their extremism, my larger point is that such fundamentalist strategies run through a much greater diversity of discourses than the stereotypes about fundamentalism suggest. Rather than dismissing fundamentalist arguments and those who espouse them, we need to understand the characteristics of fundamentalist argument at a deeper level and take such arguments seriously given their prevalence in our cultural and political debates.

Unfortunately, past scholarly work on fundamentalism may have caused many to virtually ignore fundamentalist arguments and fundamentalists altogether. Some scholars define fundamentalists as people unable, or unwilling, to cope with the conditions of modernity.¹ Instead, they turn to scriptural literalism, separatism, and traditionalism to maintain their sense of identity.² In this scholarly literature, fundamentalists are often characterized as inclined towards extremism, violence and intolerance.³ The problem with these projects is that they express, in the words of David Harrington Watt, a sense of “antifundamentalism,” by privileging rationalism and modernity over critiques of those paradigms.⁴ In doing so, these projects contribute to a

¹ Lawrence, *Defenders of God: The Fundamentalist Revolt Against the Modern Age*, 18.

² Martin E. Marty, “Fundamentals of Fundamentalism,” 18–20.

³ Almond, Appleby, and Sivan, *Strong Religion: The Rise of Fundamentalism Around the World.*, 17.

⁴ Watt, *Antifundamentalism in Modern America*, 172.

vision of the world divided on a fundamentalist/non-fundamentalist binary—one that “reinforces our tendency to divide the world into heroes and villains.”⁵ Such assumptions lead to more political division and prevent us from recognizing the signs of fundamentalism across the political spectrum.

This project is motivated by the notion that understanding the scope of fundamentalism is important. Acknowledging the problems of some genres of argument does not necessarily mean we should abandon the aim of critically, fully, and ethically understanding such modes of argument. The practice and judgments about fundamentalism remain culturally salient. To fulfill this aim, I approach fundamentalism as a rhetorical concept—a type of argument—with themes and strategies that perform specific types of work in the world.

In this study, I examine the fundamentalist arguments of three influential authors in three different discourses: the anti-abortion arguments of Francis Schaeffer, the segregationist arguments of Thomas Brady, and the environmental protection arguments of Barry Commoner. In my analysis of each case, I sought to answer three questions: 1) How do writers and speakers who use fundamentalist arguments locate the fundamentals of their identity? 2) What rhetorical characteristics do fundamentalist arguments share across a diversity of discourses grappling with significant cultural shifts? and 3) How do political activists who use fundamentalist arguments rely on appeals to God or Nature to justify their call to restore order and strengthen identity?

I argue that fundamentalist arguments are in part about defending identity. Rhetors use fundamentalist arguments in response to perceived threats to what they view as the *fundamentals*

⁵ Watt, 174.

of a universal identity. Rhetors who use fundamentalist arguments claim that who they are as a community depends on something fundamental: an authoritative doctrine, idea, text, physical location, or natural process. In his argument against abortion, Francis Schaeffer located the fundamentals of American culture in a Christian worldview—one that valued the sanctity of life. For Thomas Brady, who argued for resistance to the federally mandated integration of public schools, whiteness functioned as the fundamentals of America. And for Barry Commoner’s defense of the environment, the environment and its accompanying ecological laws were depicted as fundamental to human survival. People who use fundamentalist arguments often support their theories about the fundamentals of identity by claiming they are derived from an external, transcendent, and immutable authoritative source—usually God or Nature.

The authoritative source, like God and Nature, functions as source of meaning, a higher power, and an external authority that imposes order on the world. The authoritative source provides people who use fundamentalist arguments with an “indisputable” starting point upon which build the rest of their argument. For example, Thomas Brady claimed that the inferiority of Blackness to whiteness was “simply stubborn biological fact.”⁶ In other words, for Brady, it was a natural fact. Nature decreed one race as more superior to another, according to Brady. And who is to argue with Nature? In his vision of the world, Nature is not subject to human standards of right or wrong. It orders the world according to its own logic. By appealing to Nature as an external, transcendent and immutable authority, Brady presented his premise for white supremacy in what appeared to be “indisputable fact.”

⁶ Brady, *Black Monday: Segregation or Amalgamation. America Has Its Choice*, 2.

In fundamentalist argumentation, the fundamentals of identity are seen to be vulnerable to corruption. Contaminants to the fundamentals of identity are seen as potentially compromising to the character of the community and may even contribute to its demise. The first evangelical Fundamentalists argued that compromising on the fundamentals of Christian doctrine would alter Christianity's belief system beyond recognition. Similarly, Schaeffer argued that America's embrace of secular humanism had contaminated its Christian worldview, thereby permitting the destruction of the unborn and the subsequent decline of American culture. Brady argued that integration policies threaten the integrity of whiteness in America and thereby compromise America as a democracy dependent on white supremacy. The threats posed by contamination are also quite apparent in Barry Commoner's argument that pollution in the air, water, and soil compromises the health and livelihoods of humans on earth because they threaten the environment. People who use fundamentalist arguments urge their audiences to organize politically to preserve the fundamentals of identity through the purification of the fundamentals, unification of the community, and representation in public policy.

To argue the justice and urgency of their cause, people who use fundamentalist arguments often convey that a particular group represents and defends a universal identity—like “Christianity,” “America,” or the “human species.” Anti-abortion evangelicals like Schaeffer claim to defend America's moral base. Segregationists like Brady claim to defend white America. Environmentalists like Barry Commoner position themselves as advocates for human survival on earth. Fundamentalist narratives often cast their audience and adherents in the heroic position of defending the universal identity. They are reactionary because an existential danger is coming, and someone must do something to stop it.

To contribute to a rhetorical understanding of fundamentalist argument, this project defines the characteristics of fundamentalist argument, proposes a list of recurring themes common in fundamentalist argument, and identifies a set of strategies correlated with this genre of argument. As provided in the Introduction of this study, my proposed definition of fundamentalist argument is as follows.

Fundamentalist arguments promise clarity, certainty, and a strengthened sense of group identity and purpose. They accomplish these goals by framing uncertain situations as threats to what is fundamental to a universal identity. In response to such threats, fundamentalist arguments prescribe action to preserve and protect the fundamentals of identity. Fundamentalist arguments address fellow members of the aggrieved group and seek to bolster and reinforce the actions necessary to ensure the survival of the group.

For an argument to be fundamentalist, it will typically do the following: 1) anchor the identity of a particular group in something deemed fundamental, like a governing doctrine; 2) universalize the values of a particular group identity to represent a universal identity; 3) emphasize the purity of the fundamentals as vital for the survival of the universal identity; 4) claim that the fundamentals of identity are derived from transcendent authorities like God or Nature; 5) present a reactionary position to progress, whether social or scientific, by claiming that the progress contaminates the fundamentals of identity; and 5) call for the preservation, protection, and restoration of the fundamentals of identity to maintain the distinct character of the universal identity.

