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THE BLUEPRINT AND THE MIRROR: RICHARD NIXON'S PRESIDENTIAL RHETORIC AND AMERICAN MASCULINITY

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the intersections of presidential rhetoric and American masculinity. The Richard Nixon presidential years were a time of immense social change that carried high stakes for American hegemonic masculinity. Drawing on the growing literature of critical studies of men and masculinities and using theories of civic republicanism and *doxa*, I analyze three moments pivotal in renegotiating a position of dominance for mainstream masculinity in the United States. My main argument is that Richard Nixon's presidential rhetoric was metonymic of the changes mainstream (white) American masculinity was undergoing during this period of U.S. history. By studying Nixon's presidential discourse, we can see the rhetorical resources on which he—and by extension, the average, white American man—relied to maintain a status of dominance in a changing social landscape. The Apollo 13 crisis, tensions between Vietnam veterans and Black and student protestors, and the Watergate affair cracked the hard shell of hegemonic masculinity; Nixon's rhetoric shows how mainstream men attempted to repair those cracks. Studying the Nixon presidency and its crises illuminates a timely historical and rhetorical antecedent for the state of the U.S. presidency in 2017. Richard Nixon was a mirror for American masculinity, reflecting the *status quo*, and was a blueprint, offering alternative paths to retain a dominant social status in the United States.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"…few came so far, so fast, so alone, as Nixon." –John A. Farrell[1]

1972 was a big year. The Cold War persisted. David Bowie rocked the music world with his glam alter-ego Ziggy Stardust, Trekkies celebrated the first-ever *Star Trek* fan convention, and the first video game "Pong" premiered. HBO was born, and former president Harry Truman died. Eleven Israeli Olympians died in a terrorist attack in Munich, the Bloody Friday and Sunday attacks killed over 30 Northern Irish citizens, and the United States withdrew the last of its ground troops from Vietnam. And Richard Nixon was elected to a second term as president in a landslide victory over George McGovern as *The Washington Post* continued its reporting on the strange circumstances surrounding the arrest of five burglars at the Watergate hotel.

Richard Nixon's presidential career saw more than its fair share of socio-political tension. Having served as President Eisenhower's vice president, having run against and lost to John F. Kennedy in the 1960 election, and then serving two terms as president, Nixon was either the primary or secondary actor in some of the most important and contentious moments in United States history. Three pivotal moments among many others were the near-disaster of the Apollo 13 mission, the negotiation of domestic tensions and protests during the Vietnam War, and the Watergate affair, which ultimately ended Nixon's presidential career. In the nearly 50 years since the Nixon terms of office, scholarship on these three events, on the United States during the Nixon years, and on Nixon himself has been abundant. In particular, scholarly and popular presses have dedicated much attention to Nixon's particular brand of image management and, by extension, his construction of masculinity.[2] This study takes the infamous character of

Richard Milhous Nixon as the metonym for mainstream masculinity in the United States during this tumultuous time in American history.[3]

During the domestic social unrest of the Nixon years, the dominance of hegemonic American masculinity grew increasingly untenable. The Nixon years of the Cold War, 1968-1974, marked the end of the era of unquestioned male authority in the United States, and the form hegemonic masculinity evolved to take during the Nixon years serves as a benchmark for modern mainstream masculinity and for contemporary GOP politics.[4] Hegemonic masculinity in the 1960s and 1970s followed a pattern similar to what Michael Kimmel has recently termed "aggrieved entitlement." This phenomenon describes mainstream men (white, straight, usually married, employed, often educated, able-bodied, English-speaking, Christian (usually Protestant), native born, cisgender males) who feel that society "owes" them something, such as economic prosperity, an active sex life, long-lasting love, etc., and when they do not receive these things to which they feel entitled, become bitter and sometimes even violent.[5] One can see evidence of this phenomenon in the Nixon years of the Cold War in popular, male-oriented publications like *Playboy* and in academic research like The Kelly Longitudinal Study.[6] Those experiencing aggrieved entitlement balk at the idea of relinquishing their perceived right to a dominant position and will fight to maintain hegemonic status.[7] Something that comes to stand for another thing or group is a "metonym."[8] The male-dominated American presidency stands as a metonym for hegemonic masculinity during a given president's time. The Nixon presidency in particular reflected a mainstream response to major social changes and an attempt to reconstitute the dominance of hegemonic masculinity. This metonymy reveals the Nixon presidential years as a rhetorical

antecedent for the current state of mainstream masculinity and presidential politics in the United States.

This project examines three areas of Richard Nixon's presidential rhetoric—space, war, and Watergate—which yielded a particular prescription for proper American masculinity and articulated a different yet still dominant space for hegemonic masculinity to exist in a changing world. Based in a tradition of civic republicanism—a form of democratic participation reliant on sacrifice for the greater good, logical reasoning, and thwarting special interests—Nixon's prescription for masculinity created clear boundaries for belonging. As an opinion-leader in American culture, the president's rhetorical choices reinforced the common sense knowledge, or *doxa*, of the time about who mattered in America.

In this dissertation, I argue that Nixon's presidential rhetoric served as both a mirror and a blueprint, reflecting hegemonic norms of masculinity also while suggesting new directions for both his party and for America. I analyze Richard Nixon's discourse on the Apollo 13 explosion, on "warrior masculinity" in the Vietnam War and in domestic protest, and on the Watergate scandal. Examining these crisis moments in the Nixon presidency reveals the pivotal part this presidency played in the maturation of American masculinity. This project will consider the rhetoric of hegemonic masculinity during these important Cold War years, analyzing artifacts surrounding three major moments of domestic cultural crisis. The aim is neither to understand better the crisis moments themselves nor to interrogate them as "crisis rhetoric" but instead to interrogate the reconstitution of hegemonic masculinity at this time. Moments of crisis provide a unique way to study hegemonic masculinity on a cultural level, for moments of national

crisis could be understood as metonyms for crises of hegemonic masculinity: the carapace of each institution cracks under stress, and exposing the softness within presents a grave danger to both.

The rest of this introductory chapter will first give a brief synopsis of relevant scholarly conversations with which this dissertation will engage. I then pivot toward establishing the need for this study. I next give an overview of the project, including a general historical context, an explanation of my methodology and rationale for my selected texts for analysis, and finally I preview the chapters to follow.

Theoretical Contexts

My project engages with and attempts to put into conversation four theoretical concepts or areas of inquiry: critical studies of men and masculinities (CSOMM), the ancient concept of *doxa*, theories of civic republicanism, and "rhetorical antecedents." A brief but thorough understanding of these four concepts provides a foundation to this dissertation. I begin by discussing CSOMM, the theoretical framework that sets this dissertation apart from other studies of presidential masculinity or presidential public address, before operationalizing *doxa*, civic republicanism, and rhetorical antecedents.

Critical Studies of Men and Masculinities

What distinguishes this project from other traditional studies of presidential public address is my focus on masculinities and on the manner in which hegemonic masculinity operates within almost every facet of presidential rhetoric. I also recognize that critical studies of men and masculinities is a vocabulary with which most scholars, and especially

rhetoricians, may be unfamiliar. What distinguishes CSOMM from women's studies? What is the main narrative of masculinity CSOMM embraces? What is the role of the presidency in masculinity studies? What is CSOMM's place in rhetoric? Here I address these questions and more.

In a seminar in Women's Studies, the class performed the requisite introductory ice-breaker to start the first class. Students gave their name, department, and scholarly interests. The professor, one of the pioneers of the women's history field, appeared scandalized that I, a woman, would want to study masculinity—because hasn't ALL of history been studies of men? This response is not uncommon for masculinities scholars. Whereas second-wave feminism focused the majority of its efforts on femininity and all things woman-related, third-wave and post-feminists have also spent a great deal of time discussing masculinity, both in public fora and in the academy. CSOMM does not study men as genderless or "given" nor does it solely consider how men and women interact or how masculinity affects these relationships. CSOMM studies "men *as men*," exposing and critically examining masculinity in its own right. [9]

Critical studies of men and masculinities is quite different from "men's studies" or "men's rights" activism.[10] All these groups emerged in the early 1980s and reacted to the maturation of second-wave feminism. However, men's rights groups responded very negatively to the feminist movement; indeed men's rights activism is the rhetorical and intellectual antecedent for modern Internet sexist cyber-violence, as in the 2014 "Gamergate" controversy.[11] By contrast, most of the founding scholars of CSOMM were male scholars dedicated to the ideals of feminism, who, like their female third-wave counterparts, sought to investigate the negative impact of traditional gender on both

women *and* men. This scholarship relied on the work of critical theorists and other feminist scholars.

Social scientific scholarship on gender around the time of CSOMM's nascence depended on Sex-Role Theory, which, as scholar R.W. Connell notes, wrote social processes onto biological processes or traits. In other words, Sex-Role Theory, a product of 1970s scholarship, argued that, because women were the ones who could bear children (a biological act), they should also be the ones primarily to raise the children (a social act).[12] This theory depended on the concept of gender as fixed. Judith Butler staunchly opposed this logic and pioneered the concept of gender as performance. Butler's eponymous theory posited that gender is neither innate nor fixed but instead is a constant social enactment that can vary in different times and circumstances. Butler's work on gender was akin to other poststructuralist work that challenged the concept of any type of fixed identity.

Those scholars working within the then-budding field of women's studies placed their academic focus on the experiences of women, of women's literature and history, of women's psychology, and so forth. For too long, they argued, women have been excluded from the near-ubiquity of maleness in both scholarship and academia. Some male women's studies scholars, many who would later become founders of critical studies of men and masculinities, saw equal importance in studying the effects of patriarchy on men as well as on women. Scholars like R.W. Connell, Michael Kimmel, Michael Messner, Don Sabo, and Harry Brod labeled themselves "profeminist."[13] These scholars used this term to differentiate themselves both from the female feminist scholars they relied upon and respected as well as to differentiate them from men's rights activists,

a culture of sexism, and the highly damaging concept of "hegemonic masculinity" that they hoped their work might challenge.

Borrowing the root term from Gramsci, R.W. Connell theorized "hegemonic masculinity" as a structure that maintains patriarchy by rewarding males and oppressing females. Other theorists have contributed to this concept, explaining that hegemonic masculinity is also an oppressive force to nearly all men.[14] Later CSOMM scholars like Eric Anderson raise concerns that Connell's theory is too totalizing and should therefore be discarded. I agree with this concern but disagree with the conclusion. The concept is indeed totalizing: hegemonic masculinity describes a monolithic, pervasive cultural phenomenon that, I suggest in concurrence with Anderson, to some degree drives all American men's gender performances. Maintaining the term and studying it, however, is still important. The very point of this concept is that it is an impossible, unachievable ideal that all men to varying degrees continue to strive towards and with varying levels of success and failure.[15] Anderson's concepts of "inclusive masculinity" and "homohysteria" are not, to my reading, at odds with Connell's "hegemonic masculinity"; they can and should be studied as parts of a larger whole.

But what characterizes "hegemonic masculinity"? J. Jack Halberstam expressed the widely held scholarly opinion that it is much easier to know what hegemonic masculinity *isn't*, rather than what it is.[16] This is the pervasive and persuasive power of hegemonic masculinity: its ability to remain sufficiently vague gives it the flexibility to change its proverbial stripes when necessary, to absorb some aspect of another culture as it desires.

Hegemonic masculinity is "that which is not feminine." Certain stereotypes of traditional femininity are emotional expression, physical weakness, and poor athletic skill, among many others. Hegemonic masculinity, then, requires toughness of heart and body, often performed through violence on the battlefield or on the playing field. Hegemonic masculinity also endorses the stereotype that the embodiment of femininity in a man is homosexuality. Michael Kimmel argued that men perform their masculinity for the approval of other men.[17] By projecting his own fears and insecurities into homophobic speech (and similarly into the denigration of women) when around other men, a man performs a public assurance of his status as a "real man."[18] This rigid monitoring or "policing" of one's own behavior results in homosocial anxiety: in general, men do not have the same level of intimacy in their same-sex friendships as women do, leading to what Debord called the lonely crowd.[19]

Although terminology shifts slightly over time, most theoretical terms in critical studies of men and masculinities remain consistent. Throughout its history and today, most CSOMM scholars speak of "masculinities" in the plural to indicate the variety of masculine experiences people may face or embody in their lifetime (R.W. Connell's seminal work on hegemonic masculinity was itself titled *Masculinities*).[20] Sociologist Eric Anderson offered "orthodox" versus "inclusive" masculinity in place of "hegemonic masculinity" and "masculinities," but they are the same words spoken in different languages.[21] Regardless of the terms used, the point remains: any attempt to collapse "masculinity" into a singular prescription suitable for all people is both unwise and untenable. CSOMM scholars continuously drive this point home, as do those non-

academic writers in and activist allies of CSOMM, like the highly popular public speaker, writer, and documentarian Jackson Katz.[22]

The mushrooming field of critical studies of men and masculinities responds to the need to understand how especially white, Western masculinity operates as a social construct, governs male behavior, and ultimately guides or shapes larger socio-political culture. While it is more complex than "gender harms everyone," CSOMM works to understand, as Michael Kimmel put it, "men *as* men" instead of the woman-as-other/man-as-establishment framework of many traditionally feminist investigations of masculinity.[23] As a necessarily interdisciplinary form of work, including scholarship from psychologists, sociologists, medical doctors, rhetoricians, poets, and more, at this time at least CSOMM is more a shared vocabulary and set of intellectual and activist priorities than it is a field in the institutional sense.[24] Because gender sees no departmental boundaries, CSOMM scholarship is exceptionally diverse.

The relationship between masculinity and the United States presidency has not gone unnoticed. Sociologist Michael Kimmel explained in great detail how anxieties of masculinity have shaped the entire course of United States sociology and history in his *Manhood in America*.[25] In *Manliness and Civilization*, historian Gail Bederman traced the relationship between "manliness" and whiteness at the turn of the 20th century, tensions that only grew as the century progressed.[26] She paid particular attention to Theodore Roosevelt, a president now remembered as a heroic, ultra-masculine president. K.A. Cuordileone added to this line of inquiry by exploring the ways anxieties of masculinity shaped red scare- and Kennedy-era politics as well as the deeply felt perception of persecution felt by white, middle class American males in the years

following World War II.[27]

The aforementioned works each represent case studies in the wider theoretical claim that the United States presidency is aggressively gendered male. Though it was not their primary focus, Kimmel's, Bederman's, and Cuordileone's work all assert what I will expound upon in my final chapter: presidentiality in the United States is intimately, if not inextricably, tied to masculinity. The United States celebrates, not its founders, but its "Founding Fathers." The very act of nationhood formation involved a group of males "giving birth" to a new country. Women were not, by legal design and by cultural barriers, tied to national nascence as were their male counterparts. This national "birth" language naturalizes males' public role in American government while simultaneously reinforcing that female birth makes natural women's place in the private sphere. Furthermore, 241 years and 45 presidents later, United States history obviously shows that Americans see their president as a man. Women have run for president periodically since the mid-1800s, yet it took until 2016 to see a major party nominate a female to run. Indeed, her femaleness contributed to Clinton's un-electability in 2016. The embodied maleness of United States presidents is as important, scholarship and history show, as masculine presidential rhetoric.

Past scholarship has attended to the important connection between presidentiality and masculinity. John Orman draws out the "macho presidential style" in his *Comparing Presidential Behavior*.[28] He identifies seven characteristics of the macho presidential style:

1. Competitive in politics and life
2. Sports-minded and athletic
3. Decisive, never wavering or uncertain
4. Unemotional, never revealing true emotions or feelings

5. Strong and aggressive, not weak or passive
6. Powerful
7. A "real man," never "feminine"[29]

Orman points out something CSOMM scholars often interrogate: "The problem of asking presidents to live up to the macho myth is the problem of asking someone to be what they are not. The seven components of the macho myth are neither inherently male traits nor are they antithetical to femininity."[30] Although his analysis focuses primarily on contrasting Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan, his point is applicable to all United States presidents, especially Nixon. Orman's "macho presidential style" makes a vital theme clear: the presidency and masculinity are inextricably connected.

Nixon strove always towards "obsessive presidentiality" when in public, abiding the seven characteristics Orman identified. As I have argued in previous work, the presidential characteristic of "electability" is a constellation of many different traits and behaviors, including "such obvious qualifications as political savvy and experience and the ability to handle domestic and foreign affairs" as well as more subjective attributes, like gender and image. In my 2014 work, I explored Waterman, Wright, and St. Clair's notion of *The Image-Is-Everything Presidency*, a text that focused on processes of embodied image and reputation maintenance among presidents and presidential hopefuls.[31] I then wrote:

> Arguably no president before Richard Nixon was more actively and personally dedicated to public perception and "image." Waterman, Wright, and St. Clair attributed the creation of the "image-is-everything presidency" to Nixon. Nixon was neither as young nor as handsome as Jack Kennedy; consequently, he had to work harder to establish a glowing popular image for himself. Edwin Black argued that Nixon was almost constantly "inventing himself," usually with great success. Nixon did all he could to display the character and attributes he wanted the American

> public to see in him. The public persona of Nixon dominated Nixon's "true" person.[32]

These authors' observations of Nixon are not uncommon: most presidents have a great stake in their public image, and Nixon's investment in his image bordered on neurotic. The cover of *Esquire* magazine in May 1968, for example, shows Nixon's likeness in a beautician's chair, eyes closed, with four disembodied hands, each wielding hairspray, eyeshadow, a powder poof, or lipstick, preparing to attack his face. The only caption reads "Nixon's last chance. (This time he'd better look right!)." Retrospective work on Nixon, such as Bob Woodward's 2015 book on Alexander Butterfield, tells a tale remarkably similar to past accounts of the image-obsessed Nixon.[33] Nixon's "made up" appearance received both discussion and ridicule to interrogate or insult not only Nixon's personality, but also his gender performance. In my Master's thesis, I studied the relationship between popular culture and public images; these same Nixonian image-maintenance stories relate a particular narrative on gender. In concert with Kimmel's assertion that men perform masculinity for other men, Nixon's image management was as much an act of presidential P.R. as it was an act of gender performance.

Studying the interplay of presidential image and gender performance through campaign oratory, Jackson Katz offered for a popular audience a well-researched analysis of the relationship between American masculinity and the United States presidency. He writes, "presidential politics are the site of an ongoing cultural struggle over the meaning of American manhood. At the center stage of that debated, presidential campaigns function as symbolic contests over competing definitions of 'real manhood,' and thus over what kind of man can and should be in charge."[34] Presidential races, Katz suggests, are distinctly gendered and raced, as well as classed (though he does not directly engage

class). His evidence from studying campaigns from Carter to Obama culminates in this assertion of one way to understand who Americans vote for and why: "It's the masculinity, stupid."[35] Katz's premise makes overt the often unspoken element of presidential politics—not of gender, but of masculinity.[36] When a female candidate runs for president, conversations on gender abound, but only because female is "other" to presidential politics. I take work like this as my starting point for claiming not merely that the United States presidency to this point has been a necessarily masculine, indeed nearly hyper-masculine, institution, but also for claiming that Richard Nixon can demonstrate how and why this is true.

Along these same lines, one could write an entire book on Richard Nixon's masculinity—and, in fact, other scholars already have. Garry Wills spent much of his *Nixon Agonistes* discussing Nixon and manliness, though perhaps not in an overt way, as that was not his purpose in *Agonistes* or in his regular contributions on Nixon to *Esquire* magazine.[37] Allison Prasch's scholarship on Nixon, such as her "Retelling Watergate," at times engages with masculinity.[38] However, most studies of Nixon that have considered his masculinity have been biographies or psychological studies. My dissertation presents a different perspective by examining Nixon, not for "Nixon's sake," but as a metonym for mainstream masculinity in the United States during his presidential years. The gendered arguments within Nixon's rhetoric, in other words, are representative of the bigger socio-political picture of gender in America in the Nixon years of the Cold War. This dissertation is therefore equally a study of presidential rhetoric as it is an exercise in critical studies of men and masculinities, a connection I explain in more depth under "Dissertation Contributions."

Popular and historical memory of Richard Nixon recalls him as both exceptional and evil, so taking Nixon as a metonym for mainstream masculinity in the early 1970s may seem surprising and offensive. However, many factors made Nixon metonymic of mainstream masculinity. United States presidents dating back to the early 19th century began to conform to the paradox witnessed recently in the George W. Bush election cycles: being both the "everyman… but distinctively so."[39] That is, the president had (has) to be both average and exceptional, and Richard Nixon surely fit this description. Nixon represented the ultimate American "bootstraps" story, born the third of five sons to a poor California grocer father and a Quaker mother and eventually attaining the presidency. As Nixon measured his successful journey, "It's a long way from Yorba Linda [California] to the White House."[40]

Although my dissertation draws heavily on the type of work on masculinity and the presidency, specifically K.A. Cuordileone's work on Kennedy and Johnson, Nixon and his Democratic predecessors had fundamental differences. According to Cuordileone, Kennedy led a presidency that asserted the elites' obligation to power and therefore to shape politics for the masses, and Johnson followed Kennedy's legacy. By contrast, Nixon always remembered his roots, and indeed by many accounts, Nixon's non-elite past haunted him.[41] He responded to these pressures by always working for "the great silent majority of Americans"—Americans very like Richard Nixon himself. Simply, for who he was and when he lived, Richard Nixon exemplified the paradox of the president as both average and exceptional.[42] From this paradox, I take my license to declare him a metonym for mainstream (white) masculinity in the United States during his presidential years.

Doxa

In addition to critical studies of men and masculinities, other theoretical concepts guide this dissertation. Among them is *doxa.* Ancient thinkers understood knowledge not as a uniform concept; knowledge for them came in different though related forms. Knowledge of things like facts and figures was *episteme* (ἐπιστήμη). The form of knowledge often contrasted with *episteme* was *doxa* (δόξα), or common sense wisdom. Jim Kuypers explains *doxa* in this way: "It is apparent that *doxa* provides the underpinning of society's rationality and conception of ethical values. Values and rationality are no longer linked with modernism's epistemic constructs of rationality, but rather to a conception of *doxa* allowing for consideration of agent and contingency…."[43] In this passage, Kuypers describes how socio-political thought often relies on societally constructed "common sense" more so than on "hard fact." Robert Hariman offers an even simpler definition of *doxa* as "what need not be said," or those socially agreed-upon conventions that come to govern common sense.[44] Scholars have rightly examined the more specified forms *doxa* may take, such as *endoxa*, *adoxa*, *orthodoxa,* and *paradoxa,* which allow us to speak more accurately and responsibly about the "common sense" under consideration.[45]

A society's "common sense" wisdom can be very telling of that society's priorities. In this dissertation, *doxa* is an important part of my interrogation of the various Nixon texts as commentaries on gender in the early 1970s. Masculinity in the United States is the "given." When one hears "The doctor rushed into the room," more likely than not, the image of a white man comes to mind.[46] Particularly in the Nixon presidential years, when the women's movement was still growing, male dominance was

"that which need not be said"; it was obvious, for example, that women should not be considered for the astronaut corps. I use *doxa* in this project to mean common sense wisdom, but one must acknowledge that definitions of *doxa* have been contested and have changed over time.[47] This definition and explanation operationalize the term as I use it in this dissertation.

Civic Republicanism

"Civic republicanism" is another term with ancient origins and one that is similarly often-theorized, -disputed, and -redefined, especially among legal scholars and political theorists. Ancient thinkers such as Plato and Aristotle, as well as Cicero, proffered concepts of virtue, the moral center of civic republicanism, and theorizing this subject has continued nearly uninterrupted since that time. Modern scholars studying civic republicanism have noted, however, its ability to silence discussions of difference and inequality by framing civic republican politics as neutral; anyone who strives for the common good can be a civic republican.

Within this project, I engage civic republicanism in a 1970s context; that is, although I recognize there is newer scholarship on this concept, I have tried to think only through what Nixon would have engaged during his academic and professional training.[48] The version of civic republicanism expounded upon here is by no means the only definition of the concept. The Nixonian context for civic republicanism flattens the complexity of a more accurate historical reading in a deliberate manner—for indeed, the idea of civic republicanism attempted to *prevent* a Richard Nixon from taking power. By cherry-picking what it means to be a "true" civic republican, Nixon could place himself

on equal footing with America's Founders and could articulate more clearly the exigence for fighting an enemy not merely at the gate but that is already inside the U.S. The ancient thinkers understood virtue as a philosophy or trait, and most who theorize civic republicanism see this concept as a political foundation or philosophy. Nixon, however, used civic republicanism as a tactic rather than a philosophy.[49]

The main tenets of antiquated form of civic republicanism are emphasizing cool reason, public deliberation, and anti-factionalism as a means to pursue the greater good of society.[50] The civic republican eschews passion and special interests in exchange for the wielding of "virtuous power"—in essence, the virtuous, intelligent man taking up the mantle of power to lead the passion-governed unwashed masses.[51] Sunstein and Hariman and Lucaites note that military service carries even greater status in civic republicanism.[52] Nixon demonstrated a commitment to nearly every facet of civic republicanism during his political life. Furthermore, Nixon's blend of conservative politics and civic republicanism represents a common combination of political ideals.

Although parading itself as neutral or as attainable by any person with the correct values, civic republicanism is a highly conservative political concept. Writing on Adlai Stevenson's civic republicanism, John Murphy writes, "In a larger sense, republicanism is a conservative approach to politics. Adlai Stevenson's rhetoric, and that of the men who drew from him, is focused on *preservation*."[53] Murphy's study of Stevenson shows that a rhetoric of conservativism pervades civic republican speech even among Democrats. Drawing attention to this bias, scholars like Derrick Bell and Preeta Bansal have pointed out that civic republicanism is a very white, very masculine understanding of human interaction in the political public world, and one with subtle ties to *doxa*.[54]

Civic republicanism takes as its main catechism "cool reason"; one best achieves results for the public good when passion is left out of politics. This is a highly masculine argument, for masculinity is associated with rationality and femininity with emotionality. To be woman, therefore, is to be irrationally passionate and to be man is to be objective and coolly reasoning, and he therefore has greater public worth and is more worthy of the public's trust.[55] This is a well-studied phenomenon, and this is *doxa* at work. The American society traditionally values rationality in the public sphere; as men are "innately" rational, men belong in the public sphere, and women do not.

I use civic republicanism in this dissertation not only to interrogate Nixon's animosities towards those he felt violated the "right" path of civic republicanism but also as another means by which to explain how Nixon's political rhetoric can also be viewed as commenting on gender. As with *doxa,* the brief history and definition of civic republicanism I have offered simply defines the term for use in this project.[56]

Rhetorical Antecedents

In their 1982 article in *Pre/Text*, Gerard Hauser and Carole Blair argue that publics are naturally rhetorical.[57] Without an understanding of the rhetoric behind them, or their "rhetorical antecedents," publics make little sense. This was important work in publics theory, but the term can also support scholarship outside the study of publics. Indeed, though mindful of its history, I use the term "rhetorical antecedent" in my dissertation but I operationalize it differently.

I take a more literal definition of "rhetorical antecedent" as a rhetorical act that precedes some similar, later rhetorical act. The very term "rhetorical antecedent" is a

rhetorical antecedent for the study of publics theory in rhetoric, for example. Within my dissertation, I use rhetorical antecedents as a means to understand the relationship between Nixon's presidential rhetoric and current political and presidential rhetoric—a connection I draw out in the Conclusion. Historical awareness helps make clear present realities. Looking to historical antecedents aids comprehension of the present state of hegemonic American masculinity—that is, white, (seemingly) straight, middle class and employed, able-bodied, English-speaking, Christian (usually Protestant), native born, cisgender males—the target of increased scholarly and popular attention since the 2010s. Hegemonic masculinity, as Kimmel phrased it, "is at the end of an era," and studying the origins of the era will help us understand these, its twilight years.[58]

Dissertation Contributions

My dissertation enters into and adds to the conversations on the aforementioned bodies of literature in four important ways. First, while there are many projects that look almost identical to mine (e.g., K.A. Cuordileone's *Manhood and American Political Culture*), they stop their inquiries nearly a decade before Nixon took office. Scholarship on masculinity and gender during the red/lavender scare years and on the Kennedy years of the Cold War United States abounds. Scholars living in the Nixon years began the conversation on masculinity in the United States, and modern scholars, such as K.A. Cuordileone, Elaine Tyler May, Ian Nicholson, and Whitney Strub, have contributed to this scholarship. For example, Cuordileone argued persuasively that anxieties of masculinity in United States politics drove many of the major actions and actors of the Cold War and was reflected in the rhetoric of the time.[59] Each of the aforementioned

works provides valuable insight into how the Cold War was a gendered event.

Interestingly, nearly all of this scholarship focused on the post-WWII context of masculinity in United States socio-political life in the mid-1940s to the early 1960s, stopping their inquiry just as the cultural turbulences of the 1960s were reaching their exploding point. Similarly, many scholars have considered the different gendered social movements of the 1960s and 1970s, like second-wave feminism, African American Civil Rights and Black Power, and the early gay and lesbian (now LGBTQA+) movement, but only a minority of this scholarship explicitly treats hegemonic masculinity in this historical moment, and littler still via Nixon's rhetoric explicitly.[60] I believe a study of the Nixon presidential years holds particular importance, as these many movements boiled over during his presidency and also (and more importantly) because Nixon himself was often diametrically opposed to the changes happening all around him in the United States. His presidential rhetoric, therefore, is representative of the mainstream masculinity trying so desperately to maintain the *status quo*, and his oratory carved out for this group a way to reconstitute this dominant status.

First, previous scholarship has done an exceptional job accounting for the social, historical, and political factors that brought the United States through the Kennedy and Johnson years, but most go no further. It is the goal of this dissertation to pick up where these scholars left off, with a rhetorical examination of the state of hegemonic masculinity during the Nixon years, a time of great social and political change. I further consider myself to be joining the growing conversation on critical studies of men and masculinities, aligning myself particularly with scholars like Michael Kimmel, who have used historical analysis to understand better the development of present-day United States

masculinities. In this dissertation project , I use a rhetorical thread to stitch together the work done by other scholars and theorists to create a different, more complete product.

Second, scholarship at the intersections of rhetoric, presidential public address, and CSOMM is rare, and an increase in this interdisciplinary scholarship can yield many benefits. Work within rhetoric and communication studies adds to the scholarly conversations in CSOMM but, I argue, these are either peripheral or unwitting. Studies of masculinity within rhetoric are very often what I name "masculinity AND" studies, indicating studies that consider masculinity in relation to another identity marker. For example, analyses by Achter, Yu, and Andrew each studied how the mainstream media repurposed their male subject's Black masculinity.[61] The masculinity in these cases was only as important as the Blackness of their subjects, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Tiger Woods, and Michael Jordan. These cases demonstrate both the importance of masculinity work in rhetoric and the "masculinity AND" concept. Most emblematic of this concept is rhetorical scholarship on gay voices, such as Morris's "My Old Kentucky Homo" or "The Pink Herring," wherein discussions of masculinity filter through sexuality.[62]

Rhetoricians produce excellent work each year, and this rhetorical scholarship has much to share with CSOMM, but working to converse with CSOMM is not, at present, a field priority. Focusing on "men *as men*" rather than on "masculinity AND" studies and doing careful, cross-disciplinary research can yield a fruitful study that engages two, very rich areas of scholarly inquiry. For my study to do this, I have internalized an idea at the core of CSOMM and that reaches back to second-wave feminism: scholars must acknowledge masculinity. This claim may seem ludicrous considering rhetoric is pejoratively called the study of dead white men, but rarely do rhetoricians study men *as*

men in their work. Very often, especially in traditional studies of public address, rhetoricians take for granted a male rhetor's masculinity, where, by contrast, a female rhetor's femininity is often at the fore.[63] When rhetoricians take masculinity as the given, in the same way as we very often take whiteness as an unacknowledged given, hegemonic masculinity sleeps soundly for another night. Like racism, hegemonic masculinity operates most assiduously in the shadows; silence around masculinity, as around Whiteness, allows this system to continue.

Third, this dissertation contributes to an immense body of research on Richard Nixon. Many rhetoricians, like Mary Stuckey, Denise Bostdorff, and Allison Prasch, have studied the 37th president in their scholarship, and innumerable historians and journalists, such as John Farrell and Bob Woodward, have taken up studies of Nixon. Psychologists, sociologists, and political theorists have tried to understand Nixon's mutable public image, just as scholars across the disciplines have devoted numerous books to the different crises I discuss in this dissertation.[64] This dissertation unites CSOMM, textual analysis, and the study of Richard Milhous Nixon in both his own right and, more importantly, as a metonym for mainstream masculinity in the United States.

Finally, this dissertation is an exercise in careful historicizing. In her 2016 Kenneth Burke Lecture, "The Art of Anger in United States Presidential Elections," Mary Stuckey shared an anecdote about a newspaper calling to ask her to confirm and comment on their assertion that Donald Trump's rage-filled rhetoric was "unprecedented in United States politics."[65] She explained that she refused to give such a comment and proceeded to give the reporter a history lesson about rage during the F.D.R. campaigns. Her point was a vital one: rarely is it that we are truly in a "totally new" or "completely

unprecedented" moment in United States presidential politics. At the time of writing this project's prospectus, Donald Trump had yet to receive the Republican nomination for the presidency, let alone to win, but I still asserted that I saw this dissertation as simultaneously about Nixon and about Trump. I maintain this assertion as we move closer to the one-year mark of American under Donald Trump. Often the best way to comprehend the present is to study the past.[66]

Project Overview

To provide a general sense of the context surrounding the situations and artifacts under consideration in this project, I present a short explanation of Nixon's personal and public service history, as well as a very brief account of the social changes happening during Nixon's presidency and the cultural concerns they brought forth. I then identify and explain the crisis moments under analysis in this dissertation and the texts I have selected to represent these moments of cultural importance. I here also give a preview of each dissertation chapter, forecasting how each chapter contributes to the larger project.

Historical Context

Richard Milhous Nixon was born the third son of Hannah Milhous and Francis Nixon in a tiny house that still stands in Yorba Linda, California, on what is now the grounds of the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum. Raised in near-poverty, young Richard was an avid piano player and worked in the family grocery store until he left to attend Whittier College, a close-to-home, affordable option for a college education. He later attended law school at Duke University. After he graduated and subsequently

passed the bar, Richard met, courted, and married Thelma "Pat" Ryan. The couple later had two daughters, Tricia and Julie. Although he was raised Quaker, Nixon defied his religious mandate of pacifism to join the Navy in WWII.

Nixon had instinct towards public service from a young age, and he continuously participated in class elections and local government. He entered the national political stage in 1945 and remained there in some capacity until his death in 1994. Nixon served as a congressman and later as Eisenhower's vice president for two terms, famously lost both the presidency in 1960 to Jack Kennedy and the 1962 California gubernatorial race (after which he vowed: "You won't have Dick Nixon to kick around anymore!"), served one and a half terms as United States president before resigning, and he mentored many of his presidential successors.[67] Nixon was an active participant in United States national politics for nearly fifty years, and his legacy still affects American national politics today.

Nixon entered the presidency in a time of massive domestic and foreign sociopolitical change. Although United States pro-war propaganda may have claimed otherwise, the Vietnam War had stalemated as the Viet Cong refused to give up the war. The China wildcard preoccupied and intrigued Washington, and the threat of communist expansion plagued the minds of United States politicians, including the virulently anti-communist Richard Nixon.[68] Incidences of domestic unrest were growing more and more each day, as young people revolted against a "purposeless" war, Black Americans stood up for their rights, opting for greater militancy in doing so, women pushed back against the patriarchy, and queer Americans made their identities and their worth known.[69] Those social movements that had simmered throughout the late fifties and into the sixties were boiling over by 1969 as Richard Nixon entered the White House.

Changing social landscapes often result in reactionary behavior from the previously dominant group. During the early years of the Cold War, fears of a zero-sum game—"now that thus-and-such group has rights/monies/the vote/etc., my group will have less or none"—fueled what later became known as the "crisis of masculinity" in the United States. Concerns over the changing power landscape caused two, related reactions: white men clamped down on their dominant role in their relationships with women and men began policing their own and other men's masculine (or unmasculine) behaviors with renewed fervor.

Along with "the cancer of communism," talk of a "crisis of masculinity" was the most important part of the cultural mood in the mid- to late 1950s. Society was changing, and the dominant status white men previously held seemed to come under threat. In 1958, the editors of *LOOK!* magazine published in book form a series of articles it titled *The Decline of the American Male*, in which the contributors interrogate concerns over female dominance, "difference," and men's work habits.[70] From grievances over who has "control of conception," concern over becoming a "man in a gray flannel suit," and the "deeply American" drive to work constantly, these popular press articles represent the anxieties rampant in this era.[71]

Post-war American men greatly feared the "soft" organization man. Gray-flannel-suited "yes-men" were a threat to the United States, for they not only became more susceptible to communist propaganda, but also they sapped the virility and vitality of the American peoples' future. There was a deep cultural anxiety of the blindly following, nine-to-five organization man so lacking in masculine "hardness" that his will would bend to the slightest persuasive authority.[72] Ian Nicholson examined a particular iteration

of this fear in his analysis of the infamous Stanley Milgram shock experiments. His "'Shocking' Masculinity" argued that the Milgram experiment seemed to confirm the United States public's worst fears: years of kowtowing to workplace authority and to female tyranny in the home had "softened" the resolve of the American man so much that, should the communists desire to do so, his will would bend easily to nefarious influences.[73] For many, including Norman Mailer, John F. Kennedy offered a renewal of this vitality, but anxieties of masculinity in America had not yet disappeared.[74] Garry Wills, too, confirmed this in his work on how J.F.K.'s and Nixon's "manliness" played a central part in their presidential politics.[75] In fact, one may reasonably infer—and scholarship like Cuordileone's confirms—that these anxieties were so prevalent in the American consciousness that they became part of the cultural lexicon in the decades that followed.[76]

For Nixon in particular, this connection between anti-communism and masculinity was especially strong. The Alger Hiss case demonstrates this well. The Hiss case is one of the famous "whodunnits" in United States history, for even more than sixty years later, there is no consensus on Hiss's guilt or innocence. During the Congressional investigation, junior Congressman Nixon aggressively pursued Hiss to expose a communist hiding in the United States government, but also to make a name for himself as well as to discipline Hiss's form of masculinity. Hiss represented the type of man Nixon saw as enemy: Hiss was east-coast, liberal, effete, and an intellectual.[77] From Nixon's own writings and from secondary sources, it is clear that, Nixon's hatred for liberals, elites, and communist sympathizers came saturated in gendered language and

ideology.[78] For both the United States and especially for Richard Nixon, masculinity was always under threat.

The actual language of "crisis of masculinity" was prevalent and overt during the McCarthy years, and although it had faded to background noise by the 1960s and 1970s, the "crisis of masculinity" mindset maintained both its vigor and terror. Whitney Strub, for example, discussed the role of homosexuality and anti-obscenity laws, specific instances of a long history of oppression based on policing queerness as wrong, unmanly, and therefore un-American.[79] Work like this shows how the "crisis" mindset remained, and in full force, even if the language itself had gone by the wayside. In this dissertation, I look at how the changing status of hegemonic masculinity played a part in these larger moments of crisis, even though the "crisis of masculinity" language is not overtly present in any of these three situations.

Methodology and Rationale for Text Selection

As Kenneth Burke argued, every scholarly decision is an act of selection, of reflection, and of deflection.[80] While making certain choices limits what a project can accomplish, no single piece of scholarship can cover the entire scope of the Nixon presidency and its relation to masculinity in the 1970s United States. This project would grow to an unwieldy size were I to try to tell the so-called "whole story," so I have limited the project in certain, necessary ways. First, although I sometimes consider the relationship between the United States and foreign powers, this project is about domestic issues in the Cold War United States.[81] This is a story of intra-national, not international, relations. I furthermore do not consider this a "portrait of a president"; there will be no

analysis of Nixon's psychological history or of his voice, body language, and affect nor any probing of the "What did Nixon know?" question. I focus on Nixon's presidential rhetoric as a representation of mainstream masculinity in the United States during his presidential years.

I take textual criticism as my method in this project, informed by theoretical knowledge from critical studies of men and masculinities and contextual knowledge from analyses of presidential masculinity and presidential rhetoric. In some important ways, I methodologically deviate from a rigid understanding of "textual criticism," sometimes engaging in methods reminiscent of Critical Rhetoric. Contemporaneous with the social upheaval in United States socio-political life in the Nixon presidential years, the study of rhetoric was experiencing its own mayhem of methods. Previously to Edwin Black's watershed book, *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method,* Neo-Aristotelianism, the rigid adherence to the qualities of a successful speech detailed by Aristotle in the *Rhetoric,* was the primary method of rhetorical analysis. Through the mid-1960s and the 1970s, by contrast, a flurry of "rhetoric of X" articles appeared, many inspired by the larger cultural shifts and social movements of the time. Amidst these changes within and outside the academy, Herbert Stelzner's critique of Black remained: how do rhetorical critics best undertake the act of criticism?[82]

This question became paramount in the landmark methodological/theoretical debate between Michael Leff and Michael Calvin McGee in the late 1970s/early 1980s. Growing out of a tradition tied most closely with Black, Michael Leff emerged as the dominant voice of Close Textual Analysis (or CTA; also called close reading or textual criticism). Criticism using CTA examines "the verbing of the text," asking the critical

question "what is this text *doing*/*saying*?" Critics performing a CTA dig into the object of study on its own terms, critically pushing against the artifact and gauging its pushing-back. Concurrent with Leff and CTA came Critical Rhetoric, from the work of Raymie McKerrow and Michael Calvin McGee. Critical Rhetoricians believed that rhetorical criticism should serve the practical, activist function of exposing ideology at work in a series of "text fragments." Much like reading tea leaves, critical rhetoricians would look at these bits and pieces, often originating from hegemonic voices or structures of power, to find and explain the rhetorical enactment of ideology. This work, in McKerrow's words, critiqued power and domination.

Reading the source articles of this debate in 2017, Leff's and McGee's claims likely seem obvious or common sense to the modern rhetorician. Only the rare critic today attains publishing success by a textual analysis that completely ignores context, for example. Scholars blend elements of Leffian close reading and McGeean critical rhetoric in rhetorical scholarship dating at least from the 1990s. Rhetorical critics in the American academy have positively evolved to take elements from these two admirable schools of thought into their work. This blending is particularly relevant for the third chapter of this dissertation, as text fragments provide a better means to assess the mood of the cultural moment of Nixonian "warriors." Whether using full speeches or text fragments, this project is at least partially an act of public address scholarship, as I analyze discourse from a United States president as means by which to interrogate the cultural milieu of the Nixon presidential years.

The three cultural moments I selected for the case study chapters represent three important domestic themes in Nixon's presidential career: space, war, and Watergate.

Both to respect those scholars who have come before me and to add to the scholarly conversation, I chose to approach these "Nixon standard" themes from a less common angle—selecting not famous Apollo 11 but 13; directly comparing Nixon's rhetoric on different American "warriors" rather than analyzing major war addresses; and interrogating Nixon's own recollection of Watergate instead of asking "what did Nixon know?"—all to highlight themes of American masculinity present in these texts and events. Each of these moments represents a moment of crisis within the Nixon White House, but more importantly a crisis to the hard shell of hegemonic masculinity.[83] My analysis of these artifacts centers on Nixon's rhetorical attempts to repair the cracks these moments of crisis formed on the national carapace of mainstream masculinity.

To analyze these moments of national crisis, I selected artifacts directly produced by Nixon or by those speaking in his voice. In his excellent book on presidential speechwriters, Robert Schlesinger writes,

> Presidential speechwriters are a group unique to the modern presidency, and as such they afford a unique lens through which to view the nation's modern chief executives. Looking at how presidents prepared their speeches, the care they put into them, and the people they chose to aid them, we can learn about their views of the modern presidency.[84]

Schlesinger notes the unique role of the speechwriter for the United States presidency, both in this passage and throughout his book. A central point he emphasizes throughout the book is the ghostwriter role of the presidential speechwriter; even if Ray Price writes something for Nixon, history attributes the words to the president. I rely on Schlesinger's understanding of the ghostwriter, for in my analyses, I include discourse attributed to Nixon but which did he not solely compose.[85]

Furthermore, selecting Nixon texts allowed me to take the pulse of mainstream

American males in the Nixon presidential years. Presidential rhetoric is an example of mass culture, artifacts that are snapshots of a time period: a snapshot never tells "the whole story," but it is a unique perspective on the subject under consideration.[86] While citizens at the time would not have had access to the behind-the-scenes information I consider alongside Nixon's public rhetoric, the main texts I have selected would have been accessible to the public and can therefore give a sense of the public mood of hegemonic American maleness at the time.

The limits I placed on the dissertation project helped narrow the possibilities for possible artifact selection; I could no more select the Norman Rockwell painting of Nixon than I could take on an analysis of the first Nixon/Mao conversation under the boundaries I set for the project. There were still, however, vast possibilities for selecting artifacts that fell within these bounds. To find appropriate materials, I used both the Nixon collection on The American Presidency Project website and archival research at The Nixon Presidential Library and Museum in Yorba Linda, CA, to guide my artifact selection. While exploring The American Presidency Project, I used contextual guidelines to filter my search—for example, finding distinguished Vietnam veterans by searching for Medal of Honor recipient speeches and looking for Apollo 13 rhetoric using the mission's date. In my time in the presidential archive, I found a huge variety of artifacts, of course including but not limited to speeches.[87]

With only three days at a presidential library, one must make smart choices about what to request from the archive. With the indispensable help of the archivists, I first searched through the Apollo 13 files, finding drafts of speeches, inter-office memos, and other contextual finds, before turning my attention to the "warrior masculinity" section.

For this, I requested materials on what was filed as "Black activity," on the Black Panthers, and on student protests including Kent State. The discovery of both published and previously confidential files on these subjects helped me make decisions for the third chapter. It was the fourth chapter, however, which owes its life to the Nixon archive, for therein I found the different drafts of the Watergate and Resignation speeches, the *lack* of president's personal files on Watergate, and the full, unpublished transcripts of the Frost/Nixon interviews. In my archival searches, I opted for quantity, photographing as much as I could. Engaging in further analysis after my visit, I sought for recurring themes within the texts I found so that I might, as Edwin Black put it, "allow the text to speak for itself."[88] Although the artifacts between and within each chapter represent different moments of crisis in the Nixon presidency, they share the common ability to assess the cultural mood and state of hegemonic masculinity during the Nixon years of the Cold War United States.

Near the end of the case study chapters, I deviate from Nixon's rhetoric to offer a variation on the chapter's theme. In each case, I selected a piece of discourse or moment's discourse that present an important counterpoint to the Nixon-as-metonym point. The second chapter considers the counterfactual loss of Apollo 13 through the "Contingency Statement in Case of Failure." The chapter on warrior masculinity concludes with a brief examination of what one might call warrior paradoxes, the Vietnam Veterans Against War group and the My Lai massacre. The Watergate chapter provides a short analysis of *All the President's Men* and *Blind Ambition*, arguably the two most popular accounts of Watergate in its immediate aftermath. These analyses in miniature offer what Burke called "perspective by incongruity"; an analysis of the

counterpoint will, I contend, make clearer my larger theoretical claims about hegemonic masculinity and the United States presidency.

Chapter Previews and Research Questions

In addition to this introductory chapter, the dissertation consists of three case study chapters and a conclusion chapter. The analyses in all three content chapters consider guiding research questions as: how did the rhetoric in the selected artifacts establish national crisis moments as opportunities to rearticulate the state of mainstream/hegemonic masculinity? How does Nixon's presidential rhetoric attempt to salvage traditional gendered power structures? In what ways does this rhetoric show attempts to reconstitute white American masculinity? Does it try to reestablish dominance from a new front(s), or does it adapt to changes by carving for itself a new, more egalitarian niche? How, if at all, were the crisis moments themselves affected by hegemonic masculinity? A brief explanation of each chapter forecasts the part these questions will play in each chapter and how the chapters work together holistically.

In Chapter 2, "Mainstream Masculinity in the Final Frontier," I analyze Nixon's rhetoric surrounding the April 1970 Apollo 13 crisis, arguing that Nixon's space-race rhetoric was necessarily also a treatise on gender—even while never specifically engaging with gender. In this chapter, I focus on Nixon's seven speeches in celebration and praise of astronauts Jim Lovell Jr., Fred Haise Jr., and Jack Swigert, in which Nixon affirms the *doxa* of the time: that proper astronauts were necessarily male and white. The three astronauts embodied the American masculine ideal, a theme strengthened by the American frontier narrative and Manifest Destiny. I support my argument with archival

material from the Nixon Presidential Library and Museum. Nixon reflected the *doxa* surrounding astronauts at that time, but the Apollo 13 speeches also gave Nixon an opportunity to offer public policy agendas cloaked in *epideictic* speech, both about U.S./U.S.S.R. relations and gender relations at home. The "successful failure" of Apollo 13 represented a unique chance to rearticulate the dominance of white, mainstream masculinity even in the face of failure.

The primary focus of Chapter 3 is, as the chapter title states, "Warrior Masculinity." In a time of great domestic and international unrest, what sorts of people fighting for what sorts of causes were worthy of celebrating? Of mourning? Nixon famously held extremely diverse views on the many warriors of the time. Related to his position articulated in the "Silent Majority" speech, Nixon saw institutionally sanctioned warriors as the only "right" sort of fighter. In this chapter, I compare and contrast the Nixonian response to a few of the different warriors fighting during his presidential years: decorated Vietnam veterans, the civil rights movement, and student protests. I contend that, while addressing issues of patriotism, Nixon establishes the warrior as the peak of masculinity but only when the warrior fights for the "proper" cause—which for Nixon, was tied to his political philosophy of civic republicanism, emphasizing conformity to advance the common good. Nixon's rhetoric on warrior masculinity reinforces American *doxa*, in such ways as framing "real" Americans as those who are white as well as in naturalizing the discipline of the "Other," or anyone disrupting Nixon's idyllic *status quo*.

Chapter 4, the final content chapter, "'Hard' and 'Soft' Masculinity in Watergate," considers Watergate through Nixon's eyes to understand how mainstream

masculinity responds to a threat. How can a professed public servant justify actions that were at best covert and at worst nearly treasonous? Here I look at Nixon's own understanding of Watergate as I attempt to reconcile Nixon's conception of masculinity, civic republicanism, and *doxa*. I analyze artifacts situated on a sort of timeline, spanning from the archival record of the Watergate and Resignation speeches and the full Frost/Nixon interviews, to his published works like *RN*, to his final "publication," the Presidential Museum (which Allison Prasch has so carefully analyzed). Watergate demonstrates the tension between two ideals of "true" American manhood: patriotism versus "inner-directedness," or the unwillingness to conform to outside authority, and it highlights the stakes of being the mainstream man's metonym. Nixon's own recollections of Watergate provide a very different perspective of the 37th president as an admirable, patriotic, male American performance. The Nixon account of Watergate represents the conflicting ideals of American masculinity in this period of the Cold War; its analysis can uncover how hegemonic masculinity negotiated its expectations of its own behavior and responded to external pressures.[89] Is it more patriotic and a better demonstration of "hard" masculinity to follow the ideals of civic republicanism to their Machiavellian ends, that one must do whatever is necessary so that the "greater good" may prevail? Or does patriotism and "hard" masculinity necessitate standing up to corruption, even if that means "taking down" the United States president?

The concluding chapter of this dissertation synthesizes the work in the three analytical chapters, both to show main themes and, more importantly, to consider how these analyses relate to current events. Drawing on contemporary examples, I demonstrate in this chapter how the Nixon presidency was a watershed moment for

masculine performance in the modern Republican Party. I take as my central question "How did we get here?", looking to our past and how we understand Nixon's legacy, our present reality under the 45th president, and to the future of American masculinity.

1974 was also big year. The Cold War still had yet to resolve, and the Soviet Union was going through leaders at an increasingly rapid rate. The infamous Patty Hearst kidnapping and ransom occurred, and Eric Clapton "Shot the Sheriff" (though he claimed not to have shot the deputy). The first MRI machine was being developed, and thriller novelist Stephen King burst onto the literary scene with *Carrie*. Muhammad Ali and George Foreman boxed their historic "Rumble in the Jungle" rematch, and *The Exorcist* terrified hundreds of thousands of movie-goers. The IRA continued its bombings in both Ireland and England. Many of today's award-winning actors were born, and aviation pioneer Charles Lindbergh died. And Richard Nixon announced to the American public that, on the ninth of August, he would resign the United States presidency. This dissertation tells a story of the events that lead to this historic year and this unprecedented event in American history, a story of masculinity and the American presidency.

Notes

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[1] John A. Farrell, *Richard Nixon: The Life* (New York: Doubleday, 2017), 7.
[2] Garry Wills, *Nixon Agonistes: The Crisis of the Self-Made Man* (New York: New American Library, 1970); *Esquire, The Magazine:* "Nixon's Last Chance. (This Time He'd Better Look Right!)," May, 1968; Richard W. Waterman, Robert Wright, and Gilbert St. Clair, *The Image-Is-Everything Presidency: Dilemmas in American Leadership* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1999).
[3] The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines "metonymy" as "(A figure of speech characterized by) the action of substituting for a word or phrase denoting an object, action, institution, etc., a word or phrase denoting a property or something associated with it; an instance of this. (b) In extended use: a thing used or regarded as a substitute for or symbol of something else." As this definition makes plain, something that stands as representative of a whole can be a metonym. "Metonymy," *Oxford English Dictionary*, accessed August 2017, http://bit.ly/2vfpuSt.
[4] The Nixon campaign is widely credited with unifying conservative Southern Democrats, a political affiliation associated most notably with politician George Wallace, which centered on issues of states' rights—particularly segregation, and traditionally Democrat-affiliated blue-collar interests, establishing two of the largest constituencies in the modern Republican party.
[5] Michael Kimmel, *Angry White Men: American Masculinity at the End of an Era*, New York: Nation Books, 2013.
[6] See Cuordileone, *Manhood*. Elaine Tyler May's *Homeward Bound* cites liberally from the KLS, which administered longitudinal questionnaires to married couples in the United States. Many of the men in the KLS expressed distress at their wives becoming "liberated," i.e., expecting a satisfying sex life or having more of a say in running the family. Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*, 20th Anniversary Edition (New York: Basic Books, 2008). My own research from 1968 issues of *Playboy* indicated similar concerns.
[7] See Kimmel, *Angry White Men.*
[8] Refer back to note #2 for more on metonyms.
[9] Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 3rd ed., New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.
[10] The "profeminist" founders of CSOMM were also responding to Robert Bly's *Iron Johns* and the "mythopoetic men's movement," a sort of reclamation of "true manhood within" that embraced traditional gender roles. Michael Kimmel edited a large volume that engaged both the pro-feminist scholars and those in support of the mythopoetic men's movement. See Michael Kimmel, ed., *The Politics of Manhood: Profeminist Men Respond to the Mythopoetic Men's Movement (and the Mythopoetic Leaders Answer)*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995.
[11] For more, see Caitlin Dewey, "The Only Guide to Gamergate You Will Ever Need to Read," *The Washington Post* 14 Oct 2014, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-intersect/wp/2014/10/14/the-only-guide-to-gamergate-you-will-ever-need-to-read/. And for more on Internet misogyny, see *The New Statesman*'s 2017 "Spitting Out the Red Pill," http://www.newstatesman.com/science-tech/internet/2017/02/reddit-the-red-pill-interview-how-misogyny-spreads-online. There is also a connection between hegemonic

or, to use the popular term, "toxic" masculinity and the Charlottesville, VA, protest in summer 2017.

[12] R.W. Connell, *Masculinities*, 2nd ed., Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.

[13] At the time of her role in founding CSOMM, R.W. Connell had not yet transitioned to her full, female self and, at that time, still went by her given name and male pronouns. So, certainly not all of the CSOMM founders are "founding fathers," but at the time, they were. No disrespect intended towards Professor Connell.

[14] Connell's original explanation of hegemonic masculinity does not delve into the intersectionality issues in hegemonic masculinity, but later scholars like Kimmel, Messner and Sabo, and Anderson explained more on this. Full citations available in "References."

[15] Bruce Feirstein's *Real Men Don't Eat Quiche* comments on this paradox through a satirical "How-to" manual for men. See Bruce Feirstein and Lee Lorenz (illust.), *Real Men Don't Eat Quiche: A Guidebook to All that is Truly Masculine* (New York: Pocket Books, 1982).

[16] J. Halberstam, *Female Masculinity*, Durham: Duke University Press, 1998, 1.

[17] Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, introduction.

[18] The nebulousness of hegemonic masculinity has received popular culture attention. The short satire *Real Men Don't Eat Quiche*, from the 1980s, is a faux-advice manual that gives contradictory and over-the-top advice to men on being "Real Men."

[19] We see this at work in the "no homo" phenomenon, where adolescent boys will show affection for one another but qualify it with a verbalized "no homo," so that anyone around is clear that they are not gay.

[20] Connell, *Masculinities.*

[21] Eric Anderson, *Inclusive Masculinity: The Changing Nature of Masculinities*, New York: Routledge, 2009.

[22] Jackson Katz is an immensely popular public scholar and speaker who has produced books and documentaries about the harms of hegemonic masculinity. His work attempts to intervene especially in the lives of young men and boys to help nip unhealthy gender norms in the bud within that group. Although he does not always cite or provide evidence for claims the way an academic writer would, Katz's books are thorough and responsibly researched, such as his work on masculinity in presidential campaigns, which cited (among many others) Kathleen Hall Jamieson. See Jackson Katz, *Leading Men: Presidential Campaigns and the Politics of Manhood*, Northampton, MA: Interlink Books, 2013.

[23] For example, bell hooks's *The Will to Change* looks markedly different than, for example, R.W. Connell's *Masculinities* or most of Michael Kimmel's work. I hold that this difference stems from the wave a feminism to which these scholars subscribe. bell hooks is a second-waver, and CSOMM scholars tend to have entered the gender studies milieu during the mid-1980s in response to the "men's rights" movements. See bell hooks, *The Will to Change: Men, Masculinity, and Love* (New York: Atria Books, 2004); and R.W. Connell, *Masculinities*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

[24] CUNY Stonybrook, where Michael Kimmel has tenure, is now offering what is (to my knowledge) the first Master's degree in Masculinities Studies.

[25] Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).
[26] Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).
[27] K.A. Cuordileone, *Manhood and American Political Culture in the Cold War* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 135. This persecution phenomenon continues today and is quite the same as the "real but not true" persecution Kimmel developed in *Angry White Men*. White men may *really* feel the loss of status in the United States, but it is not a *true* reflection of reality (that is, white males are still far more privileged than many other groups in the United States). See Michael Kimmel, *Angry White Men: American Masculinity at the End of an Era* (New York: Nation Books, 2013).
[28] John Orman, *Comparing Presidential Behavior* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987).
[29] Orman 8.
[30] Orman 9; see also Campbell and Jamieson's *Presidents Creating the Presidency*
[31] Richard W. Waterman, Robert Wright, Gilbert St. Clair, *The Image-Is-Everything Presidency: Dilemmas in American Leadership* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1999), 48-49.
[32] Cite MA Thesis. Waterman, Wright, and St. Clair 50-53. Also see Nelson 54-59. Edwin Black, "The Invention of Nixon," in *Beyond the Rhetorical Presidency*, ed. Martin J. Medhurst (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1996), 105. Black 106-107.
[33] Bob Woodward, *The Last of the President's Men* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015).
[34] Katz 1.
[35] Katz 4.
[36] See also Brenton J. Malin, *American Masculinity Under Clinton: Popular Media & the '90s "Crisis of Masculinity"* (New York: Peter Lang, 2005).
[37] Wills, *Nixon Agonistes.* Some of Wills's *Esquire* contributions include his May 1968 "What Makes The Newest Nixon Run?" and the August 1968 "Nixon's Dog: How the 37th President of the United States brilliantly outwitted the 34th President of the United States." Wills was not the only *Esquire* contributor on Nixon. A satirical piece from June 1969 by unidentified *Esquire* staff offered readers a game to test their skills identifying "The Nixon Style" (hint: they're always all the same, and boring!) and "How to Tell Yourself from Richard Nixon." Particularly in this second piece, one can see the magazine noting how most of Nixon's interests are very "basic" and uninspired, and therefore many Americans find themselves aligned with Nixon and his interests. The piece concludes with "How to Adapt Yourself to the Nixon Style" and the highly entertaining "How to Adapt Nixon to Your Style," which, for example, included an image of Nixon in a dashiki.
[38] Allison M. Prasch, "Retelling Watergate: *Apologia*, Political Eulogy, and Richard Nixon's 'Final Campaign,'" *Southern Communication Journal* 80, no. 4 (2015): 271-292.
[39] Thanks to Stephen H. Browne for this phrasing, during a Center for Democratic Deliberation Dissertation Fellows writing group meeting during Spring 2017.
[40] The actual quote was "it is also a long way from Whittier to the White House," which comes from Nixon's "Remarks on Arrival in San Clemente, California," from 24 August 1972. The Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, however, sells t-shirts that

replaced "Whittier" with "Yorba Linda." I took the quote from my own t-shirt. For the original source, see http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=3543.