With the roots of fundamentalism being in the American evangelical tradition, fundamentalist arguments are strongly associated with several religious themes such as apocalyptic metanarratives, concerns about purity, warnings about moral decline and decay, and concerns about the longevity of a culture or civilization. Furthermore, fundamentalist arguments often utilize religious metaphors, even in non-religious discourses. For example, in his argument

about why humans should avoid disturbing the ecosystem, Commoner compares the ecosystem with the perfected mechanisms of a watch. To disturb those mechanisms almost always renders the watch unusable. Commoner argued that man-made pollution disturbed the ecosystem's perfectly calibrated processes and thus is evidence that humans should abide by the rule, "Nature knows best."⁷ In Christian apologetics, the watch metaphor is a common one in design arguments and is used to argue that the perfection of the universe is an indicator of an intelligent designer.⁸ In Commoner's argument, Nature is the intelligent force that perfectly organizes the ecosystem and humanity's role in it. This example demonstrates the influence of evangelical religious idioms in American fundamentalist arguments.

Additionally, rhetors who use fundamentalist arguments often support their claims with evidence from history, anthropology, biology, and other scholarly disciplines. The use of the scientific idiom in fundamentalist argument conveys an image of intellectual rigor and respectability. It enables rhetors who use this type of argument to circumvent accusations of alarmism or hyperbole. Furthermore, appeals to "natural" processes in history, like how cultures or civilizations evolve, function to naturalize claims about the origins of fundamentals of identity. Lastly, the use of deductive argument when making fundamentalist claims suggests the importance of portraying reasonableness and rationality in fundamentalist arguments. Even though the texts I examined in this project were more historical than contemporary, I posit that such fundamentalist arguments are also visible in more current debates.

⁷ Commoner, *The Closing Circle: Nature, Man, and Technology*, 37.

⁸ Paley, *Natural Theology*.

Fundamentalist Argument in Contemporary Public Discourse

I see the continued circulation of fundamentalist arguments in contemporary debates about anti-abortion activism, white supremacy, and environmentalism. While fundamentalist arguments like Schaeffer's calls to restore America to its Christian foundation may have motivated some anti-abortion activists, the legal arguments challenging abortion rights typically appealed to another fundamental in American culture likewise grounded in Christianity and Nature –the right to life. When *Roe v. Wade* (1973) was decided, it legalized abortion until the viability of the fetus, which was determined at the time to be at the second trimester. The decision also affirmed the right of states to restrict access to abortion “as long as at least potential life is involved.”⁹ Since then, anti-abortion activists have worked to undermine abortion rights in the United States through the attempt to establish the viability of life as early in pregnancy as possible. At the time of this writing, the most recent legal challenge to abortion rights on the basis of fetal viability is the Texas Heartbeat Act, enacted on May 19, 2021. The act prohibits abortions “after detection of an unborn child’s heartbeat,” which can occur as early as at six weeks of gestation. The act’s writers argue that “fetal heartbeat” was a “key medical predictor” of fetal viability since less than five percent of pregnancies “end in spontaneous miscarriage after the detection of fetal cardiac activity.” The act justified state intervention because the state of Texas had the “legitimate interests from the outset of a women’s pregnancy in protecting the health of the woman and *the life of the unborn child who may be born* (emphasis added).”¹⁰

⁹ *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 113 (1973)

¹⁰ Texas Heartbeat Act, S.B. 8., sec. 3 (2021).

The efforts put into determining the viability of life reveal a fundamentalist argument strategy at work. Anti-abortion activists assume that once life can be scientifically proven, then the fundamental right to life can be upheld. The argument that the right to life is guaranteed in America's founding documents emanates from the idea of the natural rights of man—a right granted by God. As such, anti-abortion activists argue that the right to life is a fundamental right guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment.¹¹ Even if the constitutionality of the right to life cannot be established, anti-abortion activists assume that the sanctity of *established* life is a fundamental doctrine to Americans' identity, and thus will lead to the severe restriction of abortion rights. This example shows how the abortion controversy continues to feature efforts to protect and preserve American identity by grounding its fundamentals in the authority of God and Nature. Medical science, in this case, functions to validate the truths about the viability of life, as authorized by God and Nature.

The impulse to protect the fundamentals of identity may also explain the recent bans on teaching critical race theory (CRT) in public schools, which like in 1954, remain sites of controversy. For example, North Dakota House Bill 1508 prohibits the instruction of critical race theory in K-12 public schools. The bill defined critical race theory as the “theory that racism is not merely the product of learned individual bias or prejudice, but that racism is systemically embedded in American society and in the American legal system to facilitate racial inequality.”¹² At the time of this writing, nine states have passed bills to restrict instruction on critical race

¹¹ This claim is highly contested in constitutional scholarship.

¹² First Engrossment to H.B. 1508. 67th Leg., (N.D. 2021)

theory or other “controversial” topics regarding race and sex.¹³ Many of the bills have been backed by parent advocacy groups, like Fight for Schools, a political action committee led by Ian Prior, a former Trump administration spokesperson for the Justice Department.¹⁴ In an interview with PBS, Prior claimed he was not opposed to teaching history. Rather his organization was about “teaching history in an *objective* way that is not represented as America is systemically racist” (emphasis added).¹⁵ Other parents were concerned about their children being “indoctrinated” into divisive ideologies. In the same PBS interview, an anonymous parent claimed that “critical race theory has its roots in cultural Marxism. It should have no place in our school.”¹⁶ The desire for “objective” representations of American history and suspicion that efforts towards social progress are a conspiracy from external nefarious forces are common themes in fundamentalist argumentation. But perhaps the clearest indication of fundamentalist logic was expressed by another parent who declared that he did not “see critical theory race theory in our Declaration of Independence.”¹⁷ These statements suggest that for these parents, CRT represents an attack on something vital or visceral to their identity. Another parent put it

¹³ Rashawn Ray and Alexandra Gibbons, “Why Are States Banning Critical Race Theory?,” Brookings, November 2021, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/fixgov/2021/07/02/why-are-states-banning-critical-race-theory/>.

¹⁴ “Fight for Schools,” Fight for Schools, accessed January 11, 2022, <https://fightforschools.com/>.

¹⁵ Amna Nawaz, Courtney Norris, and Vika Aronson, “Why Americans Are Americans So Divided Over Teaching Critical Race Theory?,” PBS NewsHour, June 24, 2021, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/why-americans-are-so-divided-over-teaching-critical-race-theory>.

¹⁶ Nawaz, Norris, and Aronson.

¹⁷ Nawaz, Norris, and Aronson.

this way: “I will do everything I possibly can to fight to the bitter end until you prove to me that you are not teaching my children that they are racist just because they're white.”¹⁸ The concern these parents express is about identity—about how their children’s identity as Americans, especially white Americans—is being shaped by lessons in CRT, reveals an underlying fear that CRT will tarnish the mythic past and continued force of American Exceptionalism, scaffolded by an underlying commitment to white supremacy. American Exceptionalism is the idea that America is unique among other nations and is a myth that has been traced to Puritan beliefs that America was promised by God to be a “city on a hill” and a model society for the rest of the world.¹⁹ The centrality of American Exceptionalism and its roots in white dominance may explain why some parent organizations are so determined to stop the teaching of CRT as a means to protect against the threats to American identity as they perceive it.