[41] For more see Woodward, *The Last of the President's Men*; Wills, *Nixon Agonistes*; and John A. Farrell, *Richard Nixon: The Life* (New York: Double Day, 2017).

[42] Biographer John Farrell cited a *Times Herald* quote that called young Congressional hopeful Nixon "as typically American as Thanksgiving." Farrell 42.

[43] Jim A. Kuypers, "*Doxa* and a Critical Rhetoric: Accounting for the Rhetorical Agent Through Prudence," *Communication Quarterly* 44, no. 4 (1996): 459.

[44] Robert Hariman, "Critical Rhetoric and Postmodern Theory," *Quarterly Journal of Speech (Forum)* 77 (1991): 69.

[45] For more on *endoxa,* or "reputable opinions," see Ekaterina V. Haskins, "Endoxa, Epistemological Optimism, and Aristotle's Rhetorical Project," *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 37, no.1 (2004): 1-20, as well as Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. Dr. Michele Kennerly stressed this vital point during the dissertation defense meeting, and I agree that, as this project progresses, a more complex deployment of the term is paramount. As I transition the dissertation into refereed articles and, later, into a manuscript, I plan to complicate my use of *doxa* and expand it greatly.

[46] Kimmel and others have recounted this anecdote that reveals United States *doxa* of whiteness and gender: A white man looks in the mirror and sees a human, while a Black woman looks in the mirror and sees her Blackness and her femininity. The man says he is "just" a human; his whiteness and his maleness are socially rendered invisible. Michael Kimmel, Lecture at The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA, 8 February 2017.

[47] For example, see Takis Poulakos, "Isocrates' Use of 'Doxa,'" *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 34, no. 1 (2001): 61-78.

[48] Joy Connelly's book, for example, will make an appearance in this chapter once I transition it for a manuscript. For the purposes of this document, however, it would be anachronistic to include it.

[49] In my "Persuasion & Propaganda" class, my students study the difference between the Populist Party and modern populism; I explain the difference in much the same terms as traditional versus Nixonian civic republicanism: a philosophy, a core element of one's being, becomes a tactic or a performance intended to garner some gain for oneself. There is not space in this dissertation to discuss the complex question of whether Richard Nixon had any coherent political philosophy other than "seem presidential" and "stay in power," but understanding how he used civic republicanism to his advantage begins the conversation.

[50] Cass R. Sunstein, "Beyond the Republican Revival," *The Yale Law Journal* 97, no. 8 (1988): 1539-1590.

[51] Murphy 326.

[52] Sunstein 1539-1540; Robert Hariman and John Lucaites, "Performing Civic Identity: The Iconic Photograph of the Flag Raising on Iwo Jima," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88, no. 4 (2002): 373.

[53] John M. Murphy, "Civic Republicanism in the Modern Age: Adlai Stevenson in the 1952 Presidential Campaign," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 80 (1994): 326, emphasis in original.

[54] Derrick Bell and Preeta Bansal, "The Republican Revival and Racial Politics," *The Yale Law Journal* 97, no. 8 (1988): 1609-1623.
[55] A September 2016 *Washington Post* article reported how women within the Obama administration realized that, when a woman would make a point, it would go unacknowledged and when a man later brought up the same point, he was praised for it. Juliet Eilperin, "White House Women Want to Be in the Room Where it Happens," *The Washington Post* 13 September 2016, http://wapo.st/2mWHCMM.
[56] Dr. Kirt Wilson argued during the dissertation defense meeting that, as I progress towards the monograph, my operationalization—or even my use at all—of civic republicanism requires better justification. I plan to engage this critique and improve the document as it matures into a larger project.
[57] Gerard A. Hauser and Carole Blair, "Rhetorical Antecedents to the Public," *Pre/Text* 3, no. 2 (1982): 139-167.
[58] Kimmel, *Angry White Men.*
[59] Cuordileone, *Manhood,* x. As with the contemporary scholarship, modern work on masculinity in the red scare and Kennedy years overwhelmingly focus on *white* hegemonic masculinity. The studies, unsurprisingly, do not *say* "white" as a modifier. As is common in academic writing in the United States in many disciplines, one only modifies "man" or "woman" if one is speaking of non-white people. "White" is as a racist given.
[60] There has been quite a bit of scholarship on masculinities considered "other" at the time. For example, one might consider George Chauncey's *Gay New York*. During the Kennedy and Nixon years, much attention in the popular press went to discussing homosexuality, but in most men's magazines, it was presented as a threat to nation and person and which required some sort of solution. Work like Michael Kimmel's *Manhood in America* is much more a history of masculinity, but it comes from a sociological perspective. One can also consider works like landmark historical works like Eleanor Flexner's *Century of Struggle* (1959) as well as works of rhetorical scholarship, like Kirt Wilson's article on Dr. King's "Holt Street Address" and Bonnie Dow's *Watching Women's Liberation, 1970*.
[61] Achter's work on Rev. Jesse Jackson, Yu's on Tiger Woods, and Andrews's on Michael Jordan all contributed meaningfully to understanding the intersections between Black masculinity and large press presence (in politics for Jackson and in sports for Woods and Jordan) and the rhetorical construction of Black progress narratives, which decision makers within the racist hegemony can mobilize to argue against affirmative action. Paul Achter, "Racing Jesse Jackson: Leadership, Masculinity, and the Black Presidency," in *Gender and Political Communication in America: Rhetoric, Representation, and Display,* edited by Janis L. Edwards, Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009. David L. Andrews, "Excavating Michael Jordan's Blackness," in *Reading Sport*, edited by Birrell and McDonald, 2000. Henry Yu, "Tiger Woods at the Center of History: Looking Back at the 20th Century through the Lenses of Race, Sports, and Mass Consumption," in *Sports Matters*, edited by Bloom and Willard, 2002.
[62] For example, Charles E. Morris III, "Pink Herring and the Fourth Persona: J. Edgar Hoover's Sex Crime Panic," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88, no. 2 (2002), 228-244; Charles E. Morris III, "My Old Kentucky Homo: Abraham Lincoln, Larry Kramer, and

the Politics of Queer Memory," 93-120 and Karen A. Foss, "Harvey Milk and the Queer Rhetorical Situation: A Rhetoric of Contradiction," 74-92, both in *Queering Public Address: Sexualities in American Historical Discourse*, edited by Charles E. Morris III, Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2007. The post-AND fillers are many. Joshua Gunn, for example, often interrogates masculinity in his work, but often as masculinity AND psychoanalysis. In his and Frentz's analysis of *Fight Club*, for example, masculinity is symptomatic of larger cultural psychoses. Joshua Gunn and Thomas Frentz, "Fighting for Father: *Fight Club* as Cinematic Psychosis," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 74, no. 3 (2010): 269-291.

[63] This is at its most extreme in the Neo-Aristotelians, such as Marie Hochmuth Nichols. Reading these foundational works in a seminar with Dr. Thomas W. Benson, I noted how different the analyses would look—even if one maintained the Neo-Aristotelian method—by considering how masculinity shaped the rhetor's choices.

[64] The immediate post-Watergate years saw a veritable flood of publications on the Nixon White House. For example Elizabeth Drew, *Washington Journal: The Events of 1973-1974* (New York: Random House, 1974); Leon Jaworski, *The Right and the Power: The Prosecution of Watergate* (New York: Reader's Digest Press, 1976); *New York Times* Staff, *The End of a Presidency* (Austin: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1974); Theodore H. White, *Breach of Faith: The Fall of Richard Nixon* (New York: Scribner, 1975).

[65] Mary Stuckey, "The Art of Anger in United States Presidential Elections," 24th Annual Kenneth Burke Lecture, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA, 31 March 2016.

[66] I will discuss in the concluding chapter the popular news commentary extant at the time of writing that has been drawing comparisons between Nixon and Trump as men and as presidents and between their administrations.

[67] The introductory video to the Richard Nixon Presidential Museum featured appearances by speechwriter Bill Safire and Dr. Henry Kissinger reminiscing on Nixon's personal life and public service record. One of the nuggets shared in this video was the revelation that many post-Nixon presidents sought Nixon's advice during their presidencies. This is especially true of Bill Clinton. For more information and evidence, see R.W. Apple, Jr., "For Clinton and Nixon, a Rarefied Bond," *New York Times*, 25 April 1994, http://nyti.ms/2wyseKA.

[68] Politicians were for the first time in the Cold War asking: what if China were to align not with the USSR, but with the United States?

[69] Black Panther Party affiliation reached its peak in 1970.

[70] *LOOK, The Decline of the American Male* (New York: Random House, 1958). Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., echoed similar themes in his 1958 Esquire article, "The Crisis in Masculinity."

[71] *LOOK, Decline* 9, 29, and 53.

[72] K.A. Cuordileone examined these anxieties at length in his admirable text and cited liberally from contemporary commentators like Whyte, Lindner, and Schlesinger Jr. See K.A. Cuordileone, *Manhood and American Political Culture in the Cold War*, New York: Routledge, 2004.

[73] Ian Nicholson, "'Shocking' Masculinity: Stanley Milgram, 'Obedience to Authority,' and the 'Crisis of Manhood' in Cold War America," *Isis* 102, no. 2 (2011): 238-268.

[74] See Mailer's "Superman Comes to the Supermarket," *Esquire,* 2009.
[75] Wills, *Nixon Agonistes*
[76] Cuordileone, *Manhood*
[77] Nixon's provides his own account of the Hiss case in *Six Crises* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1962). Also see Cuordileone.
[78] See Nixon's *Six Crises* and *RN;* H.R. Haldeman's *The Haldeman Diaries;* and Woodward's *The Last of the President's Men.*
[79] Whitney Strub, "The Clearly Obscene and the Queerly Obscene: Heteronormativity and Obscenity in Cold War Los Angeles," *American Quarterly* 60, no. 2 (2008): 373-398.
[80] Kenneth Burke, *Language as Symbolic Action: Essays on Life, Literature, and Method*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966.
[81] Laura Belmonte's excellent work on United States Cold War propaganda is one example of this sort of project. Belmonte considers domestic United States politics as they related to US foreign policies and programs propagandizing the United States. Laura A. Belmonte, *Selling the American Way: U.S. Propaganda and the Cold War* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010).
[82] Hermann G. Stelzner, "'War Message,' December 8, 1941: An Approach to Language," *Speech Monographs* 33, no. 4 (1966): 419-438
[83] This is not crisis rhetoric in the Bostdorffian sense. Instead, I examine the rhetoric produced to handle domestic crisis moments, each of which had stakes for hegemonic masculinity. See Denise Bostdorff, *The Presidency and the Rhetoric of Foreign Crisis* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1994).
[84] Robert Schlesinger, *White House Ghosts: Presidents and Their Speechwriters*, New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc.,2008, 4.
[85] This goes both for speechwriting and for the collaborative research Nixon did with his long-time personal secretary, Rose Mary Woods, who had just as much a hand in the writing of *RN* as Nixon himself did.
[86] In this dissertation, I use "mass culture" in an Adornian way, differentiated from "popular culture." Mass culture arose in the hyper-mediated 20th and 21st centuries and indicated the phenomenon by which media, shared by large groups of people, pump out ideas those groups come to share. Mass culture shapes cultural values, creates specific cultural moods, and enforces a reliance on mass cultural artifacts. Mass culture includes presidential speech and highly popular non-fiction. Theodor W. Adorno, *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture*, translated and with an introduction by JM Bernstein (New York: Routledge, 2001).
[87] Penn State's Department of Communication Arts and Sciences generously funded this research trip.
[88] Black distinguished between theory-guided criticism ("etic") and text-guided criticism ("emic"). In the "emic" approach, the critic can only "interpret" a text, where "etic" does the evaluative or judgment work. Edwin Black, "A Note on Theory and Practice in Rhetorical Criticism," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 44 (1980): 331-336.
[89] While I would have loved to include the film version of *All the President's Men* (1974), I realize that this is best left for another project. Including both book and film

would not only lengthen the chapter substantially, it would also require a different methodological interrogation than a treatment just of the book.

CHAPTER 2

MAINSTREAM MASCULINITY IN THE FINAL FRONTIER

"But I think the secret was the fact that we have in America something which has always been part of us and that is teamwork. ...So, on behalf of the three of us, we are glad to be home and we are glad to be part of America." *-Capt. Jim Lovell, Response to the Medal of Freedom Presentation*[1]

Just over three days into the Apollo 13 mission, on 14 April 1970, a massive explosion ripped an entire panel—25% of the ship—from the Command/Service Module of the spacecraft *Odyssey*. Moments after the explosion, Captain Jim Lovell radioed Mission Control those famous words: "Houston, we've had a problem." What was widely regarded as a "routine" flight to the Moon now became a harrowing mission to save the lives of the three astronauts of Apollo 13, Jim Lovell, Fred Haise, and Jack Swigert.

Alerted to the crisis the moment Houston grasped its magnitude, President Richard Nixon telephoned Lovell's wife. "'Marilyn?' said a familiar, growly voice. 'This is the president. …I just wanted you to know, Marilyn, that your president and the entire nation are watching your husband's progress with concern. Everything is being done to bring Jim home.'"[2] Nixon, who had presided over the triumph of the Apollo 11 Moon landing, now faced a disaster as great as the Apollo 1 fire. In the end, the heroic efforts of the three astronauts and hundreds of NASA workers on the ground beat the odds, and Apollo 13 returned safely to Earth on the 17th of April. Shortly thereafter, Nixon issued a series of speeches and proclamations, in which he praised the astronauts who, facing the failure of machines, triumphed as men. Real American men.

Richard Nixon's phone call to Marilyn Lovell was certainly a decorous demonstration of presidential duty; but the call also affirmed the individuality of the astronauts, which performed an essential aspect of American mythology. Since his landmark paper on the topic in 1893, Frederick Jackson Turner's "frontier thesis"

articulated conquest of the frontier as an essential and unique part of American identity. As I explain in greater depth below, this spirit of individuality and the storied role of the frontiersman motivated conversations about the role of man in spaceflight.

Early members of the National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics (NACA) and later the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) had extensive and very tense discussions on who would control American spacecraft, man or computer.[3] Practicality and safety demanded that machines run United States spacecraft, but the American pioneer spirit bristled at the idea of a passive role in this trailblazing. And as with their pioneering forefathers, a man considered qualified to face down the "final frontier" was a very particular type of man.

This exclusivity is unsurprising, given NASA's reputation, contemporarily and in public memory, as a good-old-boys club.[4] Apollo 13 captain Jim Lovell and Eugene Kranz, Flight Director of Apollo 13 and one of the founders of NASA's Mission Control in Houston, both explicitly noted that astronauts in the early United States space program were overwhelmingly white, Protestant, middle class, and Midwestern.[5] "This was not," Kranz wrote, "the result of deliberate discrimination, but because at the time that was the kind of man who became a military test pilot," the only group from which early astronauts were selected.[6] While it might not have been "deliberate discrimination," the archetypal astronaut was also not a product of mere chance nor was his presence in the Apollo 13 crisis treated as such.

I take as my entry-point for this chapter David Mindell's call for scholars to investigate the relationship between masculinity and spaceflight amidst tensions of man and machine.[7] The primary question for this case study is, for President Nixon, and thus

for the mainstream United States, who "belongs" in space? I argue that Nixon's Apollo 13 rhetoric performed the dual *epideictic* function of praising both the specific subject and the values of wider society.[8] The presidential response to Apollo 13 addressed the heroism of the astronauts who survived their near-death ordeal, but the specific case was far less important that the *doxa* it represented. The Apollo 13 rhetoric reinforced *doxa* of foreign politics and American national identity. Apollo 13 provided the perfect moment of *kairos*; the mission may have failed, but the astronauts prevailed by surviving. Apollo 13 presented Nixon an ideal moment, through his ceremonial rhetoric, to reinvigorate domestic anti-communism as well as to articulate a treatise on masculinity and American identity, by extension addressing broader social issues of race, gender, and patriotism in the United States.

As I explained in Chapter 1, Nixon's presidential role qualifies him as representative of the United States *doxa* in his time. As Mary Stuckey has noted, the president has long been considered a tastemaker for American society and, ostensibly, represents the opinions of the dominant group of their citizenry. Stuckey explains:

> I do not believe that the presidents included [in this book]—or indeed any of the others—are malicious men, seeking to exclude others from "their" polity and intent on reifying and maintaining existing structures of power and hierarchy. I do believe that often, by rhetorically instantiating and relying on the prevalent ideologies of their times, these presidents did in fact naturalize and propagate many exclusions.[9]

Stuckey makes clear that while presidents rarely intend to polarize the public and reify hegemony, the rhetorical conventions of presidentiality often yield this "us-against-them" effect. Presidential rhetoric, simply, more often reflects than disrupts *doxa*. How Nixon therefore constituted or reified precisely who belonged in space provides insight both into the priorities of the president as a policy-maker and a tastemaker and brings to the fore

the hegemonic ideal of American manhood, thus reinforcing its legitimacy and dominance in the public consciousness.

Since the American colonies began contemplating the "United States," Americans have been proud to be "different." Michael Kimmel explains that, while the British valued the aristocratic lifestyle, Americans began to associate their identities with "the self-made man."[10] Foppishness gave way to ruggedness as American men vested increasing importance in their ability to "make their own way," a difference de Tocqueville noticed in his landmark study of the United States.[11] This hard-working, adventurous, independent streak solidified further in the American consciousness as Americans began westward expansion.

The pioneers of the 1800s were as important to American national identity as the revolutionaries were. Once the tumult of revolution resolved itself into the early days of nationhood, Americans began to look west. A growing population mixed with the adventuring American spirit doubled the number of states from 16 to 32 in only half a century after the Revolution. The vital narrative guiding United States westward expansion was Manifest Destiny, a 19th-century concept that asserted Americans and the United States were possessed of such virtue that the mandate of destiny or the divine was to "tame" the West. Manifest Destiny offered an ideological justification for risking life and limb to pioneer new territories as well as for the displacement and murder of the indigenous peoples already on these lands. The Homestead Acts of the mid-1800s offered a big reward to those men brave enough to claim it: these acts stipulated that citizens had legal claim to new land in the West once they settled it.[12] The increasing population of

United States cities and the resultant "over-domestication" provided still more enticement for people to become pioneers.[13]

As the final territories of the American West were being settled in the late 19th century, Frederick Jackson Turner, a highly gifted University of Wisconsin student, put onto paper the concept that had guided American identity for more than a century. His 1893 "Frontier Thesis" articulated the essential traits and virtues of the American pioneer and established the resonance of the legendary frontier:

> To the frontier the American intellect owes its striking characteristics. That coarseness and strength combined with acuteness and inquisitiveness; that practical, inventive turn of mind, quick to find expedients; that masterful grasp of material things, lacking in the artistic but powerful to effect great ends; that restless, nervous energy, that dominant individualism, working for good and for evil, and withal that buoyancy and exuberance which comes with freedom—these are traits of the frontier, or traits called out elsewhere because of the existence of the frontier.[14]

In this passage, Turner articulated the "virtues" of the American pioneer spirit, drawing attention to the dual nature of the frontier as both requiring and instilling these virtues in Americans.

Scholars from many fields, including history, rhetoric, and critical studies of men and masculinities, have studied the Frontier Thesis. This scholarship has sought to understand the historical relevance of the myth of the frontier, its near-timeless rhetorical legacy, and its gendered dimensions.[15] In its time and now, the Frontier Thesis is not without its criticisms; however, the ubiquity of the frontier myth in American culture is undeniable.[16] The United States is always pursuing some new vista, and in Richard Nixon's presidential years, Manifest Destiny had its eyes on the stars..

Calling space the "final frontier" provided policy-makers and scientists with the rhetorical resources necessary to convince the public to support the American space program. This language explains this new phenomenon in familiar terms with great motivating potential for American listeners. The highly gendered quality of the "frontier" also provided the rhetorical antecedents for an all-male astronaut corps. The "final frontier" narrative also provided the rhetorical room for failure; pioneers remain pioneers even if the frontier defeats them.[17] In the case of Apollo 11, Armstrong, Aldrin, and Collins embodied the traditional frontier narrative of heroic success. Apollo 13, by contrast, rearticulated the frontier narrative; these pioneers were no less heroic and no less successful than their more obviously successful counterparts were.

Careful analysis of Richard Nixon's Apollo 13 rhetoric exposes how Nixon's metonymic rhetoric reinforced the dominance of mainstream, white masculinity in the changing social landscape of the 1970s United States through his Apollo 13 *epideictic*. I develop this chapter in three parts: I first provide a brief description of the Apollo 13 mission for context. Second, I analyze the seven speech acts that comprise President Nixon's response to the Apollo 13 crisis to demonstrate how Richard Nixon's presidential speeches and proclamations on the occasion of Apollo 13's return to Earth exemplified Nixon's dual metonymic function as both blueprint and mirror for the mainstream male American public.[18] Drawing the highly masculinized frontier myth, Nixon's Apollo 13 rhetoric ritually reinforced *doxa* of the superiority of American democracy—and by extension, of United States masculinity—by articulating Apollo 13 as situated in the American tradition of Manifest Destiny. The objective failure of the Apollo 13 mission goals provided Nixon a vital opportunity to identify alternative

assessments of the success of mainstream masculinity. In addition to the seven *epideictic* texts, I also offer a brief analysis of the undelivered contingency speech, to be delivered if Apollo 13 perished, to show that, ultimately, Nixon's message on American identity and masculinity did not in fact depend on the astronauts' survival. Finally, I place Apollo 13 in the context of presidential *epideictic*, masculinity and the frontier, and *doxa* in the United States.

The Preparation, The Launch, The Explosion

Scheduled for launch on 11 April 1970, the Apollo 13 mission was to be the United States' third excursion to the Moon. The crew dubbed the Command/Service Module (CSM) *Odyssey* and the Lunar Module (LM) *Aquarius.* The crew—Commander Jim Lovell Jr., Lunar Module Pilot Fred Haise Jr., and Command Module Pilot Ken Mattingly—had been training exhaustively since long before the historic Apollo 11 Moon landing. Apollo 13 was to be the first spaceflight for Mattingly and Haise. Thirteen's Commander Jim Lovell, however, already had a storied career in the NASA astronaut corps.[19] In the days leading up to the launch, the crew underwent rigorous medical tests to ensure their fitness to fly. One blood test revealed that all three astronauts had been exposed to the measles, and in the days before the MMR vaccine, Mattingly, who had never contracted measles, was forcibly scrubbed from the mission out of concern that he would fall desperately ill during the flight. Rookie astronaut Jack Swigert replaced Mattingly just days before launch.

Even with this last-minute crew change and much talk of superstitions about "unlucky number 13," media coverage surrounding the launch was far less enthusiastic

than it had been for previous Apollo missions. So unenthused were United States media outlets, in fact, that the crew's ship-to-Earth broadcast after trans-lunar injection (the period when the ship has left Earth orbit but has not yet reached Moon orbit) was not aired by the major news networks. This would all change fifty-one hours into the flight. Performing a series of routine-maintenance maneuvers, Swigert flipped the switch to "stir" the cryogenically frozen oxygen tanks to ensure that the ultra-sub-zero oxygen slush would not solidify. The routine became the extraordinary when a defective circuit ignited the oxygen, blasting one whole side of the CSM off the spacecraft and damaging what remained of the CSM.

The explosion destroyed most of *Odyssey*'s power, water, and oxygen resources. The crew took refuge in *Aquarius*, living in the tiny LM with minimal power and no heat for over three days, while Mission Control devised hundreds of work-arounds to save power, water, and oxygen, to minimize carbon dioxide concentration, and to return the astronauts to Earth alive. They decided to use a "slingshot" method, using the Moon's gravity to fling Apollo 13 back towards Earth instead of using the ship's already depleted engines to do the work. A heart-aching result of this decision was that, although the explosion prevented any possibility of a Moon landing, the crew still orbited the Moon, gazing at and photographing their would-be landing site before slingshotting through space towards Earth. Beating the outrageous odds against them, the crew managed to survive on minimal food, water, heat, and sleep and to maneuver to the half-degree re-entry window. They splashed down safely in the Pacific Ocean and were rescued by the *USS Iwo Jima* on the 17 April 1970 with no lasting damage to the crew.[20]

In NASA's early years, the *gravitas* of the Apollo 13 crisis was topped only by the devastating Apollo 1 launch-pad fire. One legacy from that fire was intense media scrutiny and transparency of the space program, resulting from the public perception that NASA had covered up the mistakes that lead to the deaths of Gus Grissom, Ed White, and Roger Chaffee.[21] As Ronald Reagan would later say of the United States government and space program on the occasion of the Challenger disaster, "We don't hide our space program. We don't keep secrets and cover things up. We do it all up front and in public."[22] President Reagan was driving home a point as old as the space race itself: praising the United States program also indirectly condemned the Soviet space program, serving to emphasize repeatedly the differences between the two nations and their respective ideologies.

Although he called it "the most exciting, the most meaningful day that I have ever experienced," the historical record indicates that Richard Nixon had no strong ties to Apollo 13.[23] Documents extant in the archives, biographies of Nixon, and Nixon's own writings support this observation; space was not Nixon's primary focus during his presidency. Regardless of Nixon's personal feelings about Apollo 13 (or lack thereof), his addresses responding to this event that captivated the world's attention for four days in April 1970 offered a vision for the "new frontier" of mainstream American masculinity.

From Whence Sex Segregation in Space?

The frontier *mythos* and Manifest Destiny are paired concepts: the motivation for pioneering the frontier comes from destiny, from divine obligation to spread "civilization." Manifest Destiny, therefore, relied on the polarized concepts of civilization

and barbarism. This mindset justifies pioneers robbing and even killing "Others" who might claim the same frontier. Several essays by Robert Ivie address the rhetorical construct of "savagery" in the American frontier myth, especially as used in later 20th-century presidential rhetoric.[24] Clearly, the frontier myth conveys an intense nationalistic streak, and it has equal ties with masculinity. The qualities of the American pioneer—individualism, bravery, heroism, coarseness, among many others—carry traditionally masculine connotations. I cannot say whether Nixon was actively aware of these connections, but his Apollo 13 rhetoric used these qualities of Manifest Destiny to justify America as the rightful pioneer of space. These speeches argued that the barbarian Soviets could not colonize space, and that their barbarism arises, in large part, from concepts of gender.

In the "space race," between the United States and the Soviet Union, each nation worked tirelessly to be the first to each goal. To the Soviets, the human cost was no object to this national goal; they therefore covered up accidents, failures, and fatalities in their attempts to conquer space. The United States, by contrast, proceeded with more caution. David Mindell notes that where the Soviets moved at breakneck pace, the American space program progressed slowly and meticulously because the United States had to account for public opinion.[25] Indeed, transparency defined the relationship between the American public and NASA; NASA was acutely aware that a death resulting from seemingly reckless flight testing could cost the organization its funding and end the space race before it had truly begun. This fear was almost realized after the Apollo 1 fire, which exemplified the Damoclean sword hanging above NASA's head, a constant threat unique to the transparency of the American space program.[26] This is why it took eleven

Apollo missions to get a Moon landing; the first ten each had different research and safety goals to achieve, such as LM capture and orbiting the Moon.[27]

Although each nation took different paths towards achievement, the goals for both the United States and Soviet space programs were remarkably similar: (1) get something into space, (2) get a human into space, (3) get a human into Earth orbit, (4) get a human into Moon orbit, and (5) land a human on the Moon and return that human safely to Earth. The Soviets had one additional goal that the United States ignored completely. Accounting for this difference, in tandem with Nixon's 1959 "treatise" on gender and civilization, sheds light on the Apollo 13 speeches as articulations of American masculinity and ownership of space.

Most Americans know Sally Ride was the first American woman in space, making her first launch into the final frontier in 1983. But it is a safe bet that most Americans do *not* know that Valentina Tereshkova of the Soviet Union was the first woman from any nation to go to space—a full two decades before Sally Ride and only two years after Alan Shepard's historic flight.[28] The Soviets considered it a top priority to get the both the first man and the first woman into space, so much so that Tereshkova was the third ever Soviet to ascend. And yet, the United States seemed not to care. This discrepancy likely results from the countries' differing perspectives on gender and work, articulated clearly in Nixon's famous Kitchen Debate with Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev in 1959. In the Debate, Nixon used domestic appliances as a banal illustration of America as civilized and to suggest that Soviet barbarism could benefit from the spread of Americana.

During his second term as Dwight D. Eisenhower's vice president, Richard Nixon traveled to Moscow to represent the United States at a Soviet culture fair. Western goods and services were on display alongside Soviet-made products, and one American contribution was a model of a "typical American house." While touring the model home together, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev commented on washing machines and other appliances with surprise and scorn, and Nixon came to the defense of capitalism's "modern conveniences." As Elaine Tyler May so expertly explained, "The 'kitchen debate' was one of the major skirmishes in the cold war, which was at its core an ideological struggle fought on a cultural background." The now infamous debate over capitalism versus communism argued mainly through a vocabulary of domesticity and gender, all while standing in a model American kitchen.

Khrushchev and Nixon each used gender roles to articulate why his system was superior. Khrushchev's major point was that American women were oppressed by the "conveniences" of the home, forced to stay in their houses instead of working towards the good of the state. Nixon articulated a forceful counter-premise: Soviet women, he argued, were the truly oppressed group of women because the communist system forced Soviet women to go against nature and work outside the home.[29] A capitalist system allows for men's income to support the family and for women to do all housework aided only by technology. Only capitalism permits men and women to enact their "natural" roles. The Kitchen Debate was about ideologies and economic structures, but by using gender as the main explanation of the fundamental differences between the United States and the Soviet Union, Nixon explained that the difference between civilization and barbarism can be understood through separation or integration of sex roles.

Nixon's position in the Kitchen Debate collapsed civilization and masculinity to articulate the "rightful" spread of capitalist democracy, using much the same *topoi* as Manifest Destiny. America could perform its divinely ordained duty to conquer new frontiers because it was civilized, a quality exemplified by leaving women at home. With this *doxa* in mind, it is unsurprising that masculinity and space in the early years of the NASA were inextricably linked and that this male-centered narrative of early NASA meant the United States was in no hurry to put a woman in space.[30]

Manifest Destiny

The Kitchen Debate modeled the reasoning behind America's male-only astronaut corps; segregating the sexes demonstrated how civilized the United States was, and therefore how it was ordained by destiny to spread its great virtues. Two decades' worth of Nixon's rhetoric shows how steeped in this narrative the 37th president was. His answer to "Who belongs in space?" was obvious—Americans—but this divine right to outer space did not apply at all Americans equally. Pioneers worthy of praise were male (or were led by a strong male), native-born and white, middle-class, heterosexual, Christian, and highly individualist and brave—the same traits used to assess the suitability of American men for the early astronaut corps. Manifest Destiny called forth a specific type of American to pioneer new frontiers in the name of the United States, and he was necessarily a white male.

Nixon's Apollo 13 rhetoric contains two primary means of evaluating Apollo 13 as evidence of Manifest Destiny on the final frontier: using prayer as a rhetorical resource and casting the Soviets as barbarians through the symbolic language of man versus

machine. Both methods rely on and has stakes for *doxa* that associates masculinity and Americanness. Nixon used religious rhetoric to reaffirm the superiority of the United States and its performance of civilization and to expand participation in the space program symbolically, to protect the perfection of embodied participation. The speeches also polarize the U.S./U.S.S.R. through man versus machine language; the Soviets treat their people as parts of a machine, whereas the United States celebrates individuality. Individuality is a vital part of Turner's "Frontier Thesis" and is deeply entrenched in masculinity. Specifically, interrogation of the linguistic commonplace of using "man" and "human" synonymously demonstrates the depth of this association of the frontier and masculinity.

Prayer as a Rhetorical Resource

The concept of Manifest Destiny requires a divine presence. Something more exalted than mere humans ordains one group as superior among the others. Use of divine ordnance by political figures and other leaders in America predates the United States by over a century. Winthrop's much-studied 1630 "City Upon the Hill" sermon offered perhaps the first iteration of Manifest Destiny: God has smiled upon this group, and we must therefore shine His holy light on others through our virtuousness.[31] Americans blaze trails, not merely to slake their inner desire for individual success and adventure, but because it is God's will. This particular Biblical allusion has routinely surfaced in presidential discourse over the intervening centuries, but it is by no means the only articulation of divine will in American politics.[32]

Even though the United States does not technically have an official religion, Christian religious discourse is extremely common in presidential rhetoric and has been a vital part of the Republican party since the Eisenhower presidency. Rachel L. Holloway explains that Americans use religious terminology in secular speech to convey the divine mandate of Manifest Destiny, drawing on Rod Hart's claim that religious rhetoric in political speech is an affirmation "of God's special love for America, of America's unique responsibility to God…."[33] Holloway specifically assesses Dwight D. Eisenhower's use of religious language to reframe the destructive force of the hydrogen bomb into a force for salvation, but she situates it as a specific example of a broadly deployed, often used, hyper-American rhetorical resource.[34]

Nixon also purposefully used prayer in his presidential rhetoric to stress God's favor of America, perhaps mimicking Eisenhower's rhetorical techniques. Although Eisenhower did not reciprocate, Nixon was extremely fond of Eisenhower, respected him greatly, and considered him a dear friend and mentor.[35] One may reasonably infer that Nixon might have employed some of the same successful rhetorical techniques as Ike. Like Eisenhower, Nixon was raised very religious (Quaker), but was not a zealous adherent to any faith as an adult, yet still used Christian rhetoric to bolster his presidential speech. Religious rhetoric endowed both speaker and message with a touch of the divine. In his Apollo 13 speeches, Nixon drove home this divine favor through rhetoric of "miracles," the role of prayer in bringing Apollo 13 home, and the ubiquity of religion among all humanity.

Nixon explained "miracles" simultaneously in the language of the divine and of America. In the speech presenting the Medal of Freedom to the Mission Control workers, Nixon stated:

> We often speak of scientific "miracles" – forgetting that these are not miraculous happenings at all, but rather the product of hard work, long hours[,] and disciplined intelligence. The men and women of the Apollo 13 mission operations team performed such a miracle, transforming potential tragedy into one of the most dramatic rescues of all time. Years of intense preparation made this rescue possible. The skill, coordination[,] and performance under pressure of this mission operations team made it happen.[36]

In this passage, Nixon used *paralepsis*: although he stated clearly that scientific triumphs are the product of hard work rather than divine intervention, the passage is but one in a speech filled with references to divine miracles. These religious passages include Nixon reading a telegram he received from Pope Paul, thanking God and "men of science" for 13's return, as well as the assertion that, "whatever our religious faith…we know that through our prayers we helped to participate in this successful recovery."[37] The enthymeme is clear: humans cannot perform miracles, but since God's favor rests upon the United States, He grants its citizens the virtues and skills necessary to perform the human equivalent of miracles. Similarly, when speaking to the congregation of Kawaiahao Church in Hawaii the morning after presenting Lovell, Haise, and Swigert with the Medal of Freedom in Honolulu, Nixon stated, "Finally, I would say to Reverend Akaka, on this occasion that you celebrated the 150th anniversary of Christianity [in Hawaii], that this event reminded us that in these days of growing materialism, deep down there is still a great religious faith in this Nation."[38] Similar to performing "miracles," Nixon affirms that the United States owes its success to God; our faith in Him

shows that the United States remains worthy of His favor. He declared, "let us remember we have come a long way in this country because we have had faith in God. Let us not forget it again. Let us remember that the future will be better if we continue that faith…."[39] Our national progress relies on God; it does not compete with Him.

Emphasis on prayer gave Nixon access to rhetorical resources with an American audience, which was predominantly Christian in 1970, but more than that, stressing the importance of prayer to the safe return of Apollo 13 gave Nixon the rhetorical means to symbolically open participation in the space program to all. Nixon's speeches explain that Apollo 13's successful return resulted from four entities: the brave men in the capsule, the hardworking people of NASA on the ground, God in His grace, and the public through its prayers. Four of the seven Apollo 13 addresses listed the indispensable role of prayer in bringing *Odyssey* home. For example, Nixon asserted that, "whatever our religious faith…we know that through our prayers we helped to participate in this successful recovery."[40] Although only astronauts and NASA workers had an embodied role in the Apollo 13 outcome, all four players were an active and essential part of saving Lovell, Haise, and Swigert. Nixon asserted that the amount of correspondence the White House received about Apollo 13 showed that "people all over the world, not just people in the free world but people in the Communist world, people of all religions, of all faiths, of all political beliefs, that they were also on that trip with these men."[41] By dividing responsibility for this good fortune into four, not equal but irreplaceable parts, Nixon made symbolic room for all peoples in the American space program. This symbolic participation made no change to literal participation and simply reinforced the *doxa* of the time: that space was the dominion of white American men.

Nixon also uses this ubiquity of prayer to reinforce the *doxastic* position that all humans, regardless of origin, innately tend towards religion, a right guaranteed by American democracy and outlawed by communism. While presenting the Medal of Freedom to the Mission Control team, Nixon noted, "…never have so many people on this earth, in all nations, thought together so much, shared an experience together so much, and never have they prayed so much for the success of this mission."[42] In this passage, the virtues that make the United States worthy of space are unbounded by geography or nation of origin. In proclaiming a "National Day of Prayer and Thanksgiving" to celebrate the safe return of Apollo 13, for example, Nixon wrote, "Particularly inspiring was the spontaneous outpouring of prayer, from every corner of the world, from members of every faith, calling upon God in His infinite mercy to bring home in safety to our small planet three fellow human beings."[43] Nixon's use of "God in His infinite mercy" places the Christian God as a metonym for all faiths around the world, simultaneously affirming religious diversity and placing Christianity as the representative religion of the American experience. Likewise, by citing the prayers wired to him from behind the Iron Curtain, Nixon emphasized again that human nature tends towards God and freedom and, thus, towards the divinely ordained American way.

Furthermore, Nixon's emphasis on prayer served as a *paralepsis*, calling upon "nationless" values in a way that obviously implicates American democracy. For example, in another passage from his remarks at the Kawaiahao Church, Nixon answered his own rhetorical question about the meaning of the global outpouring of prayer: "What does this mean? It means that wherever people live in this world, wherever they are, that they value human life and they thought of these three men not as Americans, but as

human beings, courageous men, and they wanted them to be saved." This passage associates religiousness with human decency (United States), which by extension condemns godless nations as inhumane and inferior (Soviet Union).

Although used to explain the hydrogen age, Holloway's claim that "Religion offered reassurance in a rapidly changing world" perfectly characterizes Nixon's Apollo 13 rhetoric.[44] The frontiers were expanding well beyond the blue-green sphere of Earth as superpower tensions at home created constant fear of nuclear holocaust. In his Apollo 13 speeches, Nixon used religion as a rhetorical resource to reassure Americans of the continued superiority of the United States. Although it was the worst in-space disaster in NASA history, Apollo 13 symbolically represented everything America was doing right. By all measures before 17 April 1970, the Apollo 13 astronauts were not coming back alive. And yet they did. The civilized nature of the United States meant only men went to space, and as a result, those men in space had "the right stuff" needed to survive and to come home. When the United States so clearly had it right, altering perfection would seem ludicrous.

Man vs. Machine: Individualism and Masculinity

Just as religion provided Nixon a rhetorical resource for articulating the righteous presence of Americans in space, anti-communist rhetoric provided similar resources. Underlying nearly all Nixon's political rhetoric was his rigorous commitment to anti-communism. Most would point to Senator Joseph McCarthy as the most fervent, vitriolic participant in the United States anti-communist movement. Slightly less vitriolic but no less fervent was Richard Nixon.[45] In typical Nixon fashion, his anti-communism leaned

more towards anti-Sovietism when it was convenient for him, as when opening United States relations with the People's Republic of China in 1972. Generally, however, Nixon never wavered from his anti-communist/passionately pro-democratic-capitalist stance over his nearly 30-year elective political career.

Central to Nixon's anti-communism was the belief that, just as they naturally seek religious faith, humans can innately sense the savagery of communism and recognize the divinely sanctioned good of democracy. Nixon believed that any evidence of happy communist citizens was pure Potemkinism, a show that the Soviets put on for the West to crush the will of the people under the yoke of the communist machine. Many of Nixon's Apollo 13 addresses created understated but persistent polarization of the United States and the Soviet Union by advocating the superiority of "the individual." Apollo 13 exemplified the virtues of individuality and, as a subtle contrast, the iniquities of the "machine," referring literally to the damaged spacecraft and figuratively to the "communist machine." Addressing this polarization in his Apollo 13 rhetoric, Nixon used an occasion for *epideictic* speech to reinforce that it was America's, not the savage Soviet Union's, destiny to conquer space.

The individual spirit of the American people (and the government's celebration of it) entitled Americans to the final frontier… The United States possessed an essential trait of the pioneering spirit that the Soviets lacked: while the Soviets pursued space to spread communism throughout and beyond the world, the individuality of the American spirit crucially aided the United States in achieving its divine mandate. Individuality made us exceptional; its lack made the Soviets savages. The Apollo 13 astronauts embody this virtue, Nixon argued, because they "remind us in these days when we have this

magnificent technocracy, that men do count, the individual does count."[46] Nixon's juxtaposition of "technocracy" and "individual" may have symbolically referred to the industrialization of the major communist states. The post-war Soviet Union and Red China both made technological advancement and "modernization" one of its primary objectives, pushing its agrarian people often far beyond their capacities to achieve this goal. These communist nations essentially mechanized both their industries and their people. Nixon's Apollo 13 rhetoric drew out the symbolic resonance of this historical fact, implying that communism viewed individual people merely as pieces within the machine of state, tinker-toys of little or no value outside the machine.

Nixon polarizes the United States and the Soviet Union by framing the mechanization of the Soviets as a barbaric squelching of individuality and by casting the cooperative efforts of NASA and the astronauts as only possible because of the individual American spirit. Nixon praised the value of the individual as an individual, who could use God-given and democratically sanctioned talents to help the US achieve great goals—in this case, getting the Apollo 13 astronauts home. Lauding the ingenuity of the NASA workers who created the square-cartridge-to-round-plug carbon dioxide filter rig (fondly dubbed "the mailbox" for its shape) and who taught the astronauts to build it over a crackling radio frequency, Nixon said, "But then here in this great organization, men came into play." Again juxtaposing the machine and the individual, Nixon turns the communist ideal on its head: the people-parts are far more important than any machine or organization they may come together to run.

Nixon peppered his Apollo 13 speeches with this theme. When reading the inscription on the Medal of Freedom for the three astronauts, Nixon observed that

> Adversity brings out the character of a man. Confronted suddenly and unexpectedly with grave peril in the far reaches of space, he demonstrated a calm courage and quiet heroism that stand as an example to men everywhere. His safe return is a triumph of the human spirit—of those special qualities of man himself we rely on when machines fall, and that we rely on also for things that machines cannot do.[47]

We can read he final sentence of this excerpt both literally and figuratively: literally, the machines in *Odyssey* did fail and the astronauts and NASA workers rescued the mission. But figuratively, Nixon implied the United States' dominance because the United States is a group of individuals pursuing their passions who choose to work together, rather than a state-centered machine that cares not at all for the individuals that make up its moving parts. If the Soviet machine were to break down, we may conclude, there would be none with "those special qualities of man" to meet such a challenge as the Apollo 13 crisis.

In his Apollo 13 rhetoric, Nixon does not invent the rhetorical importance of individualism; he simply reinforces a tightly held part of United States *doxa*. Indeed, individualism is an indispensable part of the virtues of a pioneer, of American national identity, and of mainstream American masculinity. Turner's "Frontier Thesis" stressed "that dominant individualism" as one of the guiding virtues of the frontiersman, along with related qualities like adventurousness and inquisitiveness. Lovell, Haise, and Swigert embodied these qualities to the letter. Nixon heralds their "courage," as well as Mission Control's "ingenuity and resourcefulness."[48] He continues on to assert that Apollo 13 "reminds us of the special qualities of the men who dare to brave the perils of space" and declares that "How man react in adversity determines their true greatness, and these men have demonstrated that the American character is sound and strong and capable of taking a very difficult situation and turning it into really a very successful

venture."[49] Lovell, Haise, and Swigert proved themselves true frontiersmen, the flesh and blood evidence of America's right to trail-blaze the final frontier.

This virtue of individualism, made manifest in the three Apollo 13 astronauts, is also a well-documented part of United States national identity. Social scientists usually describe cultures as either "individualistic" or "collectivistic." Geert Hofstede, a psychologist renowned for his work on a culture's impact on workplace values, reported that the United States culture scores very high both on masculinity and individualism measures, where Russia (the former Soviet Union) scores lower on masculinity and very high on collectivism.[50] Herbert Barry III strengthened Hofstede's conclusions about the United States in his study, which showed that masculinity and individualism correlate statistically.

The humanities draw similar connections between American national identity and individualism, and their relationship with masculinity. For example, Michael Kimmel's *Manhood in America* extensively analyzes these connections, using ample primary-source historical evidence to support the case.[51] Like Kimmel's book, much of the literature in critical studies of men and masculinities studies (CSOMM) the depth of entrenchment of masculinity particularly in United States culture.[52] The wide variety of in-depth scholarship on this subject was scarce during Nixon's presidential years, yet his Apollo 13 rhetoric shows that these connections long predate the founding of CSOMM.

The importance of "man" as a linguistic commonplace for "human" in Nixon's Apollo 13 demonstrates the depth of *doxa* on sex roles in the United States consciousness. When Nixon referred to "calm courage and quiet heroism that stand as an example to men everywhere," he set Lovell, Haise, and Swigert up as models of the ideal

frontiersmen, especially compared to the Soviets, and also as ideal examples of American personhood. By claiming the astronauts as metonyms for the American spirit and American way, Nixon offered up three white male faces as representative of the United States. Nixon affirmed the *doxa* of the Kitchen Debate: space belongs to white American men.

In some of his Apollo 13 rhetoric, Nixon used "men and women" or "people" when praising the heterogeneous group of NASA workers, but it is difficult to say whether it was mere artifice.[53] Nixon had many strong women in his life: raised by Hannah, married to Pat, and father to Tricia and Julie. One cannot know Nixon's true feelings, but one could reasonably conclude that these women positively influenced Nixon to be more accepting of women in American public life. Evidence exists for one to conclude the opposite, however. Biographers and scholars of Richard Nixon generally agree that Nixon was predisposed to dislike everyone.[54] There were some people Nixon came to like and, in his way, respect, but most friendly or conciliatory moves Nixon made towards one group or another in public rhetoric were often artifice solely intended to garner popularity.[55]

Although he uses "people" and "men and women" when addressing NASA workers, more consistently throughout the addresses Nixon uses "man" and "human" synonymously. In the early 1970s, "men" was almost universally considered an acceptable plural for a mixed-sex group, and Nixon used this linguistic commonplace. For example, in the "Remarks at a Special Church Service in Honolulu," Nixon declared, "We think of it in terms of the fact that brave men returned to earth, not only because of their own bravery, but because of the great courage and skill and ability of the men on the

ground." The Latinate tradition of using the masculine plural to describe a mixed-sex group held fast, even though in other speeches Nixon addresses the mixed crowed accurately as "people." When presenting the Medal of Freedom speech to the Mission Control workers, Nixon stated, "We are reminded of the fact that the men and women on the ground do count, that those hours that they spent were worth spending."[56] Here Nixon acknowledged the contributions of women to the space program…so long as they had two feet planted firmly on Earth.

Regardless of his personal opinions on gender, Nixon's Apollo 13 speeches did not challenge the *doxa* that space was the domain of men, evidenced as much by absences as by present themes. The *doxastic* understanding that frontier equals America equals masculinity is a vital element of Nixon's Apollo 13 rhetoric. This is perhaps most evident in his "Remarks on Arrival in California," when he stated:

> …as I met [Lovell, Haise, and Swigert] I felt enormously proud of this country, proud that this Nation [*sic*] produces men like that, men who despite the mechanical backing that they had, and all the scientific genius that made their flight possible, who, when that mechanical material no longer came through for them, that they responded with the individual capacity that they had within them.[57]

In this passage, Nixon holds the Apollo 13 astronauts up as the model of the perfect American citizen, of the frontiersman, and of men. The individual men strengthen the society, and the strength of the society is represented in these individual men. These men combined the ruggedness of American pioneers with the intellect of scientists in ways that invited the President to draw on frontier themes in his *epideictic* in their honor.

An aforementioned passage from the "Statement Following the Safe Return" further emphasizes the three astronauts as a masculine metonym of American culture in its rhetorical framing of the astronauts and "the Nation" as a frontier family. He stated

that Apollo 13 "reminds us of the special qualities of the men who dare to brave the perils of space. It testifies, also, to the extraordinary concert of skills, in space and on the ground, that goes into a moon [*sic*] mission. To the astronauts, a relieved Nation says 'Welcome home.'"[58] Nixon described the astronauts using active, daredevil verbs and descriptors; we can almost see the frontiersman riding away from his family to explore new, uncharted vistas. The family picture becomes clearer in the passage's conclusion, where Nixon characterized "the Nation" as "relieved." The American public is feminized, or is at least somewhat emasculated in a traditional sense, by showing vulnerability: to feel relief, one must have previously felt pain, discomfort, or fear. Nixon admitted that the non-astronauts of the country are passive, as the frontierswoman, holding down the homestead and praying to God for the safe return of her loved one, for there is nothing else in her power to do to protect his ventures.

Nixon did not challenge the common-sense assumptions about race and gender that established astronauts like Lovell, Haise, and Swigert as a perfect metonymy for the United States space program and, by extension, perfect Americanism. When "Announcing Plans to Award the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Apollo 13 Astronauts and Mission Operations Team," Nixon declared:

> I feel that what these men have done has been a great inspiration to all of us. I think also what the men on the ground have done is an inspiration to us. How men react in adversity determines their true greatness, and these men have demonstrated that the American character is sound and strong and capable of taking a very difficult situation and turning it into really a very successful venture.[59]

We see Nixon use in this passage all three usages of "men": (1) actual men, i.e., the Apollo 13 crew, (2) "men" representing a group we know to be made of men and women, i.e., NASA workers, and (3) "men" in the philosophical sense, i.e., a stand-in for

"human." This casual move from the particular to the general reinforces the *doxa* of men in space as well as of the appropriateness of male-as-metonym for the United States, especially with frontier rhetoric. Lovell, Haise, and Swigert were three variations on a theme: historical fact establishes white, cisgender male, ostensibly heterosexual/married, Protestant, Midwestern, extremely brave and tough-under-pressure test-pilot men as the model of the perfect astronaut and, by extension, the very model of the perfect American. This perfection exemplified the extreme extent to which American frontier metaphors depend not only on Manifest Destiny, but on masculinity as well.

Nixon's Apollo 13 *epideictic* reinforced the masculine narrative of United States *doxa* of sex roles. When it came to advocacy for diversifying the American space program, the Apollo 13 speeches acted the same way as earlier American rhetoric on Valentina Tereshkova: it kept silent. Relying on praise for the model American men that overcame this crisis, the American "us" versus the communist "them" dominated all other themes, homogenizing the priorities of Nixon's ideal audience. In Nixon's world, it was perfectly acceptable to maintain the established order of men going to the frontiers and women aiding their efforts from home, while still praising both groups' "separate but equal" work. The colloquialism, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it," comes to mind: the established astronaut demographic exemplified the bravery, cool-headedness, and problem-solving skills needed to keep the US at the front of the space race, its divinely ordained destiny. Why advocate for a person of color or a woman astronaut when incidents like Apollo 13 show God's approval of the American *status quo*? Deviating from those destined to pursue the frontier would only upset perfection.

Counterfactual Outcome in the Contingency Speech

After policy speaking, crisis rhetoric is the most important genre of speech for any world leader. Any queen, prime minister, *comandante*, or president must always be prepared to address the people "should the worst happen." Ronald Reagan's Challenger Address is the most famous of space-related disaster speech in American public address, but it was not the first of its kind.

For nearly every potentially dangerous national operation, presidents have prepared a variety of speeches for any variety of outcomes. Like most presidents, Nixon did not write these contingency speeches himself. Nixon's team of speechwriters, including Bill Safire and Ray Price, wrote and submitted these speeches to Chief of Staff H.R. "Bob" Haldeman for approval, who then gave them to Nixon himself. It is indeed possible that Nixon never read the many contingency speeches he never had to deliver, but Robert Schlesinger's research showed that Nixon liked to be directly involved in nearly everything within his White House, so it is possible.[60] That Nixon did not write these contingency speeches himself is largely unimportant, however. As Schlesinger pointed out, the very foundation of speechwriting is the writer's mastery of the speaker's rhetorical voice, and by filtering a document through multiple, increasingly higher-up personnel, the president nearly always ended up with something he could have written himself.[61]

President Nixon's contingency speech for the Apollo 11 Moon landing has attained popular recognition in the United States in the past ten years. The speech "In Event of Moon Disaster" is a fascinating counterfactual history of one of the chief scientific accomplishments of the United States, for the "Moon Disaster" speech speaks

of the brave astronauts who died on the Moon.[62] The "Moon Disaster" speech planned for the unknown; before the historic event, the possibility of a successful landing, extra-vehicular activity (EVA), and departure was still in question.

The "Apollo 13 Contingency Statement In Case of Failure," by contrast, prepared for the inevitable.[63] As they grasped the extent of the damage to Apollo 13, NASA could not give the astronauts even 50% odds of surviving the ordeal. It was therefore vital that Nixon's speechwriters have a speech ready for delivery in the likely event that Apollo 13 was lost. Generically, the "Contingency Statement" is nearly a eulogy. The one-page document uses themes very similar to those Reagan later deployed in the Challenger Address: it comforts the families and the public, acknowledges the bravery of the dead, and emphasizes the importance of continuing with the space program, made safer by the lessons learned from failure.

What is most remarkable about the "Contingency Statement" is the consistency of themes between counterfactual eulogy and historical celebration: it appears that Nixon valued the symbolic existence of the astronauts more than he valued their actual existence. The "Contingency Statement" draws heavily on pioneering themes present in the celebratory speeches. One sentence praises "the calm, the self-control, the quiet heroism, displayed by the men aboard [Apollo 13]," going on to state, "Other explorers have been lost, and other adventurers have died -- but none while so many watched so intently, and hoped so fervently."[64] These passages draw on the same frontiersman qualities so vital to the other Apollo 13 addresses. Indeed, the phrases almost echo those in the astronauts' Medal of Freedom ceremony ("poise and skill under the most intense kind of pressure"), the "Statement Following the Safe Return" ("man's ventures into

space have been accompanied by danger. Apollo 13…reminds us of the special qualities of men who dare to brave the perils of space"), and the statement announcing the Medal of Freedom presentations ("these men have demonstrated that the American character is sound and strong and capable of taking a very difficult situation and turning it into really a very successful venture"). In all these cases, Nixon praised Lovell, Haise, and Swigert, but the symbolic value of these final frontiersmen provided the most vital rhetorical resource.

The "Contingency Statement" offers proof that, in Nixon's rhetoric and in the American frontier myth, individuality is most important in the abstract. History remembers Nixon as a chameleon, quick to change his colors to come out on top in any political situation. Nixon may not have cared whether Jim, Freddo, and Jack made it home alive, just as he may not have cared whether female NASA workers got full recognition for their work. Scholars can only speculate on this. However, Nixon undeniably cared deeply about the public relations disaster of the highly publicized deaths of three United States astronauts and about how such a disaster would affect the United States's position in global power relations. With Richard Nixon, one must always filter any impulse towards humanity through a lens of functionalism: he may genuinely have cared about the lives of these three astronauts and their families, but he was much more worried about the crisis as it related to maintaining United States dominance on the global stage. In both life and hypothetical death, the Apollo 13 astronauts embodied the qualities so valued in American national identity—like masculinity, bravery, "the right stuff," and dedication—and Nixon drew heavily on the abstracted values these astronauts represented.

Conclusions: Coming Home

The Apollo 13 astronauts represented the very essence of good-old-fashioned American masculinity; they were Nixon's answer to "who belonged in space" made manifest in flesh. Lovell, Haise, and Swigert perfectly fit the bill of the American astronaut, the 20th-century answer to the God-ordained frontiersman. As Mary Stuckey asserts, "Settler nations are not only created by the conquest of land and its occupants, but are also invented, justified, and sustained rhetorically."[65] Nixon performed such sustaining in his Apollo 13 rhetoric, not simply justifying Americans' right to space, but also justifying and sustaining—reinforcing the *doxa* of—the maleness and whiteness of the astronaut corps. As this analysis has demonstrated, Nixon's Apollo 13 rhetoric performed the dual function of *epideictic*, praising the specific subjects but also reinforcing the shared social values of American exceptionalism and anti-communism. The Apollo 13 mission failed, but its failure was simultaneously a triumph. Through his praise of Apollo 13, Nixon carved a rhetorical niche for mainstream masculinity to maintain its dominance in a rapidly changing American society.

The Apollo 13 speeches are worthy of study in their own right, as products of their cultural and historical moment. Apollo 13 was the first near-fatal, in-space calamity NASA and the United States government had to address in front of a global audience.[66] As with other rhetorical situations, the president must address national crisis moments to offer guidance in uncertainty and to celebrate or mourn once the situation resolves. The themes in the "Contingency Statement" are familiar to us living in a post-Challenger Address age, but to a 1970 audience, this was a new type of rhetorical situation. But even considering the newness of the rhetorical situation, the fitting response possessed

qualities very familiar to an American audience. Nixon's audience would have recognized, and almost definitely resonated with, the frontier tropes and themes of American exceptionalism that the Apollo 13 speeches drew on so heavily.

Nixon's Apollo 13 *epideictic* blended space-age Manifest Destiny rhetoric with his deep anti-communist attitude to create a narrative of American exceptionalism reaching the heavens. The Apollo 13 speeches praised American values like bravery and individualism with just as much gusto as praising the astronauts. Like other discourse during the space race, the Apollo 13 speeches filtered reality through the Manichean lens of the United States as God's "city upon the hill" and the Soviet Union as outside of God's favor; Americans would be derelict in their divine mandate to allow the Soviets to control the final frontier.

Nixon drew on the American tropes of Manifest Destiny and anti-Sovietism in his speeches, but what distinguished the Apollo 13 speeches from other space race rhetoric was the gendered rhetorical antecedent of the Kitchen Debate. The 1959 Kitchen Debate was about democratic-capitalist values versus Marxist-communist ones, but Nixon and Khrushchev used gendered language and examples to make their respective points. This same pattern exists in the Apollo 13 speeches. The values of the American frontier narrative are strongly associated with masculinity. Qualities like ruggedness, resourcefulness, and courage are, for the United States, rarely coded female. This gendered *doxa* played a major role in Nixon's Apollo 13 level; Lovell, Haise, and Swigert were the best the United States had. Nixon was willing to acknowledge briefly the contributions of female NASA workers, but the general warrant of his Apollo 13 rhetoric was that NASA females were acceptable only with two high-heeled feet planted

on *terra firma*. The tropes of woman-as-homemaker and the male frontiersman made it unnecessary for Nixon to suggest women might leave our planetary homestead along with their frontiersman counterparts. By speaking within the framework of common sense, Nixon continued to render invisible any need for substantive priority shifts at NASA, like putting a woman or person of color into space.

Indeed, this is what distinguished the Apollo 13 speeches from other presidential space race rhetoric: Apollo 13's mission failed, but Nixon reframed the failure as a success. In his Apollo 13 memoir, Jim Lovell recalled apologizing to the president for the mission's failure. In the presentation ceremony for Apollo 13's astronauts, Nixon refused "failure" language, recasting the mission failures as American triumphs.[67] In praising Apollo 13, the "successful failure," Nixon made room for mainstream masculinity to remain dominant even through failure. The president, as a cultural tastemaker, offered mainstream American men a new opportunity to reassert their dominant social status. Apollo 11 was a triumph of American exceptionalism, a cultural tradition so tied to masculinity, but Apollo 13 allowed Nixon to extend that heroism to failures. White men were not only on top of the world (literally and figuratively) through their successes, but also through their failures. The "successful failure" framed white men's failures as still worthy of national honor. Men still come out on top, even when they are not successful.