Similarly, we can see fundamentalist arguments circulating in contemporary public discussions about climate change. Over the past three decades, climate change has gained visibility as one of the most urgent global issues of our time. The WHO called climate change the “single biggest health threat facing humanity.”²⁰ In his analysis of prominent public intellectual arguments about climate change, Matthew Nisbet found that activists who described themselves as “ecological activists” exhibited arguments that I would classify as

¹⁸ Nawaz, Norris, and Aronson.

¹⁹ Justin B. Litke, “Varieties of American Exceptionalism: Why John Winthrop Is No Imperialist,” *Journal of Church and State* 54, no. 2 (2012): 197–213.

²⁰ “Climate Change and Health,” World Health Organization, accessed January 11, 2022, <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/climate-change-and-health>.

fundamentalist.²¹ Among these voices were Bill McKibben, author of *The End of Nature*, (1989), David Suzuki, author of *The Sacred Balance: Rediscovering Our Place in Nature* (1999), Clive Hamilton, author of *Requiem for a Species: Why We Resist the Truth about Climate Change* (2007), and George Monbiot, author of *Feral: Search for Enchantment on the Frontiers of Rewilding* (2013).²² Nisbet found that ecological activists tended to characterize Nature as an “Eden-like place” where humans can escape the chaos of modern life and “bring wonder back into our lives.”²³ For these authors, controlling climate emissions would “restore divine harmony and balance to the world” and “enable human salvation.”²⁴ In this discourse, Nisbet finds, some of the authors diagnosed the problem of inaction on climate change as coming down to identity. According to Clive Hamilton, our resistance to arguments for action on climate is largely due to our core identity being that of consumers, rather than members of a species on earth. Hamilton encourages his readers to reconsider their core identity, (i.e., the fundamentals of identity) to ensure the survival of the species.²⁵ Examples like ecological activists demonstrate how

²¹ Matthew C. Nisbet, “Disruptive Ideas: Public Intellectuals and Their Arguments for Action of Climate Change,” *WIREs Clim Change* 5 (2014): 809–23, <https://doi.org/10.1002/wcc.317>.

²² Bill McKibben, *The End of Nature* (New York: Random House, 1989); David Suzuki, *The Sacred Balance: Rediscovering Our Place in Nature* (Vancouver: Greystone Books, 1999); Clive Hamilton, *Requiem for a Species: Why We Resist the Truth about Climate Change* (Philadelphia: Routledge, 2007); George Monbiot, *Feral: Search for Enchantment on the Frontiers of Rewilding* (London: Alan Lane, Penguin Press, 2013).

²³ Nisbet, “Disruptive Ideas: Public Intellectuals and Their Arguments for Action of Climate Change,” 813.

²⁴ Nisbet, 813–15.

²⁵ Hamilton, *Requiem for a Species: Why We Resist the Truth about Climate Change*.

fundamentalist arguments remains a salient rhetorical strategy in environmentalist discourse to stave off the threats to the environment in a reactionary fashion.

Interpretations & Implications

This investigation into fundamentalist argument offers several contributions to scholarship on rhetoric as well as fundamentalist discourse. First, it demonstrates the role of rhetoric in constituting situations and identities, and how perceptions of threat serve a constitutive function in fundamentalist argumentation. Second, this study reveals the importance of rationality in fundamentalist arguments. Third, this study's focus on reactionary discourses complicates some of our understandings of reaction.

Threat Perception and the Constitution of Identity

This exploration into fundamentalist argument contributes to our understanding of how perceived threats constitute identities. Following Vatz, the meanings of rhetorical situations are constructed by the rhetor, by virtue of what he or she chooses to make “salient” and by his or her interpretation of the situation.²⁶ In this study, I have found that fundamentalist arguments respond to perceptions of threat—often interpreted as an existential threat to a cherished identity. Choosing to read the situation in such consequential terms creates an exigence by which the rhetor must adopt a defensive stance against the perceived threat. The situational nature of rhetoric illustrates how fundamentalist arguments do not necessarily emerge out of a coherent set of “fundamentalist” doctrines but from a response to a specific construction of a situation and its accompanying threats. For example, prior to *Roe v. Wade* (1973), evangelical support for pro-life

²⁶ Richard E. Vatz, “The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation,” *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 6, no. 3 (1973): 156.

positions was hardly unified and when it was present, was often overshadowed by the Catholic pro-life advocacy.²⁷ I argue that the *Roe v. Wade* decision created an exigence to which evangelicals like Francis Schaeffer responded with a fundamentalist argument. Schaeffer interpreted *Roe v. Wade* as evidence of America's crumbling moral base. For Schaeffer, *Roe v. Wade* was not necessarily the primary problem in the situation (although he encouraged his readers to take every measure to contest it). Rather, the primary threat for Schaeffer was the fact that the Supreme Court decided it. For Schaeffer, the legal justifications for the decision indicated that the fundamentals governing American public life were compromised. He saw the Supreme Court centering human subjectivity over absolute, and Christian, standards of morality and ethics.²⁸

Furthermore, Schaeffer interpreted the compromise of fundamentals as a threat to American identity as a moral nation. By reading *Roe v. Wade* as a signal of looming danger to American identity, he presented an argument calling for the restoration of America's Christian worldview. For Schaeffer, overturning *Roe v. Wade* would be proof that America had regained its moral compass. Although Schaeffer was steeped in the fundamentalist tradition of evangelical Christianity, I argue that his position on abortion was as much a function of his *reading* of *Roe v. Wade* as it was a reflection of his religious beliefs about abortion. Schaeffer was a prolific writer, speaker, and public intellectual for most of his adult life. Yet his arguments about abortion were most visible in the last few years of his life and after *Roe v. Wade* became legal precedent. I

²⁷ Williams, "The Partisan Trajectory of the American Pro-Life Movement: How a Liberal Catholic Campaign Became a Conservative Evangelical Cause," 451.

²⁸ Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto*, 48.

argue that his attention to abortion was rooted in his view of the decision as a symbol of an oncoming threat to identity.

Recognizing the situational nature of fundamentalist arguments enables scholars to resist essentialist classifications of fundamentalism as inherent to a group, religious practice, or position on the political spectrum. Rather, a situational approach to fundamentalist rhetoric sensitizes us to the situational constructions that activate it. Furthermore, a situational approach recognizes the potential of fundamentalist argument to appear among any group that views the fundamentals of its identity to be threatened.

Ontic Logos, Rationality, and Reasonableness

This exploration also demonstrates how anchoring identity in an *ontic logos* can make appeals to rationality more visible in fundamentalist argument. People who use fundamentalist arguments view the fundamentals of their identity as being external to their subjective experience. For example, the fundamentalist controversies about preserving the meanings of biblical doctrine represented this view. For the first Fundamentalists, the Bible's meanings are inherent to the text and already determined by God, independent of the reader's meaning-making process. According to Charles Taylor, in *The Sources of Self*, this orientation to reality is based in an *ontic logos*, wherein meaning exists independently of human subjectivity.²⁹ In the *ontic logos*, meaning exists objectively in the world, like in God or Nature. For those who locate the fundamentals of their identity in an objective reality, it follows that they must also validate the truth of the fundamentals using objective metrics. This is why the first Fundamentalists were so

²⁹ Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity*, 160.

concerned with the historical validity of the Bible. If the Bible originated from an objective source—God—then it stood to reason that proof of its objective truth would be apparent.