Nixon often narrowly defined the boundaries of honorable behavior in the United States, in cases extending beyond his space program rhetoric. He followed the civic republican tradition of valuing temperance over passion and the pursuit of the greater good over factionalism. This tradition has deep ties to conservativism, as change occurs through agitation. Like their astronaut counterparts, Nixon's most praiseworthy subjects

were the Vietnam veterans, men who braved alien terrains to bring democracy to all. Just as he was rhetorically expanding what it meant to be a success as a white male in America, his rhetoric also ensured that those outside the mainstream—especially Black Americans and young liberals—remained outside it. Nixon's metonymic rhetoric constrained "true" patriotism to men like the Apollo 13 astronauts.

The world—almost literally the entire world—shared a moment of common joy when, after an abnormally long period of communications blackout during reentry, Jim Lovell, Fred Haise, and Jack Swigert radioed that they had survived reentry and splashdown. Nixon telephoned Marilyn Lovell again once he heard the astronauts had made it back to Earth: "Marilyn, this is the president. I wanted to know if you'd care to accompany me to Hawaii to pick up your husband."[68] Pausing, no doubt to tame once again the intense emotions of those harrowing six days, Marilyn Lovell finally answered Richard Nixon. "Mr. President," she said at last, "I'd love to."

Notes

[1] Jim Lovell, "Response to Richard Nixon's Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Apollo 13 Astronauts in Honolulu," 18 April 1970, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=2472.
[2] Jim Lovell and Jeffrey Kluger, *Apollo 13* (New York: First Mariner Books, 2006), 276.
[3] NACA is said as the initials "N-A-C-A," but NASA is pronounced as a word. The connection between man and machine is the primary subject of David Mindell's *Digital Apollo*, a work of exceptional importance to this chapter. Other scholars have undertaken the monumentally important task of recovering the voices of women and people of color who were instrumental to NACA and NASA and whose contributions have gone largely unrecognized for half a century. For example, the film *Hidden Figures* followed three Black female NASA workers central to the first successful Moon landing. Such a film is long overdue. In scholarship, see Daniel Sage, "Giant Leaps and Forgotten Steps: NASA and the Performance of Gender," *The Sociological Review* 57.1 (2009), 146-163.
[4] As David Mindell pointed out, even the terminology—"*manned* space program"—has not only gendered dimensions but also harkens a specific sort of man. The emphasis on "man" (both in NASA rhetoric and in Nixon's responses to Apollo 13) was definitely, in part, a product of linguistic commonplace of the time; "man" was synonymous with "people" in the vocabulary of the average American. However, this does not negate the historical and rhetorical importance of the term "man" in relation to space. See David A. Mindell, *Digital Apollo: Human and Machine in Spaceflight* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2008), 13, 22-23.
[5] Lovell and Kluger 8, and Gene Kranz, *Failure is Not an Option: Mission Control from Mercury to Apollo 13 and Beyond* (New York: Berkley Books, 2000), 15.
[6] Kranz 15.
[7] Mindell's primary concern was to relate the history of the machine in the US space program and its relationship to humans, though as a gender rhetorician, I would argue that one cannot separate tensions between man and machine from the gendered aspects of the early US space program, especially considering the overall context of the Cold War. I am glad to answer his call, however.
[8] All eight of Richard Nixon's Apollo 13 addresses are examples of *epideictic*, and the long history of epideictic rhetoric has included swathing a "deeper message" within rhetoric in praise or blame of some person or event. One may observe this in Plato's *Menexenus*, where Socrates mocks the funeral oration genre. Traditional Greek funeral orations did not just praise the dead; they were also opportunities to praise the shared values of the state. In the modern US, it is a common presidential practice to include policy themes within *epideictic* speech. For example, Barack Obama's speech after the 2012 Newtown, Connecticut, shooting provided comfort to the families of the victims and the larger American citizenry, but Obama also used it to propagate further his position on stricter gun control. US presidents often use high-profile eulogies for similar purposes, mourning the deceased while also wrapping a political message into the eulogy. Richard Nixon's Apollo 13 speeches, though never directly mentioning the US's tensions with the Soviet Union, implicitly emphasized the superiority of the democratic system by

praising religiosity and American individuality—which by extension implicate masculinity.

[9] Mary E. Stuckey, *Defining Americans: The Presidency and National Identity* (Lawrence: The University Press of Kansas, 2004), 3. Stuckey's collaborative textbook with Greg M. Smith made a similar point about the president as a tastemaeker, noting "[Presidents'] hobbies can become national hobbies; their likes and dislikes can influence the behavior of the nation's citizens; their endorsement of causes can increase the attention paid to those causes and the donations they receive." See Stuckey and Smith, "The Presidency and Popular Culture," in *The Presidency, the Public, and the Parties*, 3rd ed. (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2008).

[10] Chapter 1 (pages 9-31) in particular provides essential information on the American tradition of the self-made man. Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[11] Kimmel in particular dissects Tocqueville's less-than-flattering assessment of America's obsession with the self-made man. See Kimmel, *Manhood*, 19-20. For the original text, see Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, ed. Isaac Kramnick (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2007).

[12] Of course, this operated on the principle that "new" meant new to Americans; that indigenous peoples occupied these lands already was of no consequence.

[13] Kimmel provides a thorough analysis in Chapter 2 of *Manhood in America*. For more, also see George M. Frederickson, *The Inner Civil War: Northern Intellectuals and the Crisis of the Union* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1993); and Christopher Herbert, "'Life's Prizes Are by Labor Got': Risk, Reward, and White Manliness in the California Gold Rush," *Pacific Historical Review* 80, no. 3 (2011): 339-368.

[14] Frederick Jackson Turner's *The Frontier in American Memory*, cited in Ronald H. Carpenter, "Frederick Jackson Turner and the Rhetorical Impact of the Frontier Thesis," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 63, no. 2 (1977): 123. I would normally prefer to cite the primary source, but I was unsuccessful in obtaining a copy of this 1920 book.

[15] See, for example, Carpenter; Leroy G. Dorsey, "The Frontier Myth in Presidential Rhetoric: Theodore Roosevelt's Campaign for Conservation," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 59 (1995): 1-19; Janice Hocker Rushing, "Mythic Evolution of 'The New Frontier' in Mass Mediated Rhetoric," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 3, no. 3 (1986): 265-296; Mary E. Stuckey, "The Donner Party and the Rhetoric of Westward Expansion," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 14, no. 2 (2011): 229-260; Gail Bederman, Gail, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), especially Chapters 3 and 5.

[16] Mark Anderson, for example, critiques the imperialist impact of the American frontier myth on other cultures through his analysis of US press coverage of the Mexican Revolution. See Mark Crolund Anderson, "The Mythical Frontier, the Mexican Revolution, and the Press: An Imperial Subplot," *Canadian Review of American Studies* 37 (2007): 1-22.

[17] Biographical evidence supports this claim. Both sets of grandparents, the Nixons and the Milhouses, took advantage of the Homestead Act, and Frank Nixon (Richard's father) struggled desperately to be a pioneer success story.

[18] The texts under consideration in this chapter are: (1) "Statement Following the Safe Return of the Apollo 13 Astronauts" 17 April 1970; (2) "Remarks Announcing Plans to Award the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Apollo 13 Astronauts and Mission Operations Team" 17 April 1970; (3) Proclamation 3979 "Designating a National Day of Prayer and Thanksgiving" 17 April 1970; (4) "Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Apollo 13 Mission Operations Team in Houston" 18 April 1970; (5) "Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Apollo 13 Astronauts in Honolulu" 18 April 1970; (6) "Remarks at a Special Church Service in Honolulu" 19 April 1970; (7) "Remarks on Arrival in California" 19 April 1970; (8) "Apollo 13 Contingency Statement In Case of Failure" 16 April 1970. The author gratefully used *The American Presidency Project* website to locate the first seven documents, and the Nixon Presidential Library graciously supplied the eighth.

[19] Although he was rejected from the Mercury Seven, Lovell joined NASA in its second round of astronaut recruitment. He flew on the Gemini 7 and 12 missions, and he is most celebrated for his role in Apollo 8, the first manned craft to orbit the Moon.

[20] Haise was dreadfully ill with a kidney infection from lack of water and was hospitalized for a few days after returning, but all things considered, that is an amazingly small casualty compared to the severity of the whole Apollo 13 calamity.

[21] The inquest into the fire was headed by NASA personnel, leading to widespread accusations of insider bias, cover-up, and conspiracy. All contemporaneous sources cite this decision as a major error in judgment. Former Flight Director Gene Kranz's *Failure is Not an Option*, Lovell's *Apollo 13*, and scholar David Mindell's *Digital Apollo* all discussed how much of a pain this constant transparency was at the time—even the littlest comment was monitored and then extensively reported upon—and how, in retrospect, it may have been slightly *too* transparent.

[22] Ronald Reagan, "Address to the Nation on the Explosion of the Space Shuttle Challenger," *American Presidency Project*, 28 January 1986.

[23] Nixon, "Remarks Announcing Plans."

[24] Robert L. Ivie, "Images of Savagery in American Justifications of War," *Communication Monographs* 47, no. 4 (1980): 279-294; "Literalizing the Metaphor of Soviet Savagery: President Truman's Plain Style," *Southern Speech Communication Journal* 51, no. 2 (1986): 91-105; "Metaphor and the Rhetorical Invention of Cold War 'Idealists.'" *Communication Monographs* 54, no. 2 (1987): 165-183; "Speaking 'Common Sense' about the Soviet Threat: Reagan's Rhetorical Stance." *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 48, no. 1 (1984): 39-50.

[25] Mindell 88-89, for example, though he discusses this many times throughout the text.

[26] Gene Kranz recalled his speech to Mission Control after the fire in his memoir: "The fire…reminded the American public that men could and would die in our efforts to explore the heavens. It recreated the tension and uncertainty of the early flights of Shepard, Grissom, and Glenn. The Russians worked in secret, but the entire world could watch our flights on television. Success had become almost routine for us…until now. The country had gotten complacent. Only many years later would the full count of losses become known: these three Americans plus four Russians, all brave, good men who ran out of luck, whose technology failed at a crucial moment." Kranz, *Failure is Not an Option*, 200. Kranz later delivered a post-fire speech to Mission Control that enshrined

principles of "discipline, competence, confidence, responsibility, toughness, and teamwork" and a command "to always be aware that suddenly and unexpectedly we may find ourselves in a role where our performance has ultimate consequences." "Foundations of Mission Control," document received by author from Mr. Kranz.

[27] By contrast, because governance was secret, the Soviet space program could proceed exceptionally quickly, expecting and accepting casualties as a reality of exploration and covering them up when they did. Mindell explained that the Soviets would build entire prototype rockets and launch them, and if the cosmonaut died or the rocket exploded, they would start the same process over again—all while keeping the public in the dark. The cosmonaut was just another piece of the spacecraft. The US, by contrast, would test each individual part of each type of rocket before even considering putting a human aboard the craft.

[28] The timeline for this important part of the space race was: Yuri Gagarin, U.S.S.R., 12 April 1961, first human in space; Alan Shepard, US, 5 May 1961, first American in space; Valentina Tereshkova, U.S.S.R., 16 June 1963, first female in space.

[29] May, *Homeward Bound* 19-22

[30] One might make the argument that it still is, though NASA does now have a lot more diversity in the astronaut corps. Just this year, a female graduate student from Penn State was accepted to the program. However, as the quotes from Lovell and Kranz earlier in this chapter emphasize, the early astronaut corps was entirely white, male, and Midwestern. Some of the qualifications for the corps came from practicality, while others resulted from *doxa*. An information page by the Kennedy Space Center lists the requirements for the original Mercury program astronauts:

"In seeking its first space pilots, NASA emphasized jet aircraft flight experience and engineering training, and it tailored physical stature requirements to the small cabin space available in the Mercury capsule then being designed. Basically, those 1959 requirements were: Less than 40 years of age; less than 5ft. [sic] 11 inches tall; excellent physical condition; bachelor's degree or equivalent in engineering; qualified jet pilot; graduate of test pilot school, and at least 1500 hours of flying time" (Kennedy Space Center and NASA, "Early Astronaut Selection and Training," *Kennedy Space Center*, https://science.ksc.nasa.gov/history/early-astronauts.txt). Some requirements, like height, engineering skills, and pilot training, make obvious sense; NASA could not cram a six-foot-five man into a capsule too small for him, and any reasonable person would not want a multi-million-dollar government-funded vehicle commandeered by just anyone. Other selection criteria were less practical and relied instead on cultural convention. NASA's "Astronaut Selection" page on Mercury declares: "Compared with the average, white, middle-class American male, they enjoyed better health, physically and psychologically, and they had far more experience among and above the clouds. Slightly short of average in stature, they were above average in seriousness of purpose. Otherwise these seven seemed almost random samples of average American manhood" (NASA, "NASA Project Mercury Overview – Astronaut Selection," *NASA*, 30 Nov 2006, https://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/mercury/missions/astronaut.html). Writing in 2006, the NASA passage reveals doxa about American astronauts as much as it performs it. The above reinforces the practical criteria listed by the Kennedy Space Center, but the assertion that the Mercury Seven were "almost random samples of average American

manhood" is at odds with both the selection criteria and the reality of US demographics in the late 1950s. Common sense wisdom in the US during the space race and NASA *doxa* of the same era both reinforced the image of "American" as male, white, Midwestern, Christian, married (to a female), and so forth. The most elite group of men in the United States came to represent "average" Americans.

[31] For example, see Michael Parker, *John Winthrop: Founding the City Upon a Hill* (New York: Routledge, 2014).

[32] One example, a more recent take on God in US politics, is Jennifer L. Young, "Standing on the Premises of God: The Christian Right's Fight to Redefine America's Public Schools," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88, no. 2 (May 2002): 262-264. Also see Rachel L. Holloway, "'Keeping the Faith': Eisenhower Introduces the Hydrogen Age," in *Eisenhower's War of Words: Rhetoric and Leadership,* edited by Martin J. Medhurst (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1994): 47-71.

[33] Roderick P. Hart, *The Political Pulpit* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1977): 12.

[34] Holloway, "'Keeping the Faith'"

[35] For example, Nixon discussed his devastation on Ike's death in *RN*, 375-376, and Farrell's biography covers the period when Eisenhower nearly dropped Nixon off ticket after the fund crisis, 239-242. Wills's "Nixon's Dog" attributed this to "Tricky Dick's" silver tongue in the "Checkers" speech.

[36] Nixon, "Remarks on Presenting…Mission Operations."

[37] Ibid.

[38] Nixon, "Remarks at a Special Church Service."

[39] Ibid.

[40] Nixon, "Remarks on Presenting…Mission Operations."

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Nixon, Proclamation 3979.

[44] Holloway 51.

[45] Nixon himself recounted in great detail his committed anti-communist stance in his many written works. In Nixon's memoir, RN, for example, "the great communist conspiracy" is a leitmotif used to delegitimize Nixon's opposition and to explain or excuse Nixon's ethically questionable decisions, like the secret Cambodia bombings.

[46] Nixon, "Remarks on Presenting…Mission Operations."

[47] Nixon, "Remarks on Presenting…Astronauts." We can see a very similar theme in the "Remarks on Arrival": "I just want to say this: That as I met [the astronauts] I felt enormously proud of this country, proud that this Nation produces men like that, men who despite the mechanical backing that they had, and all the scientific genius that made their flight possible, who, when that mechanical material no longer came through for them, that they responded with the individual capacity that they had within them."

[48] Nixon, "Statement Following the Safe Return."

[49] Nixon, "Statement Following the Safe Return" and "Remarks Announcing Plans."

[50] Geert Hofstede and Associates, *Masculinity and Femininity: The Taboo Dimensions of National Cultures* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 1998); Geert Hofstede, "Russia," *Geert Hofstede*, accessed 23 July 2017, https://geert-hofstede.com/russia.html.

[51] Kimmel, *Manhood in America*
[52] Just a small cross-section of this highly interdisciplinary literature includes: Jefferson Cowie, *Stayin' Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class* (New York: The New Press, 2010); Susan Faludi, *Stiffed: The Betrayal of the American Man* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1999); Sut Jhally, "Image-Based Culture: Advertising and Popular Culture," in *Gender, Race, and Class in Media: A Critical Reader,* 4th ed., eds. Gail Dines and Jean M. Humez (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2015): 246-250; Beth A. Quinn, "Sexual Harassment and Masculinity: The Power and Meaning of 'Girl Watching,'" in *Men's Lives*, 9th edition, eds. Michael S. Kimmel and Michael A. Messner, 180-192 (Boston: Pearson, 2013); Mary D. Vavrus, "The Politics of NASCAR Dads: Branded Media Paternity," *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 24, no. 3 (2007): 245-61.
[53] Nixon, "Remarks at a Special Church Service."
[54] See Farrell's *Richard Nixon: The Life*; H.R. Haldeman's *The Haldeman Diaries* (especially the introduction); and Woodward's *The Last of the President's Men*. In his book on Alexander Butterfield (Nixon's assistant chief of staff) Bob Woodward recounted some disturbing stories Butterfield told him about Nixon's allegedly terrible relationship with Pat, and yet upon Pat's death, a heartbroken Nixon is said to have declared, "I won't last a year without her!" There is no way to know the truth, and regardless, that is not the pursuit of this dissertation project.
[55] Woodward, *The Last of the President's Men*; Farrell, *Richard Nixon: The Life*; *The Haldeman Diaries*; and Wills, *Nixon Agonistes* all discuss this phenomenon, as did many *Esquire* articles from 1968 and 1969.
[56] Nixon, "Remarks on Presenting…Mission Operations."
[57] Nixon, "Remarks on Arrival."
[58] Nixon, "Statement Following the Safe Return."
[59] Nixon, "Remarks Announcing Plans."
[60] Robert Schlesinger, *White House Ghosts: Presidents and their Speechwriters from FDR to George W. Bush* (New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 2008), chapters six and seven. Nixon was obsessive about his own speechwriting, sometimes going on three-day writing binges, living on coffee and no sleep. At the time of Apollo 13, however, Nixon was frying bigger fish than this NASA problem: The continued Vietnam War and the domestic unrest roiling because of it occupied the majority of Nixon's attention. Indeed, in his memoir, Nixon skips straight from a section on Vietnam War decision-making to the 4 May 1970 Kent State University shootings, leaving out Apollo 13 entirely…which is a bit of a departure from the claim in the "Remarks Announcing Plans," that "this is the most exciting, the most meaningful day that [Nixon had] ever experienced."
[61] Schlesinger, Introduction.
[62] Nixon speechwriter Bill Safire penned this document, which he then submitted to Bob Haldeman for approval. Full document found at http://bit.ly/2pZ41pY.
[63] Apollo 13 Contingency Statement in Case of Failure; April 16, 1970; folder Misc. Material 1970 [2 of 2]; Box New 44; White House Special Files: Staff Member and Office Files: H.R. Haldeman; Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA. Retrieved for the author by archive staff. Copy of the speech found in the Appendix to this dissertation.

[64] Apollo 13 Contingency Statement.
[65] Stuckey, Donner Party, 250.
[66] Apollo 13 was definitely not the first time a US astronaut nearly died in space or on the way home. Of course Grissom, White, and Chaffee all perished in the Apollo 1 fire, but this was an accidental death, on the launchpad, during launch rehearsal. They never had any mission time on the clock at the time of their deaths. Earlier, Ed White of Gemini 4 nearly died during the first-ever EVA, and Gus Grissom of Mercury-Redstone 7 came very close to drowning when his capsule began to sink after splashdown. These incidents, however, were different from Apollo 13 for various reasons (in space versus on the ground or in the ocean, a threat from a crippled ship versus a threat from an unknown spacewalk excursion), but most importantly because of the audience. Because the fate of Apollo 13 hung in the balance for nearly five days at a time when the NASA was under intense media scrutiny, literally the entire world could watch the near-fatal events of Apollo 13 unfold almost in real-time.
[67] Nixon, "Remarks on Presenting…Astronauts." He said in the speech that Lovell had apologized to the president for their "failed" mission; in his speech, Nixon declared it a "success."
[68] Lovell and Kluger, 335.

CHAPTER 3

WARRIOR MASCULINITY

"They may have been warriors, but in this cause they were not patriots."
–New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu, 19 May 2017[1]

"Knowing their enemy hides in plain sight, they fight a guerrilla war in constant fear for their lives." This sentence could apply to nearly every social movement of the sixties and seventies: soldiers, both enlisted and drafted, fought a seemingly endless and questionably warranted war in Vietnam, knowing that even if they survive, the public will denigrate them. Young people lived in constant fear that they or their fellows will be plucked out of normal life to fight and maybe die in the jungle. Black Americans fought continuously for basic rights in the Jim Crow era. Gay men and lesbian women feared that any gathering might end in their unjust arrest for simply living and loving. Women throughout the United States wrestled both a faceless patriarchy and the fear of knowing any man could and might attack her. All of these groups fought for a specific definition of freedom and for a specific interpretation of the "American dream," and yet within the presidential rhetoric of Richard Milhous Nixon, not all groups' actions were socially sanctioned, appropriate, and patriotic. The boundaries defining what warriors were worthy of celebration or of mourning were clear.

As the previous chapter explored in detail, the American frontier narrative functions centrally in United States national identity, and its resonance has pervaded American history through today. The American pioneer has always been defined, to varying degrees, in part by race. Gary Gerstle tells us that conversations about fitness for public citizenship often filtered through racialized rhetoric.[2] Reaching a zenith during Theodore Roosevelt's presidency, race was a means for exclusion, for the mainstream

American imagination associated "wildness" and "passion" with Americans with non-white skin.[3] The tradition of civic republicanism, which I have framed in this project as a form of democratic participation reliant on sacrifice for the greater good, logical reasoning, and thwarting special interests, has always been highly exclusionary.

This chapter examines the exclusive nature of civic republican citizenship in the context of three 1970s social movements and political events: the Vietnam war, civil rights, and student movements.[4] Here I am less concerned with Nixon's rhetoric or policies on Vietnam or on domestic unrest and am more concerned with the ties between mainstream masculinity, whiteness, and civic republicanism. By embracing civic republicanism when rhetorically responding to these events, Nixon's rhetoric helped to cement the hegemonic power of mainstream masculinity during this era of major social change. I take as my central question, "Whom did Richard Nixon understand to be "proper" American warriors, and why?" As an opinion-leader and a metonym for mainstream American masculinity, Nixon's oratory set the rhetorical boundaries of belonging, reinforcing the *doxa* (common sense) about who mattered and was most important in the United States. This referent was, unsurprisingly, mainstream American males.[5]

Locating these trends in Nixon's presidential rhetoric required an analysis of many different Nixon texts. This chapter is therefore a hybrid; it is a textual analysis of "text fragments." I narrowed the scope of the chapter by selecting a touchstone for each political or social movement: Medal ceremonies would characterize Vietnam veterans, Nixon's "war on drugs" rhetoric addressed Black movements, and the responses to the Kent State and Jackson State shootings would represent student movements.[6] Although I

sometimes supplement my analysis with behind-the-scenes documents obtained during my archival work at the Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, I rely primarily on rhetorical artifacts accessible to the wider American public, such as presidential speeches and proclamations.

I argue that Nixon's rhetoric on Vietnam veterans, Black Americans, and student protestors clearly demonstrated Nixon's commitment to metonymically representing and protecting hegemonic American masculinity through a discourse of civic republicanism. By establishing the warrior as the peak of masculine American performance and by withholding the "warrior" accolade from groups that defied the Nixon administration, Nixon tied "warrior masculinity" to a civic republican performance of citizenship, strengthening the already exclusive boundaries of United States citizenship.[7] Limiting the bounds of "warrior masculinity" strengthened two aspects of American *doxa:* mainstream masculinity retains dominance, and disruption of the *status quo* is un-American.

The warrior holds special honor in the American tradition; by using his presidential rhetoric to bestow or withhold the "warrior" status, Nixon reinforced the boundaries of full United States citizenship, preserving the dominance of white males in this time of major social change. After a brief reorientation to civic republicanism, the chapter proceeds through the three case studies. Decorated Vietnam veterans epitomized the Nixonian warrior through their performance of civic virtues like putting country before self and through the glory of the battlefield. I then examine how Nixon used the "war on drugs" to rob the Black movement of its influence; because Black Americans were becoming more militant for factional reasons, they could not be warriors. I next analyze the Kent State and Jackson State statements as representative of why student

protestors also forfeited a Nixonian warrior identity. To offer perspective by incongruity, I also briefly analyze two paradoxes of Nixonian warriors—the Vietnam Veterans Against War and the perpetrators of the My Lai massacre—or those who should be warriors but whose behaviors do or should disqualify them from this identity. I conclude by considering these warrior groups in juxtaposition to demonstrate the rhetorical potency of the president as tastemaker and the rhetorical maintenance of dominant mainstream masculinity through deeply American tropes.

Civic Republicanism

In Chapter 1, I defined "civic republicanism" as a political ideology committed to cool reason, public deliberation, and anti-factionalism, as a means to attain the greater good of society.[8] John Murphy notes that "[civic] republicanism is a conservative approach to politics," for the civic republican disdains passion and special interests, and freed of these burdens, can wield "virtuous power," becoming the virtuous, intelligent man who assumes power and rationally governs the passion-ruled masses. [9] Sunstein and Hariman and Lucaites note that the civic republican man is even more virtuous if he has a military background. Derrick Bell and Preeta Bansal offer a counterpoint, arguing persuasively that civic republicanism is fundamentally racist and sexist; it is a very white, very masculine understanding of how humans should operate politically.[10] Those truly committed Americans are objective and coolly reasoning, both traits coded "male" in the United States.[11] Civic republicanism reinforces *doxa* of who deserves to participate and to be rewarded for their participation in American public life.

The long tradition of civic republican, dating back ancient Greece, has not

remained static over the centuries; it has evolved and shifted over time, especially within the United States. Gary Gerstle provides a thorough history of "civic nationalism," charting the presence and development of this narrative in the United States from Theodore Roosevelt to George W. Bush.[12] Gerstle's argument exposes the deep ties between civic republicanism and racism throughout the last century of American history. Theodore Roosevelt, steeped in the ideology of "racial purity," advocated many exclusionary measures against Black Americans, Asian immigrants, and indigenous Americans, and later presidents drew on these same resources of "exclusion" through anti-communist rhetoric.[13] Gerstle posits that the major rupture of civic nationalism occurred when the Black civil rights movement shifted towards Black nationalism in the early 1970s. He explains, "Black power was a political ideology calling on African Americans to free their communities and consciousness from white control."[14] Such a "freeing" would have been a frightening violation of *doxa* to mainstream white men in the United States; whiteness and civic republicanism are so closely knit that a rejection of whiteness meant a rejection of America's structure of government and society. This new way of thinking was especially alluring to young people on college campuses as campuses roiled with anti-war and social reform protests. It is no wonder then that Richard Nixon, a veteran civic republican, would sharply define the boundaries of the "true" American warrior through his presidential rhetoric.

Nixon's political life demonstrated his deep commitments to civic republicanism. Despite his upbringing and against his family's wishes, Nixon chose to serve in World War II, choosing to serve the greater good over Quaker pacifism—something he brought up quite a lot in his published works and in many of speeches and interviews. He further

attempted to serve the greater good of America by dedicating more than half his life to public service. While serving the greater good, Nixon held deep commitments to "coolness" (even though he was not very good at it). His first published work, *Six Crises*, recounted with regret moments where overwork allowed his "coolness" to slip and passion to rule.[15] And as his memoir, *RN*, shows, Nixon had little tolerance for those who disrupted the *status quo*, like protestors, and for Democrats who he believed valued factionalism over the good of the United States. The civic republican reason/passion dichotomy was vital to Nixon's bestowing or withholding the coveted title of "warrior," using the dichotomy to assess the essential legitimacy and worth of different fighter groups. Not coincidentally, relative worth fell along ageist, sexist, and racist lines, which served to preserve hegemonic structures of gendered power in the 1970s United States.

The inherent conservativism of civic republicanism fostered this preservation. Civic republicanism tradition holds that systemic change can legitimately come only from within the system.[16] As Guy Debord argues of "the spectacle," the primary imperative of hegemonic structures is self-perpetuation. If we understand civic republicanism as a tool of the State's hegemony and of hegemonic structures of gender, it becomes clear that the "greater good" must always include "the preservation of existing structures," which is antithetical to major social change. Thus, the ultimate conservatism of large structures slows or resists change, making it nearly impossible for "the master's tools" to "dismantle the master's house."[17] There are distinct limits to how much a marginalized group can accomplish when their goals conflict with the preservation of the hegemonic structures of the state or society. This conservatism reflects Jasinski's claim that, in a post-Revolution United States, there is no room for revolutionaries.[18]

Nixon's differing rhetoric on Vietnam veterans and on the Black and student movements relies on the conservativism of civic republicanism to conclude that some fighters are warriors and others are un-American. In the process of defining the warrior, Nixon became a warrior himself, fighting to preserve existing structures that affirmed the dominance of mainstream American males. Staying firmly within the civic republican framework gave Nixon room to deny allegations of ageism, sexism, and racism; the conservativism of civic republicanism cloaks the *status quo* in "rightness" and "patriotism."

The Vietnam War: Who Was Fighting?

The war in Vietnam spanned two decades, from 1955-1975, beginning with France's attempt to recolonize "Indochina" and ending with the reunification of the country under communist rule. The United States officially had troops in Vietnam from 1965 to 1973 but was involved in Vietnam for almost the duration of the conflict, as President Kennedy sent the first "advisory" troops to Vietnam in 1962. During the United States's involvement in the war, there were an estimated 58,220 American deaths and over 1.3 million Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Laotian deaths (including civilians).[19] All but eight of the American deaths were male, for of course women were not permitted to fight in combat roles until around 2001.[20] Of the deaths, 59% were regular servicemen (those who voluntarily joined the service) and about 30.5% were draftees. Almost 66% of the American deaths were Army and another 25.5% were Marines, with around 4.4% each for the Air Force and Navy. White American servicemen accounted for 88.4% of those who served and 86.3% of deaths, and Black American men made up 10.6% of

servicemen and 12.5% of deaths. The vast majority of servicemen identified as some sort of Protestant.

The Vietnam War was never overwhelmingly popular among the American public, and the longer the war continued, the less popular American involvement became. The largest protest against the Vietnam War was the October 1967 march on Washington, which gathered over 100,000 protestors together. Many other protests occurred in smaller numbers around the country throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s. Fueled by a deep resentment of the draft and in some cases persuaded by the rhetoric of communist leaders like Ché and Mao, American youths especially opposed the war. Many veterans received a less-than-warm, even hostile, welcome upon their return home, and in concord with his civic republican virtue, Nixon condemned the members of the public who did not give adequate respect to America's true warriors.