The concern with validating the truth of the fundamentals of identity was evident in all the cases presented in this project. Each author attempted to prove the validity of the fundamentals of identity with objective evidence. For example, Schaeffer rarely referenced biblical texts to support his argument that a Christian worldview was foundational to American cultural identity. Instead, much of his argument was supported with comparative examples from history. Similarly, Brady supported his claims that whiteness was the basis of American culture by using evidence from cultural anthropology.³⁰ Commoner provided evidence from chemistry, biology, ecological sciences to validate his claims that natural processes were better suited than humans for ordering the human activity on earth. In other words, each author established the fundamental of identity using externally validating metrics. In doing so, they attempted to prove the truth of their claims within a rationalist paradigm.

Reaction in Fundamentalist Argument

Finally, I defined all the fundamentalist arguments presented as reactionary. Corey Robin argues that reaction occurs in opposition to social progress, particularly in the face of perceived loss of power and disturbances to social hierarchies.³¹ For Schaeffer's anti-abortion rhetoric and Brady's segregationist rhetoric, I would argue that they both fit that understanding

³⁰ Brady was not unique in this regard. Numerous fields of science, anthropology, and history have routinely been used to justify white supremacy.

³¹ Robin, *The Reactionary Mind*, 7–8.

of reactionary arguments well. Both of their projects sought to control and deny agency to “subordinate classes,” specifically women and Black people.³²

However, Commoner’s opposition to progress complicates the notion of reactionary movements. Commoner did not respond to a loss of hierarchy. More precisely, he did not respond to a loss of *his place* in the hierarchy. Rather, he was arguably more disturbed by the secondary and tertiary consideration given to what he believed should hold the primary position in the hierarchy—the ecosystem. If we were to mold Robin’s conception of a reactionary arguments to Commoner’s claims, it would go from “some are fit, and thus ought, to rule others” to “the ecosystem is fit, and thus ought, to rule humans.”³³ For Commoner, the ecosystem is fundamental to humanity as a functioning species on earth. Therefore, Commoner’s commitment to the environment makes his opposition to progress, in the scientific and technological sense, reactionary. Commoner illustrates an instance of when reactionary opposition may not be rooted in rejection of social progress.

Conclusion

One of the purposes for proposing a definition for fundamentalist argument is to draw attention to the variety of fundamentalist responses to perceived existential threats. This exploration also examines the range of “fundamentals to identity” that are often overlooked. By providing a classification of these arguments, I aim to show the individuality of the responses, the very different social experiences of the authors analyzed, and the diversity in what is believed

³² Robin, 7–8.

³³ Robin, 18.

to be “fundamental to identity.” I ultimately draw the conclusion that certain similarities in rhetorical strategies can be found in fundamentalist arguments and those similarities are not confined to the stereotypical cases. As I have tried to show, fundamentalist arguments are more commonplace than many previously thought.

While I argue that fundamentalist arguments can appear in progressive, as well as conservative discourses, the purpose of a rhetorical understanding is not to label more arguments as fundamentalist. The potential risk of yet another definition of fundamentalism is that it may be used to reduce complex arguments to yet another otherizing label. Nor do I claim that fundamentalist arguments are necessarily a negative phenomenon in public discourse. After all, if Barry Commoner has demonstrated one thing in this study, is that fundamentalist arguments can be used for the good of humanity. Instead, I hope that a rhetorical view of fundamentalist argument gives scholars of rhetoric, communication, dialogue, and deliberation a greater appreciation of their prevalence. It is not uncommon to judge others for the behavior we also perform. Patricia Roberts Miller suggests we all are responsible for contributing to a culture of “demagoguery.”³⁴ To move beyond the “us versus them” divisions and the otherizing of “fundamentalists,” we need to understand when we ourselves or those we champion also resort to fundamentalist arguments. Rather than merely rejecting fundamentalists, we need to engage, debate, challenge, and perhaps even support fundamentalist claims and conclusions based on our deeper understanding of their rhetorical force in our historical and contemporary conflicts.³⁵

³⁴ Roberts-Miller, *Rhetoric and Demagoguery*, 2.

Bibliography

- Abrahamian, Ervand. "Khomeini: A Fundamentalist?" In *Fundamentalism in Comparative Perspective*, edited by Lawrence Kaplan, 109–25. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992.
- Ahlstrom, Sydney E. "The Scottish Philosophy and the American Theology." *Church History* XXIV (September 1955): 257–72.
- Aikman, David. "The Great Revival: Understanding Religious 'Fundamentalism.'" *Foreign Affairs* 82, no. 4 (2003): 188–93. <https://doi.org/10.2307/20033659>.
- Almond, Gabriel A., R. Scott Appleby, and Emmanuel Sivan. *Strong Religion: The Rise of Fundamentalism Around the World*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
- Ambridge, Lindsay. "Imperialism and Racial Geography in James Henry Breasted's "Ancient Times, A History of the Early World." *Journal of Egyptian History* 5 (2012): 12–33.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*. 2nd ed. London: Verso, 2006.
- Anderson, Dana. *Identity's Strategy: Rhetorical Selves in Conversion*. Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 2007.
- "Annual Report: August 1955." Winona, MS: Association of Citizens' Councils of Mississippi, 1955.
- Antoun, Richard T. *Understanding Fundamentalism: Christian, Islamic, and Jewish Movements*. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira, 2001.
- Appleby, R. Scott. "But All Crabs Are Crabby: Valid and Less Valid Criticisms of the Fundamentalist Project." *Contention* 4, no. 3 (1995): 195–202.
- Armstrong, Karen. *The Battle for God*. New York: Knopf, 2000.
- Arthur, James. *Education with Character: The Moral Economy of Schooling*. London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2003.
- Atomic Energy Commission. "The Thirteenth Semiannual Report of the Atomic Energy Commission." Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, January 1, 1953.
- Barr, James. "The Problem of Fundamentalism Today." In *Explorations in Theology: The Scope and Authority of the Bible*, edited by James Barr, 25. SCM Press, 1980.
- Bascom, William. "The Forms of Folklore: Prose Narratives." In *Sacred Narrative*, edited by Alan Dundes. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984.

- Bawarshi, Anis S., and Mary Jo Reiff. *Genre: An Introduction to History, Theory, Research, and Pedagogy*. West Lafayette, Indiana: Parlor Press, 2010.
- Beard, Charles A., ed. *A Century of Progress*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1933.
- . "Introduction." In *The Idea of Progress: An Inquiry into Its Origin and Growth*, by J.B. Bury. New York: Macmillan, 1932.
- Berrey, Stephen A. *The Jim Crow Routine: Everyday Performances of Race, Civil Rights, and Segregation in Mississippi*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015.
- Bilbo, Theodore. "World War II: Increasing Racial Tensions." In *The Development of Segregationist Thought*, edited by I. A. Newby. Homewood, IL: The Dorsey Press, 1969.
- Bitzer, Lloyd F. "The Rhetorical Situation." *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 1, no. 1 (1968): 1–14.
- Bozeman, Theodore Dwight. *Protestants in an Age of Science: The Baconian Ideal and Antebellum American Religious Thought*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1977.
- Brady, Thomas P. *Black Monday: Segregation or Amalgamation. America Has Its Choice*. Winona, MS: The Association of Citizens' Councils, 1954.
- . "Segregation and the South." Association of Citizens' Councils, 1957. UC Davis Library Special Collection.
- Brockriede, Wayne, and Douglass Ehninger. "Toulmin on Argument: An Interpretation and Application." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 46 (1960): 44–53.
- Brown, Harold O. "Abortion: Rights or Technicalities? A Comparison of Roe v. Wade with the Abortion Decision of the German Federal Constitutional Court." *Human Life Review* 1, no. 3 (1975): 60–74.
- Bryan, William Jennings. "The Old Time Religion." In *Winona Echoes: Containing Addresses Delivered at the Seventeenth Annual Bible Conference, Winona Lake, Indiana, August 1911*. Winona Lake, IN, 1911.
- Buell, Frederick. *From Apocalypse to Way of Life: Environmental Crisis in the American Century*. New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Bury, J.B. *The Idea of Progress: An Inquiry into Its Origin and Growth*. New York: Macmillan, 1932.
- Buursma, Bruce. "Francis A. Schaeffer, 72, Theologian." *Chicago Tribune*. May 16, 1984.
- Carson, Rachel. *Silent Spring*. Greenwich, CT: Fawcett Publications, 1962.

- Carter, Luther J. "Earth Day: A Fresh Way of Perceiving the Environment." *Science* 168, no. 3931 (May 1, 1970): 558–59. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.168.3931.558>.
- Chalmers, David M. *Hooded Americanism: The History of the Ku Klux Klan*. 3rd ed. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1981.
- Clark, Herbert M. "The Occurrence of an Unusually High-Level Radioactive Rainout in the Area of Troy, N.Y." *Science* 119 (May 7, 1954): 619–22.
- World Health Organization. "Climate Change and Health." Accessed January 11, 2022. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/climate-change-and-health>.
- Cobb, James C. *The South and America Since World War II*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Cohen, Lizabeth. *A Consumer's Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America*. New York: Knopf, 2006.
- Colton, Joel. "Foreword." In *Progress and Its Discontents*, edited by Gabriel A. Almond, Marvin Chodorow, and Roy Harvey Pearce, ix–xii. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1982.
- Commoner, Barry. *Science and Survival*. New York: The Viking Press, 1967.
- . *The Closing Circle: Nature, Man, and Technology*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: Bantam Books, 1974.
- Connolly, William E. *The Ethos of Pluralization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995.
- Constance Areson Clark. "Evolution for John Doe: Pictures, the Public, and the Scopes Trial Debate." *Journal of American History* 87, no. 4 (2001): 1275–1303.
- Copi, Irving. *Introduction to Logic*. 5th ed. New York: Macmillan, 1978.
- Cox, Karen. *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture*. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2003.
- Cox, Oliver. "Lynching and the Status Quo." *Journal of Negro Education* 14 (1945): 576–88.
- Craven, Avery. *Reconstruction: The Ending of the Civil War*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1969.
- Daniel K. Williams. "Jerry Falwell's Sunbelt Politics: The Regional Origins of the Moral Majority." *Journal of Policy History* 22, no. 2 (2010): 125–47.

- David Harrington Watt. "Fundamentalists of the 1920s and 1930s." In *Fundamentalism: Perspectives on a Contested History*, 18–35. Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 2014.
- David O. Beale. *In Pursuit of Purity: American Fundamentalism Since 1850*. Greenville, SC: Unusual Publications, 1986.
- Davidson, Lawrence. *Islamic Fundamentalism*. Westport Connecticut: Greenwood Press Guides to Historic Events of the Twentieth Century, 1998.
- DeGregori, Thomas R. "Apocalypse Yesterday." In *Apocalyptic Vision in America: Interdisciplinary Essays on Myth and Culture*, edited by Lois Parkinson Zamora, 206–21. Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1982.
- Devitt, Amy. *Writing Genres*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2004.
- Dixon, Amzi C., Louis Meyer, and Torrey, eds. *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*. 12 vols. vols. Chicago and Los Angeles, 1910.
- Dorsey, Leroy. "Managing Women's Equality: Theodore Roosevelt, the Frontier Myth, and the Modern Woman." *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 16, no. 3 (2013): 423–56.
- . *We Are All Americans, Pure and Simple: Theodore Roosevelt and the Myth of Americanism*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2007.
- Drake, St. Clair. "Anthropology and the Black Experience." *The Black Scholar* 11, no. 7 (1980): 2–31.
- Dreier, Peter. "Remembering Barry Commoner." *The Nation*, October 1, 2012.
<https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/remembering-barry-commoner/>.
- Du Bois, W.E.B. *Black Reconstruction: An Essay Toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880*. New York: Russell & Russell, 1935.
- Easterlin, Richard A. "The American Baby Boom in Historical Perspective." *The American Economic Review* 51, no. 5 (1961): 869–911.
- Egan, Michael. *Barry Commoner and the Science of Survival*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007.
- Ehrlich, Paul. *The Population Bomb*. Binghamton, NY: Vail-Ballou Press, 1970.
- Ernest R. Sandeen. *The Roots of Fundamentalism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970.
- "Extraordinary Sessions of 1954 and 1955." In *Journal of the Senate of the State of Mississippi*. Jackson: Hederman Brothers, 1955.

- Falwell, Jerry, Ed Dobson, and Ed Hindson, eds. *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon: The Resurgence of Conservative Christianity*. Garden City: Galilee-Doubleday, 1981.
- Farrell, Thomas B. *Norms of Rhetorical Culture*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1995.
- Ferretti, Fred. "Broadcasters Give Earth Day Special Attention: Networks, Public TV and Local Stations to Emphasize Ecological Problems." *The New York Times*, April 22, 1970.
- Fight for Schools. "Fight for Schools." Accessed January 11, 2022. <https://fightforschools.com/>.
- TIME Magazine. "Fighting to Save the Earth from Man," February 2, 1970.
- Fisher, Walter R. "Narration as the Human Communication Paradigm: The Case of Moral Public Argument." *Communication Monographs* 51 (March 1984): 1–22.
- Foner, Eric. *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877*. New York: Harper & Row, 1988.
- Fosdick, Harry Emerson, and Michael Warner. "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" In *American Sermons: The Pilgrims to Martin Luther King, Jr.* New York: Library of America, 1999.
- Franklin, John. *Reconstruction after the Civil War*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961.
- Southern Poverty Law Center. "Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints." Accessed January 6, 2022. <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/fundamentalist-church-jesus-christ-latter-day-saints>.
- Furniss, Norman F. *The Fundamentalist Controversy, 1918-1931*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1954.
- Garlington, Don. "'The Salt of the Earth' in Covenantal Perspective." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 54, no. 4 (2011): 715–48.
- Gills, Barry K. "Accepting Difference, Finding Tolerance, Practising Dialogue." *Globalizations* 3, no. 4 (2006): 423–26.
- Goldberg, Michael. *Theology and Narrative: A Critical Introduction*. Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001.
- Grebler, Leo. *Housing Issues in Economic Stabilization Policy*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1960.
- Newsweek. "Guru of Fundamentalism," November 1, 1982.
- Gutmann, Amy. *Identity in Democracy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003.