True Warriors

Nixon's personal and political commitments to civic republicanism offered him a clear, narrow, and official means to limit the scope of "warrior" masculinity.[21] A shining example of true Nixonian warriors was Vietnam veterans. The ideal American warrior had to be male for two primary reasons. First, soldiers represented a pinnacle of American public service, and men accounted for 99.91% of Americans who served in Vietnam, so in the Vietnam era, "solider" meant "male." In Dinah Zeiger's words, American culture "link[s] soldiers and blood sacrifice with male bodies…."[22] Second, as I discussed in Chapter 2, Nixon's presidential rhetoric often reflected *doxastic* gender roles: men go to work (and war), and women keep the home. Evidence of this attitude

dates back at least to the 1959 "Kitchen Debate," whereby Nixon used the domesticated position of American women to articulate the superiority of democratic capitalism. His Vietnam rhetoric similarly treated the exclusive maleness—and as I will argue, whiteness—of American warriors as natural and obvious. Qualities in addition to obligatory maleness characterize a Nixonian warrior: (1) his disregard for his physical well-being and his willingness to endanger himself for others, (2) his loyal service (he did not "hide" on college campuses or flee abroad), and (3) his besieged domestic role or position. After presenting evidence for these three qualities, I briefly discuss how Nixon used the glory of war, the always-faithful service, and the battle for support on the home-front to justify "legal exceptions" for warriors, which set the boundaries for what warriors deserve such exceptions. [23]

The Glory of Bloodshed

Militarism and military service have long been one part of American national identity, as much as they have been a part of masculine performance. Not only does military service constitute a plank in the civic republican ideological platform, but also, as I demonstrated in Chapter 2, the American frontier narrative fundamentally relied on masculinity and masculinity fundamentally relied on the frontier narrative. Sociologist Michael Kimmel explains that "The celebration of the military spirit was more than an attempt to redraw the boundaries of the frontier—it was an attempt to re-created the experience of the frontier."[24] While some American men, like the Apollo 13 astronauts, pursued the final frontier, others could exercise their frontier spirit—and thus perform

their masculine identities—through military service. War is a theatre in which men can prove both their masculinity and patriotism.[25]

Ties between masculinity, militarism, and national identity in the United States can be traced back to the revolutionary years. Sarah Purcell notes that what she calls "martial memory" is a vital part of American public memory and identity. In her words, "The anniversary celebrations of the Battle of Lexington [during the revolutionary years] show how memory and patriotism could make a potent combination. …commemorating New England's wounds ennobled their local community at the same time that it justified the rest of the war and connected them to the people who endured it."[26] Here, Purcell refers specifically to how celebrations of American bloodshed valorized both the war and the ideological justifications on which it relied. This theme is not unique to the American Revolution. Indeed, honoring the injured and the fallen solider was an essential element in Nixon's rhetoric in praise of Vietnam veterans. The soldiers receiving commendation became symbols of the ideal American and the ideal man.

The American Presidency Project's Richard Nixon archive shows that Nixon presented Congressional Medals of Honor on six occasions to 32 Vietnam veterans. Of the 32 recipients, 29 were white, one was Latino, and two were Black. Of the 32 recipients, 20 were Army, four were Navy/Naval Reserve, four were Marines, three were Air Force, and one was Army Medical.[27] According to the Army's Code of Federal Regulations, to earn a Congressional Medal of Honor: "The deed performed must have been one of personal bravery or self-sacrifice so conspicuous as to clearly distinguish the individual above his comrades and must have involved risk of life. Incontestable proof of the performance of the service will be exacted and each recommendation for the award of

this decoration will be considered on the standard of extraordinary merit."[28] Regardless of any personal prejudices, Nixon presented the Medal to distinguished servicemen from different races and branches of service, expanding the boundaries of "true American" beyond white males. Non-white men could become ideal Americans by serving the American cause in Vietnam with bravery; their military service outweighed their non-whiteness.[29] It was through a blood sacrifice that servicemen earned their status as "warriors."

Critical studies of men and masculinities (CSOMM) literature recounts at length that American society usually associates a high tolerance for physical pain with manliness (and acquiescing to pain as unmanly/feminine). For example, Mike Messner and Don Sabo's edited volume, *Sex, Violence, and Power in Sports: Rethinking Masculinity*, discusses the negative effects on men's health that result from behaviors aimed at protecting an image of manliness. They and their authors argue that men engage in pursuits that likely result in injury (namely war and sports), and men's urge to protect their manliness prevents them from acknowledging pain and from therefore ceasing the activity that is causing the pain, often leading to more lasting or more intense injuries.[30] The ties between this "fight through the pain" attitude, militarism, and masculinity are inextricable and are obvious in the very language of the Medals of Honor. The glory of blood sacrifice is sewn into the very fabric of the now-155-year-old award ("must have involved risk of life"). Though "risk of life" does not mean "mandatory injury," 20 of the 32 men who received the Medal of Honor suffered injury (Pfc. Newlin died, but only after fighting through three separate attempts to kill him), and all 32 speeches included phrases like "with utter disregard for his personal safety."

The texts of each of the Medals begin, after the serviceman's name and rank, "for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty," followed by a brief but detailed explanation of the actions that earned the serviceman the Medal. The Medal description for each recipient is like a hand-held action movie. Specialist Five Clarence Sasser's Medal provides an excellent example for analysis:

> Specialist Five Clarence E. Sasser (then Private First Class) distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity on 10 January 1968 while assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3d Battalion, 60th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division in the Republic of Vietnam. On this date he was serving as a medical aidman with Company A, 3d Battalion, on a reconnaissance in force operation in Ding Tuong Province. His company was making an air assault when suddenly it was taken under heavy small arms, recoilless rifle, machine gun and rocket fire from well fortified [*sic*] enemy positions on three sides of the landing zone. During the first few minutes, over thirty casualties were sustained. Without hesitation, Specialist Sasser ran across an open rice paddy through a hail of fire to assist the wounded. After helping one man to safety, he was painfully wounded in the left shoulder by fragments of an exploding rocket. Refusing medical attention, he ran through a barrage of rocket and automatic weapons fire to aid casualties of the initial attack and, after giving them urgently needed treatment, continued to search for other wounded. Despite two additional wounds immobilizing his legs, he dragged himself through the mud toward another soldier one hundred meters away. Although in agonizing pain and faint from loss of blood, Specialist Sasser reached the man, treated him, and proceeded on to encourage another group of soldiers to crawl two hundred meters to relative safety. There he attended their wounds for five hours until they were evacuated. Specialist Sasser's conspicuous gallantry, extraordinary heroism and intrepidity at the risk of his own life, above and beyond the call of duty, are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army.[31]

SPC Sasser demonstrated his worthiness for this Medal—and by extension for the Nixonian "warrior" distinction—through blood sacrifice or a willingness to shed blood for company and country. In the face of fire, SPC Sasser did not run. Not only did he stand his ground, he also ran "through a hail of fire" to help rescue his fellow servicemen. Enemy fire hit SPC Sasser, not once, but three times, and still he refused to stop treating his wounded fellows for an additional five hours. The story told by SPC Sassser's Medal text harkens American national memory of Teddy Roosevelt, now considered the epitome of American manliness not least because of his refusal to end a stump speech after being shot.[32] Duty and country come before self.

This "utter disregard for personal safety" might seem in direct contrast to civic republicanism's call for "cool reason," and therefore abhorrent to Richard Nixon, but it was not. Explaining this requires that one understand the decision for America to fight in Vietnam as the exercise of cool reason. This not only excuses but in fact mandates that men be ruled by the heroic passions of bravery and loyalty once boots hit the ground, so long as those passions operate for the greater good.[33] For example, Navy hospital corpsman Donald Ballard, like SPC Sasser, put the greater good before self, demonstrating a willingness to make a blood sacrifice for the United States.

When an enemy grenade landed amongst his platoon, HM Ballard "fearlessly threw himself upon the lethal explosive device to protect his comrades from the deadly blast. When the grenade failed to detonate, he calmly arose from his dangerous position and resolutely continued his determined efforts in treating other Marine casualties."[34] Consider the word choices in this passage. Jumping on a grenade and dying for your fellows is about the most passionate thing a person can do, yet the text balances the

passion of the act with words indicating reasoned and "for the greater good" motivations behind the actions. HM Ballard "calmly arose" and "resolutely continued his determined efforts." Once it became clear that his passionate act for the greater good was unnecessary, HM Ballard immediately returned to coolness and calmness.

The Congressional Medal of Honor recipients, like SPC Sasser and HM Ballard, symbolize how the upper echelons of United States government reward civic republican virtues. The Medal texts praise the men and their deeds, and Nixon's own words, delivered before and after the Medal text recitation, equally reward "true" warriors.[35] During any Medal ceremony, the President speaks to the recipients and the gathered audience before and after the Secretary of the Army or Navy reads the Medal texts. Nixon used each of the 12 Medal ceremonies to articulate his vision of a civic republican United States, guarded by truly American warriors.

Blood sacrifice for the greater good vouched for these servicemen as Nixonian warriors. Echoing Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address," Nixon expressed that "We really cannot honor these men, but they have honored America," hailing their "magnificence" for having "risked their lives."[36] His words express humility in the knowledge that the sacrifices of these servicemen go far beyond the abilities of human praise. In another Medal presentation, he explained how, "Like gold, [heroism] is uncovered. Danger does not make heroes; it finds them."[37] In this passage, Nixon explained heroism as innate, not learned; a person not prepossessed of heroic qualities could not become heroes. Indeed, this also reinforces that the warrior spirit is an inborn quality of true Americans; it is a circular argument that warriors are warriors because they are warriors. Nixon later made a stark comparison between the bravery it took for Armstrong and Aldrin to step onto the

Moon and the bravery of the Medal of Honor recipients who "did not go to the moon [*sic*]. They went to Vietnam … and they have served with uncommon courage and uncommon valor."[38] Vietnam veterans exercise the highly masculine pursuit of the frontier both in space and in the jungles of Southeast Asia.

Valor, honor, heroism, and bravery: these are all highly masculinized words in American English. By using these words to describe and to praise particularly venerable Vietnam veterans, Nixon simultaneously reinforced the *doxa* of gender roles and the *doxa* of blood sacrifice that codes these behaviors as both "male" and "warrior." Or in Nixon's words, "So long as our Nation produces men of such great character, it can truly be said the God has blessed America."[39] The warrior evidences God's divine favor on the United States.

Semper Fidelis

In addition to praising bravery and blood sacrifice as qualities of the "warrior," Nixon also subtly noted the contrasts of his warriors with those who, in his view, falsely lay claim to that title. Veterans, the true warriors, possess a quality that false warriors do not: loyalty. Nixon's commitment to civic republicanism necessitated a particular meaning of loyalty: the loyal American man defends the "greater good" by fighting factionalism and passion with cool reason. When loyalty is a tool of civic republicanism, only the protection of the *status quo* could be considered the loyal pursuit of a true warrior. Nixon's rhetoric of warrior loyalty must also be understood demographically; except for top brass and older officers, Vietnam vets' ages averaged 22 years old. That

meant that student protestors, counterculture youths, and most Vietnam veterans (especially draftees) were demographically identical in age.

This similarity of age provided Nixon with an ideal opportunity for contrast, as one group conformed to his civic republican understanding of "loyalty" and the other did not. In one Medal of Honor ceremony, for example, Nixon stated of the honorees:

> They [the Medal recipients] share several things in common: They are men who risked their lives for their fellow man. They are men who faced death and instead of losing their courage they gave courage to the men around them. And, finally, they are young men. The oldest man is 30; Sgt. Hooper is 30, Sgt. Zabitosky is 26, and Spc. Sasser is 21. That leads me to give you a conclusion that I reached after studying all of the Congressional Medal of Honor winners in this war. Their average age is 27, which brings home a thought that we must always remember: When we think of America's younger generation, we sometimes have a tendency to emphasize what is wrong with them, and sometimes young people do get into trouble; sometimes they do not follow the patterns that older people think they ought to follow. But in the magnificent records of these three young men, they have demonstrated to us that we can be very proud of our younger generation. They are magnificent men, magnificent in their idealism. Idealism is often shown by words, but they have demonstrated their idealism by their deeds. And because they have made us proud of being Americans and also reminded us that we should be proud of our younger generation, the youth of America, I am honored to be here with them.[40]

In this passage, Nixon established these warriors as metonyms of loyal American youth. The section beginning with "When we think of America's younger generations" includes many subtle contrasts. The general "youth" and those implied to be agitators by the phrase "do not follow the patterns that older people think they ought to follow" are idealistic only in words; the warrior is idealistic in action. American warriors demonstrate their loyalty and love of country by serving the United States's cause in Vietnam.

Similar evidence of youthful loyalty/disloyalty exists in Nixon's "Remarks at the Presentation of the Young American Medals for Bravery and Service" on 17 June 1969 and 3 December 1970.[41] These teenaged Medal recipients demonstrate the bravery it took, in Nixon's understanding, to be loyal to American values. Nixon declared, "We hear too much these days about the very small minority of young Americans who have lost faith in their country. We hear too little about the great majority of young Americans…who display courage in their daily lives…."[42] The phrasing, as Karlyn Kohrs Campbell notes of the "Silent Majority" speech, is "a version in miniature of the constitutive rhetoric described by Maurice Charland in Quebec and Nathaniel Cordova in Puerto Rico."[43] Nixon rhetorically constituted a demographic ratio for his audience, where more loyal young Americans far outnumbered agitators. Whether this demographic reflected reality was irrelevant; its rhetorical power lay in the ability to affirm an identity for Nixon's listeners. These loyal young people became metonyms not only for American youth but also for ideal American citizens.

Nixon reinforced this constitutive rhetoric with *doxa*; appealing to the common sense knowledge of his listener allowed Nixon to protect the *status quo*. At the presentation of the Medal of Honor posthumously to Private Newlin, after the Secretary of the Navy read PFC. Newlin's Medal citation, Nixon turned to the Newlin family and said,

> Mrs. Newlin, there is very little I can add to that citation, but we do want you to know- that the people of this country are grateful for the sacrifice of your son. They are also aware of the fact that this kind of remarkable courage never occurs by accident. Only if a young man had a fine family, mother and father, would he have acted as he did. Therefore we present this for him. But we also present it to you because you, his mother and

> father, contributed so much to this fine young man in the background that you provided for him.[44]

Certainly these are words of comfort to a grieving family, but they also tell a story of the ideal citizen: warriors are the pinnacle of American masculinity, and heterosexual, married, two-parent families can produce warriors, a theme echoed in a later Medal ceremony.[45] Loyal Americans follow the *doxastic* pattern of domesticity that not only produces warriors but that also produces families loyal and brave enough to "sacrifice [their] son." In calling forth this picture, Nixon also performed a symbolic erasure of groups that do not fit within this frame, such as American parents who might not want their son to serve. He reversed the ratio just as he did when counting loyal youth versus agitators. Especially through his use of "we"—where the President very literally becomes the mouthpiece of his people—Nixon idealized families possessed of civic republican virtue.

We see an amplified version of such symbolic erasures and the constituting of ideal citizens in "Proclamation 3975 – Loyalty Day."[46] The first version of this observance occurred in 1921 as "Americanization Day," when Americans gathered during first Red Scare.[47] The official presidential declaration of Loyalty Day came from Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1955, and he made it an annual observation in 1958.[48] Since 1958, every sitting president has issued his own, annual Loyalty Day proclamation.[49] The two decades of presidential Loyalty Day proclamations are rhetorical antecedents to Nixon's proclamations. They share generic qualities, though each responds to particular exigencies facing the president and the United States at the time.[50]

Nixon's six Loyalty Day proclamations (1969-1974) followed this pattern. All six shared the same urge towards remaining deeply loyal to the United States, and all drew

on American god terms like “founding fathers,” “Constitution,” “inalienable rights,” and so forth. Additionally, each Proclamation addressed a specific exigence of the time, such as the continuing conflict in Vietnam (1970), the withdrawal from Vietnam (1973), and attempting subtly to control the chaos of Watergate (1974). The 1970 Proclamation is of particular interest, given its issuance on the same day that Nixon issued “Executive Order 11521—Authorizing Veterans Readjustment Appointments for Veterans of the Vietnam Era,” (26 March 1970). One can infer from the date and the content of the proclamation that Nixon had Vietnam on his mind when he proclaimed Loyalty Day 1970.[51]

Nixon used a rhetoric of “law and order” within the Proclamation, which demonstrated his civic republicanism and the attendant limitations this ideology places on “warriors.” The first two paragraphs of Proclamation 3975 read:

> The full meaning of ordinary words is often discovered only when we know their origin. The word “loyal” has its origins in the Latin word for “legal.” Ultimately, to be loyal means not only to be faithful to a person or a cause or a nation, but to be lawful as well.
>
> We demonstrate loyalty to our nation, then, not only when we show our love for its ideals, but when we also show respect for its laws. Without those laws, our ideals cannot be reached; without those ideals, our laws are mechanical and lifeless. True loyalty to our country means working together toward justice under the law.[52]

By this Proclamation, Nixon reaffirmed this holiday while simultaneously limiting it to those who meet his definition of loyalty. He used implicit contrast to warrant the exclusion from the “warrior” category those who fight in the “wrong” ways. Including the title, “loyal” or “loyalty” appears five times in six sentences and “law” or “legal” appears as many times in as many sentences. Nixon placed equal emphasis on loyalty and abiding by the law. This zealousness is reminiscent of Lincoln’s “Lyceum Address,”

where, early in his political career, Lincoln emphasized that the only correct, American way to affect change was through legal means and not through extralegislative activities.[53]

The Battle on Two Fronts

In his discourse that praises warriors who risk physical injury to put others before self and who loyally served, Nixon also emphasized the warrior's role as "besieged" by the enemy abroad and by domestic public opinion. I have already given evidence of the ways in which Vietnam veterans suffered attack by enemy forces in the jungles, but this was not the only front on which Vietnam veterans ended up fighting. In his "Remarks to American Troops in the 1st Infantry Division in Vietnam," Nixon acknowledged that the soldier's already difficult role is made much more difficult, and more admirable, when widespread misunderstanding about the war causes people to protest the war and those fighting it.[54] "No group of American fighting men," Nixon asserted in a later "Statement About the Vietnam Veteran," "was ever called on to demonstrate their bravery, their endurance, or their love of country under more trying circumstances than those gallant Americans who served in Vietnam."[55] We see all three elements of the Nixonian warrior here: brave, loyal, and up against an intense lack of support at home.

Always trying to reframe that lack of support as the nefarious work of the "vocal minority," Nixon offered this encouragement at his "Remarks at Ceremonies Commemorating Vietnam Veterans Day":

> Those who served may be discouraged because it seems sometimes that more attention is directed to those who deserted America than those who chose to serve America. They may be discouraged because they read and hear that America becoming involved in Vietnam was wrong, that

> America's conduct in Vietnam was wrong, that the way we ended the war was wrong.
> I would say to all of those who served and to all of my fellow Americans that not only was it not wrong but I think it is well for us to put in perspective on this day why we went there, what we accomplished, and what would have happened had these men not served their country as bravely and as courageously as they did in these difficult times.[56]

In this passage, Nixon demonstrated his own "warrior" qualities by standing up for veterans and shielding them from becoming victims of public opinion. Note how Nixon only acknowledged the presence of dissent in the abstract: he characterized anti-Vietnam sentiments as the villainous antonym to an amalgam of presidential leadership, apparent majority support, and the well-deserved "rewards" Nixon intended to bestow on veterans.

Nixon's Vietnam rhetoric also features an element of public shaming, which serves to silence his political opponents. In a statement during a Medal of Honor presentation, when Nixon admonished, "We should all be reminded that it could not be the land of the free if it were not also the home of the brave."[57] Nixon echoed this sentiment in the famous "Silent Majority" speech, stating, "Let us provide these men with the veterans benefits and the job opportunities they have earned. Let us honor them with the respect they deserve. And I say again tonight, let us not dishonor those who served their country by granting amnesty to those who deserted America."[58] These passages shame those who do not support America's warriors; these people want to reap the benefits of warrior sacrifice without giving warriors their due respect or doing the right thing themselves. Nixon's rhetoric suggested that heroism denigrated was a true tragedy, and that the warriors of the Vietnam era deserved more than just respect.

What the Warrior Deserves

A vital tenet of civic republicanism is "anti-factionalism" or "resisting special interests." In Sunstein's defense of civic republicanism, he explains how surrendering to special interests might seem to help that specific group but ultimately damages the greater good.[59] So how could a committed civic republican like Richard Nixon justify creating massive, government-sponsored veterans benefits programs?[60]

Framing Vietnam veterans benefits programs as both "the right thing to do" and a means for "making amends," Nixon defended something normally prohibited by civic republicanism. In his many statements announcing, explaining, and signing into law his veterans programs, Nixon used phrases that implicated a debt that the public and the government owed veterans. For example, one "Statement" announced, "We owe these men a debt of gratitude for their service—but we also owe them something more. We owe them an extra measure of help in making the difficult transition back to civilian life."[61] Nixon here balanced "extra help" with "transition back to civilian life," reminding the listener that it was only the veteran's status as warrior warranted "extra" assistance. The most obvious example of a accommodating the warrior status even in apparent violation of anti-factionalism is Proclamation 4188. In this Proclamation, Nixon suspended the tradition (after obtaining permission from Ladybird Johnson) of leaving the flag half-staff for 30 days after the death of a president so that the flag could fly full-staff to celebrate the return of American POWs. What these men went through to obtain their Nixonian "warrior" status overrode any suggestion of factionalism or favoritism. Simply, they had earned it.

Apparent violations of anti-factionalism were restitutive; however, Nixon further articulated that these programs indeed worked for the greater good. In his "Statement on Benefits for Vietnam Veterans," he stated, "Veterans benefit programs have therefore become more than a recognition for services performed in the past; they have become an investment in the future of the veteran and of his country."[62] He then clarified that veterans benefits programs would specifically be an investment in the American economy, providing a skilled, loyal, dedicated workforce, ultimately boosting prosperity. Two years later, Nixon wrote to the Secretary of Labor, advocating for the executive order's continued life. He wrote, "As you know, I am greatly concerned at any denial of civilian job opportunities to these young men who have borne the burden of fighting."[63] In this statement, Nixon used an active, negative word ("denial") as a foil for positive words ("young" and "borne the burden"), and he later called the program a "vital national effort," driving home the program's status as "for the greater good."

Like the creation of the EPA, Nixon's Vietnam veterans programs rhetoric is an example of how Nixon did sometimes ultimately align with the demands of special interests if they seemed to benefit "the greater good" and of how he would support some changes to the *status quo*—as long as he was the hero who fought for these changes.[64] And although Nixon's Vietnam veterans benefits programs undoubtedly provided important assistance to individual veterans, much of Nixon's rhetoric about veterans merely cast them as one part of the international drama of Vietnam, where American "honor" hung in the balance.

A Different Kind of "Personal is Political"

Similar to his rhetorical response to the Apollo 13 astronauts, Nixon's praise of Vietnam veterans used the personal to affirm an abstract point or ideal. His rhetoric enacts and enunciates ideals of masculinity and American citizenship. In Chapter 2, I explained how Nixon's Apollo 13 rhetoric lauded Jim Lovell, Fred Haise, and Jack Swigert as individual American heroes, but much more important was the ideal they represented—the perfect face American frontiersmen. This was also the case in Nixon's wide rhetorical corpus on Vietnam veterans.

Nixonian warriors needed to be "heroes," for there is something invaluable in having the hero on your side or having the hero look like you.[65] Rhetorical theorists like Kenneth Burke and Chaïm Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca offered "identification" as an essential element to persuasion. Burkean identification is the means by which rhetors attempt to overcome innate divisions between individual humans.[66] In Burke's words, "In being identified with B, A is 'substantially one' with a person other than himself [*sic*]. …To identify A with B is to make A 'consubstantial' with B."[67] When one sees oneself in another, the two become symbolically one. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca called Burkean identification "connections and rejections of connections," similarly suggesting that drawing commonalities can overcome human separateness.[68]

In the midst of a highly unpopular war (and the longest war the United States had at that time ever been engaged in), splitting the country into "good" and "bad" allowed Nixon both to simplify a complex problem and to cement the in-groups and out-groups of the "warrior male" identity. Nixon often used the term "hero" to describe Vietnam veterans, contrasting their heroism with phrases like "this has been described as a war

without heroes."[69] In such moments, Nixon called out the public's cynicism and then offered up the heroic, government-associated warrior to evidence the human and ideological toll of their lack of faith. People (usually) want to identify with the hero, something Nixon counted on when constituting his "great silent majority of Americans."

Jeanne Fahnestock and Marie Secor's *A Rhetoric of Argument,* like many treatises on argumentation and rhetoric, undertakes an explanation of audience analysis, wherein they claim that a rhetor must "tell the audience about itself."[70] Fahnestock and Secor's advice on audiences is similar to Charland's claims of the *peuple québécois*: speakers can engage in constitutive rhetoric; the rhetoric creates the audience it presumes.[71] Nixon joined a long tradition of Americans who constitute their audience through the praise of warriors and of blood sacrifice, of "the central icons of martyrs, heroes, and battles" that trace back at least to the American Revolution.[72] Nixon used constitutive rhetoric to call forth an audience ready to identify with his "warrior male."

Nixon often made an analogy between veterans and the United States as a whole beyond the "Silent Majority" speech. In the "Remarks on Signing a Proclamation Honoring Vietnam Veterans," for example, Nixon explained that the servicemen's steadfastness on the battlefield represented America's steadfastness in the global war against communism. The American government and its agenda therefore benefit from the heroic glow of warriors, but the government is not the sole beneficiary. People who support the warriors—those in the "great silent majority of Americans" who identify with the heroic warrior—form the in-group, and those outside of this glow by contrast become wretched and un-American. For example, near the end of the "Silent Majority" speech, Nixon blatantly declared: "The pages of history are strewn with the wreckage of nations

which fell by the wayside at the height of their strength and wealth because their people became weak, soft, and self-indulgent and lost the character and the spirit which had led to their greatness."[73] This passage shows the connection between civic republicanism, the Nixonian "warrior" accolade, and masculinity, as well as demonstrates the need for identification. Though speaking about "the pages of history," Nixon invited his audience to see the current path of the United States in his denunciation of "weak, soft, and self-indulgent" citizens and invited a sort of anti-identification, as Campbell notes, to avoid these devil terms.[74] Nixon's Silent Majority supported the war and the warrior, which reinforced the dominance of the *status quo*.

Both the people and the president benefitted from this presidential license to withhold the "warrior" title from those who were unlike them, those who did not or could not meet Nixon's warrior standards. Sarah Purcell explains of the War of Independence:

> The ideal heroes relied on the public to make their sacrifices meaningful, and the connections between people became defined by reference to a common cultural ideal. Commemorations elicited an audience response that enhanced patriotism itself. The wartime memory of martyrs and heroes…was supposed to serve to inspire others to continue the fight, thereby materially contributing to the success of the nation.[75]

Although her point was about the American Revolution, many similarities exist between it and the war in Vietnam. Like those original patriot rhetors, Nixon offered the warrior, in the form of the decorated Vietnam veteran, as the "common cultural ideal" that Americans could venerate, which by extension could increase support for America's continued involvement in Vietnam and for Nixon's presidential policies.

False Warriors

Nixon used the bravery of proper warriors to establish a warrant for his Vietnam Veterans benefits programs. Recall the above passage where Nixon explained that "No group of American fighting men was ever called on to demonstrate their bravery, their endurance, or their love of country under more trying circumstances than those gallant Americans who served in Vietnam."[76] No clearer statement exists of Nixon's opinion on the American warrior male. But that does not mean no one else was fighting.

Vietnam was not the only conflict the United States faced during Nixon's presidency. Other heated and dangerous conflicts were the continuing Civil Rights Movement and the increasing number of youth and student protests.[77] The Nixon years saw many major steps forward for Civil Rights for African Americans. While Nixon was campaigning in 1968, Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act into law, and the 1971 Supreme Court case, *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, was an important step in upholding the legality of integration. Nixon himself played a part in increasing equality for Black Americans via legal means, in addition to integration, including pushing for equal employment opportunities for construction workers.

There was progress, but it was slow, and it left a legacy of violence and discrimination that the United States still grapples with—perhaps now more than ever, as law enforcement officers murder more and more Black Americans and go unprosecuted. During Nixon's presidency, Jim Crow laws still ruled the South, and the government (including the FBI) often abetted atrocities and turned a blind eye to daily discrimination all over the country. The same year that the Black community gained the Civil Rights Act, it lost Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King to assassination, just one of many Black

Americans killed in the war for equality. Frustrated by the lack of progress and continued mistreatment and murder as the movement entered its third decade, the non-violent style of Dr. King gave way to the more militant Black Power movement. This movement, as well as membership in the Black Panther party, reached a zenith during the Nixon years; indeed, Nixon won his first presidential term the same year as the famous Olympic black glove protest by John Carlos and Tommie Smith. As Rev. Dr. King said, "We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. ...This 'Wait' [*sic*] has almost always meant 'Never.' [*sic*] ...We have waited for more than 340 years for our constitutional and God given rights."[78] Why peacefully work with a system that continues to oppress you when the system can be replaced instead? It is easy to "wait" when your demographic is not the one dying.

Student protestors asked the same questions. The "rebelliousness" of young people in the late 1960s and early 1970s United States is well known, with increasing drug use, decreasing sexual inhibitions, and the abandonment of "traditional values."[79] Additionally, American participation in Vietnam fueled an increasing body of communist sympathy among American youth in the early 1970s, and movements like women's liberation (now the feminist movement) and gay liberation (now the LGBTQ+ movement) made room for youths to ask new questions and advocate new beliefs. Many American youths replaced idols like Wally Cleaver and the Beeve with people like Jim Morrison, casting off traditions in favor of a more modern, freer life. For the president, a growing number of citizens refusing to abide tradition could pose a sizeable problem, and

the warrior distinction was an effective means by which to control the surge of this changing cultural tide.

American servicemen in Vietnam were not the only Americans fighting during the Nixon years, but Nixon's rhetoric withheld the "warrior" accolade from two, major fighting groups during his presidency. In what follows, I share two case studies that demonstrate well the interaction of Nixon's civic republicanism and his withholding of the "warrior male" title: Black Americans, for Nixon, disqualified themselves through "factionalism" and youth/college protestors disqualified themselves by being ruled by passion instead of reason. Note that I analyze only Nixon rhetoric in these sections; I provide no primary sources from Black or student protestors, though I sometimes draw from non-presidential but hegemonic texts, like the *Report of the U.S. President's Commission on Campus Unrest* (1970).