- Hague, Canon Dyson. "The History of Higher Criticism." In *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*, 1:87–120. Chicago, IL: Testimony Publishing Company, 1910.
- Hall, Alan. "Interview with Barry Commoner." *Scientific American*, June 23, 1997.
- Hamilton, by Michael S. "The Dissatisfaction of Francis Schaeffer." *Christianity Today*, March 3, 1997.
- Hamilton, Clive. *Requiem for a Species: Why We Resist the Truth about Climate Change*. Philadelphia: Routledge, 2007.
- Handy, Bruce. "He Called Me Ellen Degenerate?" *Time*, April 14, 1997.
<https://web.archive.org/web/20070428222149/http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,986189-2,00.html>.
- Hankins, Barry. *Francis Schaeffer and the Shaping of Evangelical America*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2008.
- . *Francis Schaeffer and the Shaping of Evangelical America*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2008.
- Hankins, Frank H. *The Racial Basis of Civilization*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1926.
- Harding, Susan. "Representing Fundamentalism: The Problem of the Repugnant Cultural Other." *Social Research* 58, no. 2 (1991): 373–93.
- Harris, Jay M. "'Fundamentalism': Objections from a Modern Jewish Historian." In *Fundamentalism and Gender*, edited by John Statton Hawley. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Hatch, Nathan O. *The Democratization of American Christianity*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1989.
- Hawkins, J. Russell. *The Bible Told Them So: How Southern Evangelicals Fought to Preserve White Supremacy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2021.
- Heit, Evan. "Properties of Inductive Reasoning." *Psychonomic Bulletin and Review* 7, no. 4 (2000): 24.
- Hertz, Friedrich Otto. *Race and Civilization*. Oxford, England: Macmillan, 1928.
- Hill, Gladwin. "Activity Ranges from Oratory to Legislation." *The New York Times*, April 23, 1970.
- Hogan, J Michael, and Sara Ann Mehlretter. "Helen Caldicott, 'Stop the Nuclear Madness' (17 April 1986)." *Voices of Democracy* 3 (2008): 103–21.

- Horsman, Reginald. *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981.
- Jackson, Kenneth T. *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- James Barr. *Fundamentalism*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1978.
- James Orr. "The Virgin Birth of Christ." In *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*, 1:7–28. Chicago, IL: Testimony Publishing Company, 1910.
- Jasinski, James. "Constitutive Framework for Rhetorical Historiography: Toward an Understanding of the Discursive (Re)Construction of 'Constitution' in The Federalist Papers." In *Doing Rhetorical History: Concepts and Cases*, edited by Kathleen J. Turner, 72–92. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1998.
- Jonathan J. Edwards. *Superchurch: The Rhetoric and Politics of American Fundamentalism*. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2015.
- Jones, Landon Y. *Great Expectations: America and the Baby Boom Generation*. New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1980.
- Juergensmeyer, Mark. "Antifundamentalism." In *Fundamentalisms Comprehended*, edited by Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, 5:353–66. The Fundamentalism Project. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.
- Kahane, Howard. *Logic and Contemporary Rhetoric*. 2nd ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1976.
- Kanfer, Stefan. "Going Pogo." *City Journal*, Autumn 2011. <https://www.city-journal.org/html/going-pogo-13429.html>.
- Kelly, Walt. *Pogo: We Have Met the Enemy and He Is Us*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972.
- Keohane, Nannerl O. "The Enlightenment Idea of Progress Revisited." In *Progress and Its Discontents*, edited by Gabriel A. Almond, Marvin Chodorow, and Roy Harvey Pearce, 21–41. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982.
- Killingsworth, M. Jimmie, and Jacqueline S. Palmer. "Millennial Ecology: The Apocalyptic Narrative from Silent Spring to Global Warming." In *Green Culture: Environmental Rhetoric in Contemporary America*, edited by Carl G. Herndl and Stuart C. Brown, 21–45. Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1996.
- Kirsch, Scott. "Harold Knapp and the Geography of Normal Controversy: Radioiodine in the Historical Environment." *Osiris* 19 (2004): 167–81.

- Koop, C. Everett, and Francis Schaeffer. *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* 2nd ed. Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1983.
- Kristy Maddux. "Fundamentalist Fool or Populist Paragon? William Jennings Bryan and the Campaign Against Evolutionary Theory." *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 16, no. 3 (2013): 489–520.
- Latham, James E. *The Religious Symbolism of Salt*. Paris: Editions Beauchesne, 1982.
- Lawrence, Bruce B. *Defenders of God: The Fundamentalist Revolt Against the Modern Age*. San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1989.
- Laws, Curtis Lee. "Convention Side Lights." *Watchman-Examiner*, July 1, 1920.
- Laws of the State of Mississippi: Passed at a Regular Session of the Mississippi Legislature: Held in the City of Jackson, October, November, and December 1865*. Jackson, MS: J.J. Shannon, State Printers, 1866.
- Lelyveld, Joseph. "Mood Is Joyful as City Gives Its Support: Millions Join Earth Day Observances Across the Nation." *The New York Times*, April 23, 1970.
- Lienesch, Michael. *In the Beginning: Fundamentalism, the Scopes Trial, and the Making of the Antievolution Movement*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007.
- Litke, Justin B. "Varieties of American Exceptionalism: Why John Winthrop Is No Imperialist." *Journal of Church and State* 54, no. 2 (2012): 197–213.
- Locke, John. *Second Treatise of Government*. Edited by C.B. MacPherson. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 1980.
- Lombardo, Paul A. *Three Generations, No Imbeciles: Eugenics, the Supreme Court, and Buck v. Bell*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010.
- Lovejoy, Arthur O., and George Boas. *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1935.
- Luce, Henry R. "A Letter from the Publisher." *TIME Magazine* 95, no. 5 (February 2, 1970): 5–5.
- Lyman, Abbott. *The Evolution of Christianity*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1894.
- Lyon, Janet. *Manifestoes: Provocations of the Modern*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1999.
- Lyotard, Jean-Francois. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Translated by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

- Madsen, Deborah L. *American Exceptionalism*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, 1998.
- Mahmood, Saba. "Islamism and Fundamentalism." *Middle East Report* 191, no. November-December (1994): 29–30.
- Mankiw, N. Gregory, and David. N Weil. "The Baby Boom, the Baby Bust, and the Housing Market." *Regional Science and Urban Economics* 19 (1989): 235–58.
- Marsden, George M. *Fundamentalism and American Culture*. 2nd ed. London: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- . *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth Century Evangelicalism: 1870-1925*. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980.
- . *The Evangelical Mind and the New School Presbyterian Experience*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970.
- . *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991.
- Martin E. Marty. "Fundamentals of Fundamentalism." In *Fundamentalism in Comparative Perspective*, 15–23. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992.
- Martin, William. *With God on Our Side: The Rise of the Religious Right in America*. New York: Broadway Books, 1986.
- Marty, Martin E. "Fundamentalism Reborn: Faith and Fanaticism." *Saturday Review*, May 1980, 37–42.
- . "Too Bad We Are So Relevant: The Fundamentalism Project Projected." *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Science* 49, no. 6 (1996): 22–38.
- Marty, Martin E., and R. Scott Appleby. "Conclusion: An Interim Report on the Hypothetical Family." In *Fundamentalisms Observed*, edited by Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby. The Fundamentalism Project. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.
- , eds. *Fundamentalisms: Observed*. Vol. 1. 5 vols. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.
- Mazzarello, Paolo. "Cesare Lombroso: An Anthropologist between Evolution and Degeneration." *Functional Neurology* 26, no. 2 (2011): 97–101.
- McGowan, Alan H. "Remembering Barry Commoner." *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development* 55, no. 2 (March 2013): 17–17.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00139157.2013.765312>.