Factionalism and the Disqualification of Black "Warriors"

Richard Nixon was not indiscriminately racist like George Wallace and Americans like him. Nixon respected and liked many Black Americans; he was, as Khan notes, on very friendly terms with fellow Republican Jackie Robinson, and during his 1960 presidential campaign, Nixon spoke out in support of civil rights legislation.[80] No, Nixon was not the kind to use the n-word, to support lynching, and to think "separate but equal" was a system that actually worked. His racism was much subtler and left a substantial legal legacy. The means by which Nixon barred African Americans from the "warrior" distinction reinforced the *status quo* that civic republicanism so often protects.

By the 1970s, the Civil Rights Movement was in a new phase, so Nixon's rhetoric on civil rights looked very different from Kennedy's or Johnson's. Campbell, among other rhetoricians and historians, notes that Nixon changed the face of the Republican party by (to use Campbell's phrase) "wooing…those who had voted for George Wallace."[81] Nixon's famed "Southern Strategy" used a much more subtle racism than many of his predecessors.[82] Nixon's raced rhetoric, therefore, often focused on the qualities of "some Americans," usually code for Black Americans. As long as Black Americans protested and fought for their civil rights, they were factionalist, by Nixon's standards, and not acting towards the greater good.

In his presidential rhetoric, Nixon often expressed a frustration with and distrust of Black Americans' using extra-legislative means—like Black Panther activity, boycotts, and protests—to push towards Black rights. Indeed, ample archival evidence exists proving that those Nixon did not trust would be investigated by the federal government. During my time in the Nixon Presidential Library archives, I found many records of the surveillance of Black Americans conducted on Nixon's behalf of civil rights leaders and members of the Black Panthers, like memos investigating "inappropriate ties" between Black elected officials and known Black Panthers.[83] This massive amount of confidential surveillance was all behind-the-scenes though. In public, Nixon tended to ignore violent or otherwise inappropriate protestors, except to denounce them in abstract.[84] By using agitation and sometimes violence to improve life for African Americans, Black protestors disregarded the "greater good" of the United States, which Nixon asserted meant only minor, incremental change for a small minority of the public.

Law and Order: It's a Black-and-White Issue.

Much of Nixon's public, racialized rhetoric revolved around "law and order," meant to separate law-abiding Americans from lawless ones—also a demonstration of his commitment to civic republicanism. To position himself as an authority on race issues, the president had to establish his "neutrality," which he often did by calling out the North's racial hypocrisy. For example, speaking in Birmingham, Alabama, Nixon declared, "I have nothing but utter contempt for the double hypocritical standard of Northerners who look at the South and point the finger and say, 'Why don't those Southerners do something about their race problem?'" when the North, at least according to Nixon, has statistically greater regional segregation than the South.[85] He repeated this denunciation in a later speech in Rochester, New York.[86] In that same New York speech, Nixon also asserted the racelessness of the drug epidemic in the United States; drug addiction was no longer a "ghetto problem" or a "nonwhite problem."[87] Articulating the culpability of white people in racialized issues like segregation and drug addiction ostensibly lessened the appearance of overt racism.

After positioning himself as a non-racist, Nixon could advocate positions that had deep racial implications and that reinforced his civic republican view of America and who deserves to be called "warrior." Nixon relied on his listener to associate "law-abiding" and "law-breaking" with white and Black Americans respectively. Just as he constituted, according to Campbell, a narrow definition of "the great silent majority" in that eponymous speech, Nixon's language choices reflected the assumptions and prejudices of a mainstream white audience. Furthermore, his dependence on this "law and order" trope aligned comfortably with his civic republicanism. Since the Nixon

Administration made and enforced the laws, Nixon's "in-group" had a rigged premium on being for the greater good and lawfully so, and anyone who wanted something different was automatically lawless and factionalist. And factionalists cannot be "warriors."

Nixon's law-and-order rhetoric relied on an in-group/out-group, literally black-and-white understanding of the issue of civil rights, which resulted in the insidious lumping together of all groups that disagreed with Nixon's policies.[88] For example, in a speech offering an alternative to the integration busing system, Nixon said:

> Let me close with a personal note. This is a deeply emotional and divisive issue. I have done my very best to undertake to weigh and respect the conflicting interest, to strike a balance which is thoughtful and just, to search for answers that will best serve all of our Nation's children. I realize the program I have recommended will not satisfy the extremists on the one side who oppose busing for the wrong reasons. I realize that my program will not satisfy the extreme social planners on the other side who insist on more busing, even at the cost of better education. But while what I have said tonight will not appeal to either extreme, I believe I have expressed the views of the majority of Americans. Because I believe that the majority of Americans of all races want more busing stopped and better education started.[89]

Nixon again affirmed his non-racism by beginning with his "personal" journey of compromising "for the children" (an idea as American as apple pie!). More important is that the passage then contrasts "extremism" with his middle-of-the-road, coolly reasoned, for the greater good anti-busing proposal. Nixon further strengthened these Manichean roles by lumping together segregationists and civil rights activists. Both groups are nothing more than "extremists"; the (im)morality and (un)democratic nature of each cause are irrelevant. In this passage, Nixon reduced civil rights advocates of all sorts to the meanest common denominator of "extremists" who are just as bad as Klansmen.

As the busing passage shows, legislation that benefits only a small group, no matter how necessary the benefit, is bad legislation; worse yet are changes that come from outside the legal system. In these moments, Nixon appears to be reducing "legality" to "legislative"; protesting and other civic engagement find protection under the First Amendment, but they become factionalist in Nixon's race rhetoric. Many of Nixon's addresses on Black issues praise Black leaders and citizens who worked within the existing legal system to make change, such as his "Letter to Representative Charles C. Diggs, Jr.," a member of the Congressional Black Caucus.[90] The letter discusses legislative paths that the president and Congress can follow towards change for Black Americans. Truly patriotic Americans leave social change to elected officials.

A starker example of this emphasis on legislative-only change exists in Nixon's aforementioned address to Southern media representatives in Birmingham, Alabama. Discussing segregation, integration, and racism, Nixon asserted:

> Second, and here this is difficult, but we have made enormous progress, and we are going to make more. The problems of race can be and must be solved. They must be solved in an orderly way recognizing we will continue to have differences, but recognizing that unless they are solved, this destructive force, this division over an issue of this type is going to weaken this part of the country in a way that could be very, very detrimental to the national interest and weaken other parts of the country where there are also racial problems. … I speak of such square things as patriotism; I speak of such things as religious faith. I also speak of such things as respect for law, even those laws that you don't like.[91]

Note how Nixon established civil rights progress as progress for the whole United States (in other words, "for the greater good"). Additionally, the phrase "They must be solved in an orderly way" praises the use of in-system change and denounces extra-legislative change. He calls on all "extremists" to respect law and order, which again lumps together

Wallacite Southerners with those Black individuals who break Jim Crow and other racist laws, a passage echoed in his Rochester speech.[92] Although one side was fighting for progress and the other for regression, they were equally unfit warriors for Richard "Law-and-order" Nixon.

This "law and order" trope characterized Nixon's civil rights rhetoric. At least five of the addresses under consideration in this chapter contain the phrase "law and order" or some derivative of it.[93] Nixon aligned his in-group—which as I established earlier in this chapter, meant males, especially servicemen—with "true American values" and aligned his "permissive" opposition with amorality, indulgence, license-taking, and weakness.[94] Indeed, Nixon hated "permissiveness" and loved "American values" so much that he "declared war" on drugs.

This is "War."

Nixon's drug and crime speeches, so steeped in raced meaning, are full of war imagery and terms. Speaking on his new drug policies, Nixon stated, "Our new Code will give us tougher penalties and stronger weapons in the war against dangerous drugs and organized crime."[95] Police are "the real frontline soldiers in the war against crime."[96] The "war" was by no means new, however. Lyndon Johnson famously declared "war on poverty," which, as David Zarefsky argues, eventually became a war on the poor.[97] Zarefsky explains that, "Like the 'unconditional war' objective, the image of poverty as a vicious circle was useful for the administration in 1964. It located the problem within the individual, not the macroeconomic system."[98] The "war" trope absolves the system of any culpability in a social problem, but this could break down. Zarefsky continues,

> In the aftermath of the [1960s race] riots, it was no longer clear who the enemy was. The war had been launched against a cultural phenomenon transmitted across generations in a vicious circle. But each attempt to find a point at which to break the circle seemingly had led only to frustration. The theory did not seem to work—unless one took it to mean that the circle must be broken by changing the individual personalities of the poor.[99]

The nominal enemy had changed from "poverty" to "drugs," but the implied enemy (Black citizens), their individual culpability, and the exigence for war remained. The rhetoric of the "all-out attack on drug pushers" characterized Nixon's drug and crime policies and carried through well into the Reagan years.

This flagrant war imagery and language imperatively drew on imagery from Vietnam, associating Nixon, his "for the greater good" drug and crime war, and those who support it with Nixonian warriors from the Southeast Asian jungles. Recounting an anecdote of a young narcotics officer killed in 1972, Nixon concluded a speech on crime and drugs saying, "We cannot bring Frank Tummillo back again, any more than we can bring back the American soldiers who have given their lives in Vietnam. But in our war against crime and drugs, as in our war against aggression in Southeast Asia, we can resolve to redeem with honor the ultimate sacrifice which these brave men have made."[100] This heavy-handed analogy asks listeners to transfer the respect and honor of Vietnam warrior males onto those fighting the war on drugs and crime, like Officer Tummillo and, by extension, to view those who would harm Officer Tummillo as akin to the communist hordes under Ho Chi Minh.

Once again, to maintain the *status quo*, Nixon focused on constituting his own group as truly American while ignoring or caricaturizing his "enemies." Nixon used the militancy of the Black Panthers to dismiss all Black protest as un-American and

factionalist. The "war" analogy also provided Nixon additional rhetorical resources by which to disqualify his enemies. Writing of Johnson's war on poverty, Zarefsky notes, "Before the military conflict in Vietnam called into question the patriotism of war, the administration could use war against an ancient, impersonal foe as the means by which to cater to the national need."[101] Zarefsky shows that Johnson's war imagery backfired; I suggest that Nixon attempted to reclaim it. When considered alongside his Vietnam veteran "warrior" discourse, Nixon's "war on drugs" rhetoric invited further identification of mainstream American males with the Nixon administration; rejecting factionalists like civil rights fighters and supporting those fighting the "war on drugs" meant an honorary conferring of warrior status to mainstream (white) Americans. Because whiteness is largely invisible in American society, white factionalist actions aiming to preserve the *status quo* are reframed as the noble protection of the greater good in the war for the very soul of the United States.[102]

The "Blackening" of America.

As Johnson's "war on poverty" became the "war against the poor," civic republican, war-on-crime-and-drugs rhetoric associates the fight against drugs with the fight against the "Blackening" of American culture. Implicit in Nixon's rhetoric on drugs and crime is an emphasis on "whiteness as rightness," as drugs and crime were traditionally associated with "bad" families and with Black Americans. It is not difficult to combine the two, and doing so carries many rhetorical benefits. That white youths now abused drugs and committed crimes evidenced a breakdown in traditional values (a code-phrase for whiteness). Progress towards the greater good therefore relied on a definition

of "goodness" that reflected traditionally white and heterosexual family structures, values, and social roles.

Further evidence of this strong claim comes from Nixon's dismissal of the structural factors that cause many disenfranchised Americans to turn to drug crimes as their only means of income, taking his lead from Johnson blaming individuals rather than the system. In a 1972 campaign address, Nixon stated, "Neither [Attorney General John Mitchell or Richard Kleindienst] has fallen for the naïve theory that society is to blame for an individual's wrongdoing." Nixon here dismissed entirely the sociological notion that, when barred from traditional, living-wage employment due to inadequate schooling, Jim Crow laws, lack of access to housing or healthcare, and/or because of a criminal record—issues which disproportionally affected then and continue to affect Black Americans—people turn to the high-paying career of drug-dealing or other crime to pay the bills. By dismissing these real, socio-economic factors that can lead to crime, Nixon reduces the issue literally to black and white: some people (i.e., white people) are law-abiding and support the war on drugs and other people (i.e., Black people) are lawless and are "drug pushers" who do not care about America's well-being and deserve incarceration for their un-American behavior.

This simple, black-and-white picture maintained the association between Blackness and drugs/crime, making a warrior status nearly unattainable for Black Americans. To this end, Nixon declared in a 1973 radio address, "There are those who say that law and order are just code words for repression and bigotry. That is dangerous nonsense. Law and order are code words for goodness and decency in America."[103] Nixon made several significant rhetorical moves to disqualify Black Americans from the

warrior accolade in this brief passage. First he engaged in a straw-person fallacy, vaguely raising the opposition's point ("There are those who say") and then summarily dismissing the opposition without citing actual evidence; he reduced the opposing viewpoint to "dangerous nonsense." Instead, he offers an alternative definition of "law and order" (i.e., "goodness and decency"). Considering this passage alongside his rejection of the socio-economic factors that can lead to crime, Nixon again reinforced the association of all Black Americans (and their allies) with dangerousness and lack of reason. Even to consider the possibility of a societal role in the rise of drug crimes is to engage in "dangerous nonsense" that contributes to the "Blackening" of American values. Whether they are as non-violent as sit-in participants or as militant as the Black Panthers, Nixon's association between badness and Blackness significantly disqualified any Black people from the true American warrior distinction. Because they are inextricably associated with un-American values and behaviors that destroy the American way of life and the social hygiene of the United States, they could not possible be heroic, patriotic warriors. In addition to the symbolic exclusion of Black Americans from the warrior accolade, the prison industrial complex created by the Nixon war on drugs and crime has had intense and long-lasting effects on the United States, especially on our Black citizens.[104]

Nixon's civic republican approach to race, expressed through his drug and crime rhetoric, helped him legally cement the discrimination implicated in "enforcing law and order." His dismissal of the claim that society shares blame for creating crime allowed discriminatory drug and prison measures to become law. These legal measures so often associated Blackness with criminality and therefore with un-Americanness. By rhetorically reducing drug laws and dissent to a black-and-white issue, Nixon invited the

mainstream, white American public to associate all Black Americans with drug pushers and criminals, effectively reducing to rabble-rousing the continued fight for African American equality. Furthermore, by casting anyone who dissents from his policies as not only the out-group but also the enemy, Nixon could associate his administration with the greater good and protestors as factionalists. Nixon's oratory rhetorically lumps those who fight for Black equality in with drug criminals, nullifying the purpose of their fight, making their fighters unworthy of being called "warrior."

Ruling Passions and the Disqualification of Student "Warriors"

In his speeches on crime and drugs, Nixon twice asserted his belief that those who throw "incendiary devices" should receive the death penalty if their device results in someone's death.[105] In choosing the phrase, "incendiary devices," Nixon heralded both Black protestors and student protestors, drawing on the resources provided by domestic terrorism language. Those who acted in discord with Nixon's agenda were little better than terrorists. The enormous scale of anti-war protests during the early Nixon years meant Nixon had to overcome rhetorical hurdles to disqualify these young people as warriors.

There were near-countless student protests around the United States during the Vietnam era, most directly against the war.[106] These protests ran the gamut from peaceful sit-ins to arsons of campus ROTC buildings. Often part of human nature, sometimes violence resulted from mob mentality; like their Black counterparts who turn to violence, though, the violence often had strategic and political purposes. Recall that draftees came from this group of Americans, drafted into a war few American youths supported. The

traditional, legal methods of systemic change were failing to save young people and their fellows from being drafted and dying in Vietnam, and when no other options seem to exist, violence can ignite. Young protestors often also engaged in "disrespectful" and un-American actions and attitudes, like burning draft cards and American flags, using drugs at protests, and using profane or disrespectful language in their protest chants and slogans.[107] The violence and disrespect of these protests demonstrated that passion, not reason, ruled these students' hearts and minds. They were fighting for, in Nixon's view, the wrong thing and in the wrong way, and therefore, they could not be warriors.

"Four Dead in Ohio."[108]

Kent State University in Ohio saw many student protests, fighting for many causes, especially an end to American involvement in Vietnam.[109] Rallies and vigils increased following Nixon's announcement of the Cambodia bombing on 30 April 1970, and they included some incidences of property destruction and assaults on police officers.[110] To restore "law and order," the Ohio governor, James Rhodes, called in the Ohio National Guard. One day after student protestors razed the ROTC building and after numerous confrontations between students and the Guard, at noon on 4 May 1970, the Guard inexplicably opened fire in the quad of Kent State, killing four students (two of whom were merely crossing campus to go to class) and injuring nine others. Reports of the event, including the official *Congressional Report*, offer a wide variety of explanations and versions of stories. Guard leadership at Kent have always insisted that they did not give any orders to open fire and that the shootings were the result of overwrought, under-rested Guardsmen.

Nixon's private response to the shootings at Kent State was unsettling. In his memoir, Nixon's only mention of Kent State lay in a three-page section on "the tempest of reaction over Cambodia" (three pages of a 1090-page memoir).[111] Within these three pages, Nixon discusses the "increase in bombings and violence" that characterized student protests in spring 1970.[112] Nixon uses two of these three pages to discuss incidences of violence, especially against ROTC buildings, around the country. When speaking of the Kent shootings, Nixon states, "It appeared that an uneasy confrontation had begun brewing around noon. Finally, a large crowd of students began throwing rocks and chunks of concrete at the guardsmen, forcing them up a small hill. At the top of the soldiers turned, and someone started shooting."[113] Nixon then noted how disturbed he was by the four deaths and how Allison Krause's father's words, "My child was not a bum," haunted him. But note that Nixon described the shootings as a response to student violence: students "forced" them up a hill after "throwing rocks and chunks of concrete." While this contains elements of fact, Nixon's description of the events at Kent State in the 1978 *RN* contradicted the *Report of the U.S. President's Commission on Campus Unrest* (ostensibly assembled directly for Nixon) in 1970. The *Report* does explain that protests before May 4th had included students throwing rocks at Guardsmen and police, but on May 4th, the gathered crowd did not have time to come to blows before the Guard opened fire.

If his private response was lacking, Nixon's public response to the Kent State shooting was truly inadequate. On Nixon's behalf, Press Secretary Ronald Ziegler read:

> This should remind us all once again that when dissent turns to violence, it invites tragedy. It is my hope that this tragic and unfortunate incident will strengthen the determination of all the Nation's campuses--administrators, faculty, and students alike--to stand firmly for the right which exists in this

> country of peaceful dissent and just as strongly against the resort to violence as a means of such expression.[114]

The most jarring element of the Statement is its lack of specificity: never does he name or describe the event or give the murdered students' names.[115] This passage echoes Nixon's sentiment that violent protestors should be eligible for the death penalty: violent dissent "invites tragedy." In other words, they deserved it. Nixon immediately returns to his law and order rhetoric when calling on "all the Nation's campuses…to stand firmly for the right…of peaceful dissent." Violence, as the ultimate expression of rule by passion, stands in direct opposition to the proper, American way of rule by reason. Unlike Vietnam veterans, who engaged in violence only against communism and only for a well-reasoned cause, students like those at Kent allowed wildness to prevail and therefore welcomed disaster. And because they were ruled by passion and engaged in unfit practices, students could not be Nixonian warriors and were therefore unworthy of presidential or national mourning.

A majority of American citizens at the time appeared to agree with Nixon. A *Newsweek* poll from 18 May 1970 reported that "A *Gallup* Poll [*sic*] conducted one week after the shootings found that 58 percent of the public blamed the students themselves, while only 11 percent blamed the National Guardsmen."[116] The Grand Jury Report on Kent State reflected this anti-student sentiment; no Guardsmen were charged for the deaths of Allison Krause, Jeffrey Miller, Sandra Scheuer, and William Schroeder.[117] This is an unsurprising response. As I have argued in Chapter 1, presidential rhetoric reinforces the *doxa* of the time about who mattered in America. Presidential rhetoric offers both a reflection of the majority and a proposal for new opinions, and because

Nixon would not characterize student protestors like those at Kent State as mournable fallen warriors, many Americans would follow their president's lead.

Jackson State.

Some members of the public must have found Richard Nixon's Kent State (KSU) statement inadequate, however, for Nixon's response to a similar massacre at Jackson State College (14 May 1970) in Mississippi was an improvement over the Kent State statement of the previous fortnight. Issued as a written press release, it read:

> Mrs. Nixon and I are deeply saddened by the death of the two students at Jackson State College. In the shadow of these past troubled days, this tragedy makes it urgent that every American personally undertake greater efforts toward understanding, restraint, and compassion. I am confident that the Nation joins us in extending sincere sympathy to the families of these two young men, James Earl Green and Phillip L. Gibbs.[118]

Though its form was similar to the KSU statement (e.g., very short, not spoken by Nixon himself), it has many stylistic differences. The Jackson State College (JSC) statement shows Nixon's humanity through "Mrs. Nixon and I are deeply saddened." Unlike KSU, JSC "saddened" Dick, and the reference to Pat reminds the listener that the Nixons are parents. Though he still urges "restraint," both Nixon and "the Nation…exten[d] sincere sympathy to the families" of victims who, this time, he named in the statement. Though there is no concrete proof, I contend that the JSC response likely differed from the KSU statement for two reasons, one practical and the other ideological. Practically, the KSU statement was cold and unsubtle. The highly P.R.-motivated Nixon may have written the warmer, gentler statement after the Jackson State shootings. Ideologically, the shooters at Jackson State—local law enforcement and State Troopers, not National Guardsmen—had

overt racial hatred motivations.[119] This opened room for Nixon to blame these shootings on the factional (i.e., racist) interests of Mississippian law enforcement.[120]

Nixon's rhetoric on student unrest expresses disapproval for the ruling passions that lead to protestor violence on campus. As explained earlier in this chapter, Western, especially American, culture codes passion as feminine and reason as masculine. People governed by passion are not reasoned, not masculine, and therefore cannot be warriors. As Karlyn Kohrs Campbell astutely observes, "Nixon's characterization of protestors highlights the relationship between our national mythology and the power of identification and division. In characterizing those who criticized American policy on the war as traitors who could 'defeat or humiliate' the nation, Nixon divided the citizenry and made dissent un-American and unpatriotic…"[121] Nixon created divisions among citizens, clearly characterizing those dissenting the war as non-warriors, unmournable, and those supporting the Vietnam war (represented most obviously by decorated veterans) as warriors. How then do we understand warriors who abandon this identity to protest the war or who use this identity to commit acts of terror?

Warriors? The VVAW and My Lai

As I have demonstrated at length in this chapter, Richard Nixon bestowed the necessarily male "warrior" distinction on those who aligned themselves will civic republican values, and therefore with the Nixon Administration. Those who disagreed with the Administration could not be warriors. Vietnam veterans represented the ideal warrior male. But certain cases muddy the clarity of those waters: one group, the Vietnam Veterans Against War (VVAW), consisted of those whose service made them "warriors"

but who disagreed publically with the president's war policies. The other group of questionable warriors was the soldiers who perpetrated the My Lai massacre—supposed warriors who acted far outside the bounds of civic republican behavior.[122] Nixon's public rhetoric and private opinions of these groups exposes both his civic republicanism and concept of the Nixonian "warrior" as mere vehicles for the protection of the *status quo* and of his own political legacy.

The Vietnam Veterans Against War group began in 1967 and was, as the name suggests, a protest group for veterans who disagreed with American involvement in Vietnam.[123] Though the VVAW also formed counseling groups and other veterans support projects, its primary function was exposing the atrocities of war. The VVAW is known best perhaps for its 1971 "Winter Soldier Investigation," where veterans testified to war crimes they had witnessed or participated in while in Vietnam. It was during this event that 2004 presidential candidate and Obama Secretary of State Lt. John Kerry testified and came under intense governmental fire. The group remains active today, protesting the United States's involvement in the Middle East.

During my time in the Nixon Presidential Library archives, I obtained copies of the files on the VVAW.[124] Along with many newspaper clippings about VVAW goings-on, the archive contained memoranda between high-ranking Nixon officials trying to filibuster different VVAW legal cases.[125] In one memo from 11 October 1971, Special Counsel to the President Charles Colson wrote White House Counsel John Dean to request stall tactics to "keep the appeals going at least over the next 14 months" so the VVAW could not access the names of all Vietnam veterans for use in their protests.[126] Another document, "Plan to Counteract Viet Nam Veterans Against the War," listed a

nine-point plan to use celebrity testimony and media appeals to discredit the VVAW.[127] The White House closely surveilled the VVAW, who were misusing their warrior status and threatening Nixon's idea of the greater good.

This evidence and the intense scrutiny from the Nixon Administration shows that members of the VVAW forfeited their warrior status by not conforming to Nixon's civic republican dream. Even though they used cool, legal methods rather than passionate tactics, the VVAW proved their unmanliness (even femininity) and weakness by recasting the manly glory of war as evil and ugly. An aforementioned quote from Sarah Purcell discussed how the glories of war are a useful rhetorical tool to establish wide public support for a cause. Public support for the United States's involvement in Vietnam was already extremely weak, and the stories the VVAW vowed to make public would weaken public support further still. The VVAW and Nixon's reaction to it also exposes the subjectivity of "the greater good." History is grateful to the VVAW for the just and moral act of exposing American war crimes, but contemporarily, Nixon saw this exposure a threat to the greater good of maintaining the United States's "honor" on a global stage.

War atrocities, one would assume, are non-civic republican; they are acts of selfish passion that harm the greater good. Yet Nixon's reaction to the My Lai massacre did not support this conclusion. His chilling defense of the perpetrators reveals Nixon's civic republicanism as inextricably linked to his own maintenance of power and to the maintenance of the white mainstream *status quo.*

The My Lai massacres occurred on 16 March 1968 in Sơn Mỹ in Quảng Ngãi Province, South Vietnam. Soldiers in the United States Army rounded up and executed

504 civilians "from 247 families; 24 families lost everyone—three generations, no survivors. Included in the 504 were 60 elderly men, and 282 women (17 of whom were pregnant). A total of 173 children were killed; 53 were infants."[128] Some of the victims had been raped and some mutilated. One participant in the massacre, Paul Meadlo, gave an interview with the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* in which he revealed that the company committed the massacre as revenge.[129] Twenty-six servicemen were eventually court-martialed, yielding only the conviction of Lt. William Calley, Jr., whose life imprisonment Nixon commuted to three years on house arrest.[130] Most historical sources mark news of My Lai as greatly increasing domestic anti-war sentiment and protest.

Mitigating factors must be taken into account when analyzing My Lai. Under no circumstances are such atrocities excusable, but under some circumstances they are explicable. As I explained in detail in Chapter 2, the American frontier myth relies on a Manichean dichotomy; "manifestly destined" cowboys are ultimately good, and their enemies are savage and evil. War rhetoric similarly relies on polarization by which the enemy is demonized. War dehumanizes both the enemy and oneself—unthinkable acts become banal as a war continues. Popular culture even reflects this: Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1929) states that the WWI soldiers "became hard, suspicious, pitiless, vicious, tough—and that was good; for these attributes were just what we lacked."[131] As I will discuss in the next chapter, the constellation of manliness, "hardness," and pursuit of justice is deeply engrained in United States *doxa.* Wartime acts threaten civic republicanism, and after My Lai, Nixon had to reconstitute the event to fit the framework of civic republican virtues befitting a true warrior.

My Lai should have been an open-and-shut case where the United States performed a *mea culpa* by convicting the perpetrators. Indeed, since Nixon later asserted that those who throw "incendiary devices" and injure or kill someone while protesting deserve the death penalty, a cold-blooded revenge massacre would deserve the same. Unfortunately, this was not the case. In Bob Woodward's book-length exposé of Deputy Assistant to the President Alex Butterfield's role in the Nixon White House, interviews with Butterfield and archival evidence from the Nixon Presidential Library and Museum show that Nixon considered My Lai "a clear political threat to Nixon's strategy of Vietnamization" because "The mass slaughter of Vietnamese civilians, women and children, demolished any notion of honor."[132] In a press conference on 8 December 1969, Nixon responded to *Associated Press* journalist Douglas B. Cornell's question: "In your opinion, was what happened at Mylai [*sic*] a massacre, an alleged massacre, or what was it? And what do you think can be done to prevent things like this? If it was a massacre, do you think it was justifiable on military or other grounds?" I have reproduced the full content of Nixon's reply in the Appendix to this dissertation, but certain passages require particular attention.

Answering the reporter's question, Nixon affirmed that, while the "event" indeed happened, it was both appropriate and democratic to use the word "alleged," as individual Americans are "innocent until proven guilty."[133] He assured the public that the government was investigating My Lai. Immediately thereafter, Nixon lists statistics of the number of Americans killed in Vietnam and the number of good deeds done (e.g., building churches) and dollars given by American soldiers for the Vietnamese. He concludes by a call for temperance: "this record of generosity, of decency, must not be

allowed to be smeared and slurred because of this kind of an incident." Nixon here made a claim all too common in modern anti-activist rhetoric on Twitter (#notallmen, #notallwhitepeople, etc.), wherein he dismisses atrocities committed as errant or rare, thereby absolving the warrior of blame and maintaining his honor (#notallsoldiers). This "non-denial denial" of My Lai diminishes the devastation and inhumanity of the mass executions at My Lai and asks the public to ignore an incident outside the norm, no matter how egregious.

Nixon did not just minimize the massacre; he sanctioned a cover-up. Memos between Nixon and key staff members like Executive Assistant (Chief of Staff) H.R. Haldeman and Secretary of State Dr. Henry Kissinger are evidence of the Administration's attempt to "find dirt" on the newspaperman breaking the My Lai story and on those members of the offending platoon that chose to speak to the press.[134] In his 1978 memoir, Nixon gave the same non-denial denial of My Lai, recasting it as a tool for the Democrats and liberal media could use to discredit Nixon.[135] Because My Lai could undo Vietnamization, it had to be minimized and quashed in the press; the warrior status of Vietnam soldiers had to be preserved.

The My Lai murderers represented the worst fears of those opposed to American involvement in Vietnam and the worst examples of American citizens. The murders at My Lai were the fundamental inversion of civic republican virtues, which should have disqualified the perpetrators as Nixonian warriors. Yet Nixon minimized the massacre and covered up the extent of the atrocities. He may have honestly believed that minimizing My Lai would work toward the greater good, but this Machiavellianism does

not demonstrate the virtuous aspects of the true civic republican. One could conclude, therefore, that Nixon's deployment of civic republicanism was subjective.