- McKibben, Bill. *The End of Nature*. New York: Random House, 1989.
- McMillen, Neil R. *Dark Journey: Black Mississippians in the Age of Jim Crow*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1989.
- . *The Citizen's Council: Organized Resistance to the Second Reconstruction, 1954-64*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1971.
- McRae, Elizabeth Gillespie. *Mothers of Massive Resistance: White Women and the Politics of White Supremacy*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Methodologie. *125 Years Sharing Happiness: A Short History of the Coca-Cola Company*. Richmond, British Columbia: Blanchette Press, 2011. <https://www.coca-colacompany.com/content/dam/journey/us/en/our-company/history/coca-cola-a-short-history-125-years-booklet.pdf>.
- Meyer, Donald H. *The Democratic Enlightenment*. New York: Putnam, 1976.
- Miller, Carolyn R. "Genre as Social Action." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 70, no. 2 (1984): 151–67. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00335638409383686>.
- TIME Magazine. "Mission to Intellectuals," January 11, 1960.
- Monbiot, George. *Feral: Search for Enchantment on the Frontiers of Rewilding*. London: Alan Lane, Penguin Press, 2013.
- Montagu, Ashley, Ernest Beaglehole, Juan Comas, L.A. Costa Pinto, Franklin Frazier, Morris Ginsburg, Humayun Kabir, and Claude Levi-Strauss. "The Race Question." *UNESCO and Its Programme* 1, no. 3 (1950). <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000128291>.
- Moran, Shane. *Representing Bushmen: South Africa and the Origin of Language*. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2009.
- Moyers, Bill. "9/11 and God's Sport." *CrossCurrents*, 2006.
- Munson Jr., Henry. "Not All Crustaceans Are Crabs: Reflections on the Comparative Study of Fundamentalism and Politics." *Contention* 4, no. 3 (1995): 151–66.
- Myrdal, Gunnar. *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy*. Vol. 1. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944.
- National Research Council (U.S.). Committee for the Study on the Relationships Among Development Patterns Vehicle Miles Traveled, and Energy Consumption. "Driving and the Built Environment: The Effects of Compact Development on Motorized Travel, Energy Use, and Co2 Emissions." Washington, D.C.: Transportation Research Board, 2009.

- Nawaz, Amna, Courtney Norris, and Vika Aronson. "Why Americans Are Americans So Divided Over Teaching Critical Race Theory?" PBS NewsHour, June 24, 2021. <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/why-americans-are-so-divided-over-teaching-critical-race-theory>.
- Newby, I. A. *The Development of Segregationist Thought*. Homewood, IL: The Dorsey Press, 1969.
- Niebuhr, H. Richard. "Fundamentalism." In *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 6. New York: Macmillian, 1931.
- Nisbet, Matthew C. "Disruptive Ideas: Public Intellectuals and Their Arguments for Action of Climate Change." *WIREs Clim Change* 5 (2014): 809–23. <https://doi.org/10.1002/wcc.317>.
- Nixon, Richard. "Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union." The American Presidency Project, January 22, 1970. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/241063>.
- Nordau, Max. *Degeneration*. London: William Heinemann, 1898.
- "Nuremberg Laws." Collection: George S. Patton, Jr. Papers, 1933 - 1945, 1945 1933. 18501106. National Archives at College Park.
- Obama, Barack. "Preface to the 2004 Edition." In *Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance*. New York: Three Rivers Press, 2004.
- O'Leary, Stephen D. *Arguing the Apocalypse: A Theory of Millennial Rhetoric*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Omi, Michael, and Howard Winant. *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 1994.
- Ore, Ersula J. *Lynching: Violence, Rhetoric, and American Identity*. Jackson, MS: University of Mississippi Press, 2019.
- Orr, James. "Holy Scripture and Modern Negations." In *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*, edited by Ruben Torrey, Amzi C. Dixon, and Louis Meyer, Vol. 1. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1910.
- Osborn, Fairfield. *Our Plundered Planet*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1948.
- Paley, William. *Natural Theology*. Edited by David Knight and Matthew D. Eddy. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1956.
- Patrick, Rembert. *The Reconstruction of the Nation*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1967.
- TIME Magazine. "Paul Revere of Ecology," February 2, 1970.

- Payne, Charles M. *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle*. 2nd ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007.
- Pearce, Roy Harvey. *The Savages of America*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1953.
- Perelman, Chaim. "The New Rhetoric and the Rhetoricians: Remembrances and Comments." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 70 (1984): 188–96.
- Perelman, Chaim. "The Rational and The Reasonable." *Philosophic Exchange* 10, no. 1 (1979): 29–34.
- Perelman, Chaim, and Lucie Olberchts-Tyteca. *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969.
- Peter Applebome. "Jerry Falwell, Moral Majority Founder, Dies at 73." *The New York Times*. May 16, 2007. <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/16/obituaries/16falwell.html>.
- Piepmier, Alison. *Out in Public: Configurations of Women's Bodies in Nineteenth Century America*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004.
- Prentiss, George L. "The National Crisis." *American Theological Review* 1st ser., no. 4 (October 1862): 674–718.
- Ray, Rashawn, and Alexandra Gibbons. "Why Are States Banning Critical Race Theory?" Brookings, November 2021. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/fixgov/2021/07/02/why-are-states-banning-critical-race-theory/>.
- Reicher, Stephen, and S. Alexander Haslam. "Towards a 'Science of Movement': Identity, Authority and Influence in the Production of Social Stability and Social Change." *Journal of Social and Political Psychology* 1, no. 1 (December 16, 2013): 112-131–131.
- Reiss, Louise Zibold. "Strontium-90 Absorption by Deciduous Teeth." *Science* 134, no. 3491 (1961): 1669–73.
- The Barry Commoner Center of Health and the Environment. "Re-Naming CNBS to the Barry Commoner Center of Health and the Environment," 2012. <https://web.archive.org/web/20141219204636/http://commonercenter.org/>.
- Roberts-Miller, Patricia. *Rhetoric and Demagoguery*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2019.
- Robin, Corey. *The Reactionary Mind: Conservatism from Edmund Burke to Donald Trump*. New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2017.
- Romero, Simon, and Giulia Heyward. "Fundamentalist Sect in Colorado Is Focus of Wildfire Inquiry." *New York Times*, January 4, 2022.

- Rose, Laura Martin. *The Ku Klux Klan or Invisible Empire*. New Orleans, LA: L. Graham Company Limited, 1914.
- Sayers, James Denson. *Can the White Race Survive?* Washington, DC: The Independent Publishing Company, 1929.
- Schaeffer, Francis. *A Christian Manifesto*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1981.
- . *How Should We Then Live? The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture*. Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1976.
- . *The Complete Works of Francis Schaeffer*. 2nd ed. 5 vols. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1985.
- Schmitt, Peter J. *Back to Nature: The Arcadian Myth of Urban America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1969.
- Schrag, Calvin O. *Radical Reflection and the Origin of the Human Sciences*. West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 1980.
- New York Times. “Scientist, Candidate and Planet Earth’s Lifeguard,” October 1, 2012. <https://www.proquest.com/blogs-podcasts-websites/scientist-candidate-planet-earth-s-lifeguard/docview/2215622033/se-2?accountid=14696>.
- Seymour Martin Lipset and Ear Raab. *The Politics of Unreason: Right-Wing Extremism in America, 1790-1977*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978.
- Shorten, Richard. “Reactionary Rhetoric Reconsidered.” *Journal of Political Ideologies* 20, no. 2 (2015): 179–200.
- Sidahmed, Abdel Salam, and Anoushiravan Ehteshami, eds. *Islamic Fundamentalism*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996.
- Simpson, John H. “Review of *Fundamentalisms and the State: Remaking Politics, Economies, and Militance* by Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby.” *Journal of the Scientific Study of Religion* 33, no. 4 (1994): 388–89.
- Sober, Elliot. “The Design Argument.” In *The Blackwell Guide to the Philosophy of Religion*, edited by William E. Mann, 117–47. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005.
- Somini Sengupta. “Carter Sadly Turns Back on National Baptist Body.” *The New York Times*. October 21, 2000. <http://www.nytimes.com/2000/10/21/us/carter-sadly-turns-back-on-national-baptist-body.html>.
- Southern Baptist Convention. “Resolution on Abortion.” <https://www.sbc.net/>. Accessed April 2, 2021. <https://www.sbc.net/resource-library/resolutions/resolution-on-abortion-2/>.

- Squires, Catherine R. “‘Hybrid Degenerates’ to ‘Multiracial Families’: Discourses of Race Mixing in America.” In *Dispatches from the Color Line: The Press and Multiracial America*. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 2007.
- Stearns, W.A. “Recent Questions of Unbelief.” *Bibliotheca Sacra* XXVII (July 1870).
- Stefan Kuhl. *The Nazi Connection: Eugenics, American Racism, and German National Socialism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Steiner, Mark Allen. *The Rhetoric of Operation Rescue: Projecting the Christian Pro-Life Message*. New York, NY: T & T Clark International, 2006.
- Steinfelds, Peter. “Fundamentalism: The 20th Century’s Last Ideology.” *The New York Times*. April 6, 1993. <https://www.nytimes.com/1993/04/06/us/fundamentalism-the-20th-century-s-last-ideology.html#:~:text=Unlike%20traditional%20believers%2C%20the%20scholars,not%20reject%20modernity%20in%20principle>.
- Stepan, Nancy Leys, and Sander L. Gilman. “Appropriating the Idioms of Science: The Rejection of Scientific Racism.” In *The “Racial” Economy of Science: Towards a Democratic Future*, edited by Sandra Harding, 170–93. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993.
- Sullens, Major Fredrick. “Bloodstains on White Marble Steps.” *Jackson Daily News*. May 18, 1954.
- Suzuki, David. *The Sacred Balance: Rediscovering Our Place in Nature*. Vancouver: Greystone Books, 1999.
- Swinburne, R. G. “The Argument from Design.” *Philosophy* 43, no. 165 (1968): 199–212.
- Taub, Amanda. “What Taliban Gain From Repression of Women.” *New York Times*. October 5, 2021.
- Taylor, Charles. *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989.
- New York Times. “Thomas P. Brady, Mississippi Judge: Author of Citizens Council’s Segregationist Guide Dies Curbed His Views.” 1973.
- Toulmin, Stephen E. *The Uses of Argument*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1958.
- “United States Nuclear Tests: July 1945 through September 1992.” Las Vegas, NV: U.S. Department of Energy, Nevada Operations Office, December 2000.

- Valverde, José de, Laurent Sovet, and Todd Lubart. "Self-Construction and Creative 'Life Design.'" In *The Creative Self*, edited by Maciej Karwowski and James C. Kaufman, 99–115. San Diego: Academic Press, 2017.
- Van Bavel, Jan, and David S. Reher. "The Baby Boom and Its Causes: What We Know and What We Need to Know." *Population and Development Review* 39, no. 2 (2013): 257–88.
- Vatz, Richard E. "The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation." *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 6, no. 3 (1973): 154–61.
- The Los Angeles Times. "Venice Festival Screens Scorsese's 'Last Temptation.'" September 9, 1988. http://articles.latimes.com/1988-09-09/entertainment/ca-1870_1_venice-festival.
- Virgil. *The Aeneid (29-19 BC)*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964.
- Vogt, William. *Road to Survival*. New York: William Sloane Associates, Inc., 1948.
- Walter Fisher. "Towards a Logic of Good Reasons." *The Quarterly Journal of Speech* 64 (1978): 376–84.
- Ward, Jason Morgan. *Defending White Democracy: The Making of a Segregationist Movement and the Remaking of Racial Politics, 1936-1965*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2011.
- Watt, David Harrington. *Antifundamentalism in Modern America*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2017.
- Wayland, Francis. *The Elements of Moral Science*. Edited by Joseph Angus. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963.
- Weiss, Stanley. "The Shocking Campaign Ad That Put a Third-Party Candidate on the Political Map." *TIME Magazine*, December 2, 2016. <https://time.com/4584919/barry-commoner-shocking-ad/>.
- Wharton, Vernon Lane. *The Negro in Mississippi, 1865-1890*. New York: Harper & Row, 1965.
- White, Hayden. "The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality." *Critical Inquiry* 7, no. 1 (1980): 5–27.
- Whitehead, John W. "Crazy for God: An Interview with Frank Schaeffer." *OldSpeak*, October 23, 2007. https://www.rutherford.org/publications_resources/oldspeak/crazy_for_god_an_interview_with_frank_schaeffer.
- Who's Who in the South and Southwest*. 9th ed. Chicago: Marquis-Who's Who, 1965.

William G. McLoughlin. *Revivals, Awakenings, and Reform: An Essay on Religious and Social Change in America 1607-1977*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978.

William O. Beeman. "Fighting the Good Fight: Fundamentalism and Religious Revival." In *Exotic No More: Anthropology on the Front Lines*, 129–44. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.

Williams, Daniel K. "The Partisan Trajectory of the American Pro-Life Movement: How a Liberal Catholic Campaign Became a Conservative Evangelical Cause." *Religions* 6 (2015): 451–75. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel6020451>.

Wills, Garry. *Under God: Religion and American Politics*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2007.