Conclusions: Keeping Up the Fight

In this chapter, I have showed how Richard Nixon demonstrated his metonymic status as the protector of mainstream American masculinity through his definition of the "warrior." Bestowing this accolade only on those groups that aligned with his civic republican policies and withholding it from dissenters, Nixon exposed his civic republicanism as a tool to maintain the *status quo* that kept white men ahead of all other social groups. The warrior is always male, and Nixon's civic republican rhetoric on the warrior narrowed that definition to exclude other groups, like Black Americans and young liberals, fighting for their rights in the Nixon presidential years. The five different cases of Richard Nixon's presidential rhetoric discussed in this chapter show both the subjectivity and functionalism of Nixon's civic republicanism and warrior masculinity. Decorated Vietnam veterans represented the ultimate example of the Nixonian warrior for their bravery and machismo exhibited for the "coolly reasoned" cause of America's honor abroad, while other groups disqualified themselves as warriors by engaging in factionalism and passion.

Similar to his campaign Southern Strategy was Nixon's "war on drugs" oratory, crafted in such a way as to implicate all Black Americans as possible drug criminals and to classify anyone deviating from the Administration's proposed plans as dangerously un-American factionalists. Similarly, like a parent dealing with toddlers throwing tantrums, Nixon's rhetoric against student protestors disregarded the "ends" and focused solely on

the "means." What students fought for was irrelevant; that they engaged sometimes in violence, as represented by events leading up to the Kent State and Jackson State protests and shootings, proved that unmanly passions ruled them rather than masculine reason.

Student protestors' means and ends were remarkably similar to Nixon's own ends in Vietnam, but as Jasinski observed in his study of Frederick Douglass's "Fifth of July Address," the governing structures of the United States exist to perpetuate themselves. Revolutionary acts, especially those that use agitation or violence, are no longer noble and can easily be reframed as un-American. As Sarah Purcell explains, past revolutionary acts are a vital tool for public memory and support of patriotic causes, but Jasinski's claim makes clear that only past revolutionaries deserve celebration. Campbell noted that Nixon cast aside a vital element of democratic theory in his rhetoric, the "firm support for the idea of loyal opposition…which treats dissent as healthy, patriotic, and productive."[136] Campbell further explains that, for Nixon:

> This vocal minority…was violating democratic principles by attempting to impose their will, not through the ballot box or via elected representatives, but by demonstrating on the streets. By contrast, the "great silent majority" was composed of those committed to democracy, to decision made through voting, and its members would listen to and respond to reason as their elected leader with access to the best sources of information explained what was the best path to follow.[137]

Campbell's passage demonstrates how Nixon reframed true Americana as only the product of his own invention and guidance. As the ultimate arbiter of political reason, Nixon's way was the only American way; his was the only path to "the greater good."

The Vietnam Veterans Against the War and My Lai massacre cases emphasize this point. The VVAW consisted of warriors who Nixon condemned for not acting as a warrior should, contradicting Nixon's vision of the greater good by protesting American

involvement in Vietnam, and the Nixon Administration went to great lengths to silence this group. The VVAW was somehow less permissible than William Calley and the other My Lai murderers. Although they acted in direct contrast to Nixon's vision of civic republicanism—acting through passion, out of revenge, and committing acts that harmed the greater good—Nixon minimized the import of the My Lai massacre in press conferences, and in private sought to cover up the extent of the atrocities, fearing that they would disrupt his Vietnamization program. Minimizing My Lai helped protect civic republicanism and "law and order." Nixon's factionalist and unethical activities, when used by a United States president, could be reframed as necessary means to achieve the greater good for America.

These contradictions are both disturbing and discriminatory, and the legacy of discrimination retains its power today. According to Nixonian civic republicanism, the only acceptable means by which the public can advocate change is through the legal system—or better yet, simply trust the Nixon Administration. The patience required to abide by this political ideal is accessible only to those members of society without enough of a personal stake in timely political change; they can afford to "wait it out."[138] This same situation continues when white conservative Americans criticize the Black community (and its allies) for "un-American" protests and agitation while making claiming that white nationalist protests do not represent all white people and are protected under the First Amendment. Insistence on patience from marginalized groups and explaining away evidence of white supremacy and patriarchy in the United States is but another tool by which hegemonic structures, both of government and of patriarchy, maintain the *status quo* in the United States, both in the Nixon years and today.

Susan Jeffords's *The Remasculinization of America: Gender and the Vietnam War* (1989), provides ample evidence for the legacy of Vietnam as a threat to mainstream American masculinity through her analysis of American popular culture. This exceptional book uses popular culture artifacts from the 1980s (about two decades from the end of Vietnam) to argue "that an important way to read the war, perhaps the most significant way which we think about the war itself, is as a construction of gendered interests. …the representational features of the Vietnam War are structurally written through relations of gender, relations designed primarily to reinforce the interest of masculinity and patriarchy."[139] Her study seeks to explain the "remasculinization" process that mainstream American masculinity desperately needed to undergo after the emasculating defeat in Vietnam, for "Vietnam veterans are portrayed in [1980s] contemporary American culture as emblems of an unjustly discriminated masculinity," discriminated against by the government and by the increasing political voice and rights of women and Black Americans.[140] Any change or threat to the *status quo* was, in fact, a threat to mainstream masculinity.

Nixon demonstrated his personal brand of civic republicanism in his interrelated rhetoric on Vietnam veterans, Black Americans fighting for equality, liberal student protestors, the VVAW, and the My Lai perpetrators. "True" American warriors were those who fell in line with Nixon's vision of the greater good, and any who opposed this path disqualified themselves from the honors and privileges attendant to the "warrior." The warrior distinction has inextricable ties with masculinity, reinforcing the *doxa* of males as active, public, and rational. As I will explain in the next chapter, Nixon, like many American men his age, feared the "softening" of American masculinity.[141] His

anxiety that these false warrior groups—groups not associable with the best masculine traits—would come to dominate the American experience was intense and reflected conversations on masculine hardness that characterized gendered rhetoric in the post-WWII years. Under Nixon's concept of civic republicanism, if a vocal minority could out-shout the silent majority, it could destroy all that is American about the United States.

Notes

[1] For a full transcript of the speech, see Derek Cosson, "Transcript of New Orleans Mayor Landrieu's Address on Confederate Monuments," *Pulse Gulf Coast*. 19 May 2017, http://bit.ly/2q9rm83.
[2] Gary Gerstle, *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 4.
[3] Gerstle 3-11.
[4] My committee member, Dr. Wilson, rightly argued that no study of Nixon's presidential rhetoric could be complete without some discussion of the Vietnam War. Although I disagreed with his suggestion to treat a single, lesser studied Vietnam speech, I ultimately agreed with the essence of his argument. I intend this chapter to unite the Vietnam suggestion and my previous interest in social protest by examining "the warrior." Although I made mention of the women's movement and the gay/lesbian movement on the first page of this chapter, I have not included these movements in this chapter for three reasons. First and most practically, it was necessary for the dissertation project to limit my scope to something befitting the genre of "dissertation." Perhaps a future book project based on this dissertation could include these important social movements. The second, also practical reason for their omission was that, regardless of their importance historically, contemporarily Nixon paid far less attention, both privately and in his public rhetoric, to these movements than to the Civil Rights Movement and student protestors. Given the equally hefty amount of public rhetoric on Vietnam veterans, for this comparison/contrast chapter, it seemed most fitting to select the two movements of equal size and relation to Vietnam. Finally (and actually least importantly), an effective means by which hegemonic masculinity treated the women's and gay/lesbian movements in the early 1970s was ignorance; to attend to these movements was to acknowledge them as legitimate, so it was better to (essentially) pat them on the head, say "how quaint," and to rely on the social and legal structures in place to subjugate these groups to continue their work.
[5] I explained "mainstream" in the previous two chapters as encompassing many qualities. The "mainstream" American man was: white, cisgender, able-bodied, middle class, employed, heterosexual, married to a woman and likely had fathered children, Christian (especially Protestant), native-born, and conservative.
[6] To gather these text fragments, I used several means and criteria for selection. I explored in depth the Nixon archive of *The American Presidency Project*, seeking first his speeches that treated Vietnam veterans as human beings, rather than just the general policies about "veterans" in the abstract. To find texts on student movements, I searched the *APP* for addresses on specific, major incidences, like "Kent State" and "Jackson State." Finding texts on Black American protestors was more difficult. Nixon's racism was starkly different, much more subtle, than that of demagogue George Wallace, so finding his rhetoric on Black Americans was not simple. With advice from senior faculty, I sought "code words" (e.g., "law and order" and "civil unrest") that Nixon often used to imply a raced issue or to justify ultimately racist, ageist or otherwise exclusionary policies. Of particular import were Nixon's addresses on crime-prevention and drug abuse-prevention.

[7] The phrase "warrior masculinity" came up in a discussion with my advisor, Dr. Browne. However, I also later came across the same term in Ian Nicholson's "'Shocking' Masculinity" article, on page 256. As I do not know whether the phrase is original to Nicholson, I figured I would give cite his work, as his previous use of the term holds quite similar meaning to how I use the term in this project.
[8] Cass R. Sunstein, "Beyond the Republican Revival," *The Yale Law Journal* 97, no. 8 (1988): 1539-1590.
[9] John M. Murphy, "Civic Republicanism in the Modern Age: Adlai Stevenson in the 1952 Presidential Campaign," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 80 (1994): 326, emphasis in original.
[10] Sunstein 1539-1540; Robert Hariman and John Lucaites, "Performing Civic Identity: The Iconic Photograph of the Flag Raising on Iwo Jima," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88, no. 4 (2002): 373. Derrick Bell and Preeta Bansal, "The Republican Revival and Racial Politics," *The Yale Law Journal* 97, no. 8 (1988): 1609-1623.
[11] The implicit antonym, "passion," is both sexed and raced. *Doxa* holds that women are passion-ruled where men are reason-ruled, and the same dichotomy is often mapped onto white males versus Black males. The stereotype that Black people are passion-ruled contributed to sexual assaults of especially Black slave women and to the lynching or castration of Black men.
[12] Gerstle, *American Crucible.*
[13] Gerstle 6 and 8, as well as Chapter 4 and Chapter 6. Also see Bederman.
[14] Gerstle 295.
[15] Richard Nixon, *Six Crises* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1962).
[16] This reflects a very Lincolnian stance of working within the system to change the system, as Lincoln articulated in his "Lyceum" address in 1838.
[17] Audre Lorde, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House," in *The Essential Feminist Reader,* ed. Estelle B. Freedman (New York: Modern Library, 2007): 331-335.
[18] James Jasinski, "Rearticulating History in Epideictic Discourse: Frederick Douglass's 'The Meaning of the Fourth of July to the Negro,'" in *Rhetoric and Political Culture in 19th Century America,* edited by Thomas W. Benson, 71-39 (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1997). In Jasinski's words, "By the middle of the 19th century, a reified tradition had been construction. This tradition was not internally consistent but its underlying vision of the Revolution was clear: the Revolution was rational, inevitable, natural, orderly, and conservative; the Revolution had become, in a word, domesticated" (78). For this reason, America can celebrate the Boston Tea Party while lamenting and disparaging the damage to property that occurred in the 1960s Detroit riots, the 1990s LA riots, or the 2010s Ferguson riots. Even though both were extra-governmental acts of destruction aimed at civic engagement, one is fundamentally American while the other is un-American.
[19] All statistics come from "Statistical Information about Casualties of the Vietnam War," *National Archives: Electronic Records Report,*" 29 April 2008, https://www.archives.gov/research/military/vietnam-war/casualty-statistics.html. This source asserts that 47,434 of these casualties were hostile deaths.

[20] Technically, no law forbids women in combat, but the loosely written laws that did exist were interpreted in such ways that barred women from combat roles until very recently.
[21] That is, Nixon did not invent it, but instead drew on the long tradition of civic republicanism.
[22] Dinah Zeiger, "The 'Very Best' Soldier: Honoring Female Veterans," *Feminist Media Studies* 5, no. 3 (2005): 385-387.
[23] In this section, I draw from numerous primary sources, all attributed to Richard Nixon. Within each citation, I have included a number in brackets. This indicates the year of the speech and the *American Presidency Project*'s sorting number. Although this is perhaps unconventional, I have chosen to refer to the speeches by these numbers in these citations because the titles are all so similar. The speeches are: "Remarks on Presenting the Medal of Honor to Three Members of the United States Army," 7 March 1969, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [69101]; "Remarks on Presenting the Medal of Honor Posthumously to Pfc. Melvin E. Newlin, USMC," 18 March 1969, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [69115]; "Statement on Benefits for Vietnam Veterans," 5 June 1969, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [69228]; "Remarks at the Presentation of the Young American Medals for Bravery and Service," 17 June 1969, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [69247]; "Remarks to American Troops of the 1st Infantry Division in Vietnam," 30 July 1969, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [69269]; "Remarks on Presenting the Medal of Honor to Four Members of the United States Army," 9 October 1969, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [69383]; "Remarks on Presenting the Medal of Honor to Three Members of the United States Army," 24 November1969, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [69456]; "Remarks Following a Meeting with Wives and Mothers of Prisoners of War and Servicemen Missing in Action in Vietnam," 12 December 1969, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [69484]; "Executive Order 11521—Authorizing Veterans Readjustment Appointments for Veterans of the Vietnam Era," 26 March 1970, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [EO11521]; "Proclamation 3975—Loyalty Day, 1970," 26 March 1970, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [P3975]; "Remarks on Awarding the Congressional Medal of Honor to Twelve Members of the Armed Services," 14 May 1970, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [70150]; "Remarks on Presenting Medals to Members of a Search and Rescue Mission to Sontay, Vietnam," 25 November 1970, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [70441]; "Remarks on Presenting the Young American Medals," 3 December 1970, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [70444]; "Statement Announcing a Program to Inform Disadvantaged Vietnam-Era Veterans of Education and Job Training Benefits," 12 April 1971, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [71137]; "Letter to the Secretary of Labor on Employment Opportunities for Returning Vietnam-Era Veterans," 13 June 1971,

online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [71200]; "Memorandum About Employment of Vietnam Veterans," 5 October 1972, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [72339]; "Remarks on Presenting the Congressional Medal of Honor to Nine Members of the Armed Forces," 15 October 1973, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [73296]; "Proclamation 4188—Display of the Flag in Honor of Vietnam Prisoners of War," 13 February 1973, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [P4188]; "Statement About the Vietnam Veteran," 24 March 1973, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [73090]; "Address to the Nation about Vietnam and Domestic Problems," 29 March 1973, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [73098]; "Remarks on Signing a Proclamation Honoring Vietnam Veterans," 26 February 1974, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [74062]; "Proclamation 4270—Vietnam Veterans Day," 26 February 1974, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [P4270]; "Remarks at Ceremonies Commemorating Vietnam Veterans Day," 29 March 1974, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Wooley, *The American Presidency Project* [74093].

[24] Kimmel, *Manhood* 83.

[25] For more, see Kimmel, *Manhood* chapter 6.

[26] Sarah Purcell, *Sealed with Blood: War, Sacrifice, and Memory in Revolutionary America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 44.

[27] The Medal for Pfc. Melvin Newlin was awarded posthumously.

[28] Department of the Army, "Section 578.4 Medal of Honor," Code of Federal Regulations Title 32, Vol. 2 (Washington DC: United States Government Publishing Office, 2002).

[29] Historical records, including biographies and the White House Tapes, show that Nixon could be extremely racist, but it also shows that he maintained close friendships with non-white people over his lifetime. For example, Nixon and famed Black baseball player Jackie Robinson were quite close. For more on this friendship and its relationship to civic republicanism, see Abraham Khan, "Jackie, Robinson, Civic Republicanism, and Black Political Culture," in *Sports and Identity: New Agendas in Communication*, eds. Barry Brummett and Andrew W. Ishak (New York: Routledge, 2014): 83-105.

[30] For example, Michael A. Messner and Donald F. Sabo, *Sex, Violence and Power in Sports: Rethinking Masculinity* (Freedom, CA: Crossing Press, 1994).

[31] #69101. For the rest of the document, I will use the United States military's abbreviations for titles when referring to these servicemen and their rank. SPC is Specialist, and HM is Navy hospital corpsman.

[32] This odd little artifact evidences the cult of TR's manliness today: "October 14, 1912: The Speech That Did Not End with a Bang!" *History & Headlines,* 14 October 2013, http://www.historyandheadlines.com/the-speech-that-didnt-end-with-a-bang/. Fact or fiction, this urban legend is often-circulated and carries a lot of social capital for "manliness" arguments. For more academic work on the cult of manliness surrounding TR, both contemporarily and in public memory, see Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization* Chapter 5; and Kimmel, *Manhood*, chapter 5.

[33] I use the "greater good" and "for the greater good" to articulate this vital part of civic republicanism, but I wish to credit JK Rowling for the specific phrase, which she used in her *Harry Potter* series.
[34] #70150.
[35] Indeed, Nixon/his speechwriters may not have had any access to the texts of the Medals of Honor, which are, among other things, governed by a traditional form. The "bookend" statements are more truly Nixonian because he was not constrained by the award guidelines and was speaking as man and President in those moments.
[36] #69101.
[37] #69383.
[38] #69456.
[39] #73090.
[40] #690101.
[41] #69247 and #70444.
[42] #70444.
[43] Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, *The Great Silent Majority: Nixon's 1969 Speech on Vietnamization* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2014), 59.
[44] #69115.
[45] In #69383, Nixon stated that servicemen's brave, warrior character was "acquired from their families, from their homes, from their schools, from their churches, from the heart of America."
[46] #P3975.
[47] As the VFW explains, "Americanization Day" was a counter-protest to the communist commemoration of the Russian Revolution. See https://www.vfw.org/community/community-initiatives/patriotic-days.
[48] See Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Proclamation 3091—Loyalty Day, 1955," 28 April 1955, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=107237 and "Statement by the President Upon Signing Resolution Designating May as Loyalty Day," 18 July 1958, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=11135.
[49] The full list and access to these proclamations may be found at http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?searchterm=loyalty%20day
[50] For example, Clinton's 1997 proclamation discussed what loyalty meant in times of peace and prosperity, whereas Trump's 2017 one specifically addressed terrorism, among other things.
[51] "Loyalty Day" has always been 1 May since Eisenhower issued his 1958 proclamation. The timing took on an eerie significance in 1970. On 30 April 1970, Nixon announced to the public that American forces had begun bombing "Communist sanctuaries" in Cambodia, a neutral country, which immediately resulted in a massive wave of protests on college campuses that resulted, in Kent State University's case, in the murders by National Guard gunfire of four college students. As I will mention later in this chapter, around three-quarters of Americans polled after the KSU shootings stated that they felt the KSU students had "started it" and deserved their fates. Loyalty Day, indeed.
[52] #P3975.

[53] Lincoln, Abraham. "The Perpetuation of Our Political Institutions: Address Before the Young Men's Lyceum of Springfield, Illinois, January 27, 1838." In *Abraham Lincoln: His Speeches and Writings,* ed. Roy P. Basler (Cambridge: Da Capo, 2001): 76-85.
[54] #69269.
[55] #73090.
[56] #74093.
[57] #70150.
[58] #73098.
[59] Sunstein, "Beyond the Republican Revival."
[60] Executive Order 11521 in particular was a sort of "GI Bill 2.0."
[61] #71137.
[62] #69228.
[63] #71200.
[64] This is not unlike the argument Denise Bostdorff made of Nixon's "opening" China. China was effectively ready to open during LBJ's presidency, but Nixon took political steps to make sure he would be the one doing the opening. Denise M. Bostdorff, "The Evolution of a Diplomatic Surprise: Richard M. Nixon's Rhetoric on China, 1952-July 15, 1971," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 5, no.1 (2002): 31-56.
[65] I know I am not alone in having felt extremely empowered after seeing *Wonder Woman* (2017), the first big-budget, major motion picture company superhero film solely about a female superhero.
[66] Kenneth Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1950), 20-23.
[67] Burke, *Rhetoric of Motives* 21.
[68] Chaïm Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*, trans. by John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), 413.
[69] #74062.
[70] Jeanne Fahnestock and Marie Secor, *Rhetoric of Argument,* 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 1990), 329-331.
[71] Maurice Charland, "Constitutive Rhetoric: The Case of the *Peuple Québécois*," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 73, no. 2 (1987): 133-150.
[72] Purcell 48.
[73] #73098.
[74] Campbell 59.
[75] Purcell 48.
[76] #73090.
[77] These are the same two social movements that Karlyn Kohrs Campbell discusses in her small but mighty book on *The Great Silent Majority*.
[78] Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," *University of Pennsylvania African Studies Center*, 16 April 1963, https://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html.
[79] See also Elaine Tyler May's *Homeward Bound* and WJ Rorabaugh, *American Hippies* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015) among others.

[80] Khan, "Jackie, Robinson. Feel free to roll your eyes at this Nixonian "I have friends who are Black!" business, though.
[81] Campbell 57. For more on Nixon's Southern Strategy, see Frank Brown, "Nixon's 'Southern Strategy' and Forces against Brown," *The Journal of Negro Education* 73, no. 3 (2004): 191-208; Bruce H. Kalk, "Wormley's Hotel Revisited: Richard Nixon's Southern Strategy and the End of the Second Reconstruction." *The North Carolina Historical Review* 71, no. 1 (1994): 85-105; and Randy Sanders, "Rassling a Governor: Defiance, Desegregation, Claude Kirk, and the Politics of Richard Nixon's Southern Strategy," *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 80, no. 3 (2002): 332-59.
[82] In Chapter 5, I will show how this subtler strategy opened the door for the election of Donald Trump almost 50 years later.
[83] For example, John Dean sent a memorandum to the president on inappropriate ties between a Panther, the ACLU, and an anti-Vietnam group. J. Edgar Hoover sent a similar memo to John Ehrlichman, reporting of indirect ties between a police commissioner and the Panthers but warned that the commissioner might be "influenced" by them. "Scheduled Appearance of Black Panther Party Representative at Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, April 30, 1970," 30 April 1970, folder Demonstrations and Domestic Intelligence, 1968-73: Project Alpha/Black Panthers, box 85, White House Special Files: Staff Member and Office Files: John Dean, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA, author's archival photo 20170302_133641; and "Memorandum, J. Edgar Hoover to John D. Ehrlichman," 14 April 1970, folder Alphabetical Subject File: Black Panthers, box 19, White House Special Files: Staff Member and Office Files: John Ehrlichman, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA, author's archival photo 20170302_143723. For some academic work on this subject, see Dean J. Kotlowski, "Black Power – Nixon Style: The Nixon Administration and Minority Business Enterprise," *Business History Review* 72, no. 3 (1998): 409-446; and Pauline Peretz, "President Nixon's Broken Promise to 'Bring the American People Together,'" *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 44, no. 4 (2014): 673-696.
[84] We see this in *RN*, as well as in "The President's News Conference," 30 July 1970, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project,* http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=2603.
[85] #71182.
[86] #71204.
[87] #71204. Indeed, even if he is saying that whites are implicated in drugs too, by using the phrase "no longer," Nixon points the "you started it" finger at the Black community.
[88] Campbell refers to this move as the creation of "a highly unattractive alter-ego," or the creation of straw-person enemies in his speeches (59).
[89] #72090.
[90] #71172.
[91] #71182.
[92] #71204. Nixon stated, in regards to officials meeting at the White House to discuss desegregation, "many of the white leaders particularly—even some of the blacks—but most of the white leaders said, 'We don't agree with the law, we don't like the law, but we do not want our part of the country to be a non-law-abiding area.'"

[93] I have already discussed Nixon's Birmingham and Rochester addresses. Nixon included in a late 1972 "Radio Address on Crime and Drug Abuse" the declaration that "Government must never mistake license for liberty, amorality for tolerance, indulgence for charity, or weakness for compassion. Above all, government must maintain that structure of ordered freedom within which alone the human spirit can thrive and flourish" (#72350). These contrasting pairs align the Nixon administration with the greater good and give him license to again "speak for the majority of Americans." Nixon would later use this license to claim, "The American people are a law-abiding people. They have faith in the law," effectively barring any who are not law-abiding from an "American" identity. See #73079.
[94] #72350, #73074, and #73079.
[95] #73074. At the time of writing, Trump is reportedly preparing to declare the current opioid epidemic a national crisis. We must watch with scholarly interest whether a similar "war" develops in the Trump administration rhetoric. For a biographical take on the "war on drugs," see Farrell, especially pages 378-379.
[96] #72350.
[97] David Zarefsky, *President Johnson's War on Poverty: Rhetoric and History* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1992). Johnson was not alone in, as Leroy Dorsey states, "narrated a war myth with a nonmilitary objective," for John F. Kennedy used war language and imagery when forming the Peace Corps. See Leroy G. Dorsey, "The Myth of War and Peace in Presidential Discourse: John Kennedy's 'New Frontier' Myth and the Peace Corps," *The Southern Communication Journal* 62, no. 1 (1996): 42-55.
[98] Zarefsky 92.
[99] Zarefsky 119.
[100] #72350.
[101] Zarefsky 22.
[102] Nixon used anecdotal evidence in many of his speeches to humanize the costs of drug abuse in the United States, and in two of his lengthier examples, the audience learns of a white man associated with the war on drugs who is gunned down by ostensibly Black offenders. Senator John Stennis was the victim of a "senseless shooting" in Washington DC, and Frank Tummillo was shot in New York City only a month before his wedding day. Nixon does not come right out and name the gunmen as Black, but Senator Stennis's shooter was a young "lawless" teen named Tyrone (a traditionally Irish or Scottish name that was very popular in the Black community in the 1960s and 1970s) and Tummillo's shooters are described as "two hoodlums" (a word often used as a softer version of "thug" or "gangster"). Nixon names the victims and personalizes them, including describing them as fighters in the war on crime and drugs. By contrast, he uses racially coded euphemism and suggestion to describe the gunmen, the villains in these stories.
[103] #73074; also see "The President's News Conference," 30 July 1970, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project,* http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=2603.
[104] The speeches cited above each explain Nixon's aggressive incarceration policies for drug use and sales, and no matter how much Nixon attempted to paint it as "dangerous nonsense," this incarceration system has disproportionally affected the Black community

to a high degree. Newell provides an excellent history of the "war on drugs" and its legal legacy. "Sentencing laws," he states, "are nominally race-blind and could be explained by developments in criminological theory or by lawmakers' eagerness to bolster their 'tough on crime' credentials. Certain sentencing laws, however, such as the federal government's differential treatment of cocaine and crack offenses, are difficult to justify as being race-blind" (Newell 20-21). Newell also cites the "spiraling effect" of a criminal record on under- and unemployment as disproportionally affecting Black Americans (14). Walker Newell, "The Legacy of Nixon, Reagan, and Horton: How the Tough on Crime Movement Enabled a New Regime of Race-Influenced Employment Discrimination," *Berkeley Journal of African-American Law & Policy* 15, no. 1 (2013): 3-36.

[105] #73074 and #73079.

[106] Sources are not precise about numbers as these protests were usually *ad hoc*. The most notable protest, however, was the 100,000 people who gathered in Washington, D.C., in May 1970, just days after the Kent State shootings, and the student strike that began on 8 May 1970.

[107] For example, one of the more famous "disrespectful" chants was "1 2 3 4 we don't want your fucking war!"

[108] Less than a month after the National Guard's fatal shooting of four students at Kent State University, famous folk rock group Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young recorded their hit protest song, "Ohio," which recounted their view of the events that took place on the Northeast Ohio campus in on 4 May 1970.

[109] Kent State is a state university in Kent, Ohio, about 30 miles northeast of Akron. See http://www.kent.edu/ for more demographic info on Kent State. Kent State is also now home to the May 4th Visitor Center, a museum curated to memorialize the shootings. The late Carole Barbato, Kent State Professor Emerita of communication and a dear neighbor and friend, was instrumental in opening the Visitor Center.

[110] *The Report of the President's Commission on Campus Unrest, Including Special Reports: The Killings at Jackson State, The Kent State Tragedy* (New York: Arno Press, 1970): 233-259.

[111] Nixon, *RN* 454.

[112] Nixon, *RN* 455.

[113] Nixon, *RN* 457.

[114] #70140.

[115] I will discuss at length the similarities between Nixon's Kent State statement and Trump's Charlottesville statement of August 2017 in Chapter 5.

[116] "A *Newsweek Poll*: Mr. Nixon Holds Up," *Newsweek*, May 18, 1970, p30.

[117] For more, see J. Gregory Payne, "Aftermath," *May 4 Archive*, 1997, https://may4archive.org/aftermath.shtml.

[118] #70151; An earlier draft of the Jackson State Statement, now declassified, reads "Violence helps no rational cause. It inevitably creates unmitigated anguish for those involved and immeasurable harm for our country. Let us settle our differences through reason and not through riot and retaliation." "Memorandum, Leonard Garment to John Ehrlichman (Copy to Ron Ziegler)," no date, folder Kent State – Jackson [CFOA 5016], White House Confidential Files: Staff Member and Office Files: Leonard Garment Alpha-Subject Files, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA,

author's archival photo 20170303_111400. Obviously, this statement has much more in common with the KSU Statement, playing to the same unsympathetic civic republican traits. This was not, however, the draft the White House ultimately used.

[119] I will not quote the hateful things the officers said of the JSC students. Those interested can consult the Jackson State section of *The Report of the President's Commission on Campus Unrest.*

[120] The *President's Commission* report notes at length, however, that, before the JSC shootings, students were engaged in the annual "spring riots" that caused over $10,000 in property damage. "Ruling passions" seemed to be at work at JSC as much as racial hatred was, but Nixon could mute the former by stressing the latter.

[121] Campbell 95.

[122] The correct spelling of My Lai in Vietnamese is Mỹ Lai (pronounced "me-ee lie"). The United States uses the Latinate y in spelling My Lai, and I will use this spelling throughout this section.

[123] For more, see the VVAW's website, http://www.vvaw.org/about/.

[124] I am grateful to Dominic Manthey for doing his research on this topic and asking me to get these files for him. I had no idea how helpful they would be for me too.

[125] This included one of John Kerry's testimony. "Preservation Copy: *New York Times* 'Anti-War Veteran Accused of Exploiting P.O.W. Issue,'" 23 July 1971, folder Subject Files: Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) [1 of 2], box 117, White House Special Files: Staff Member and Office Files: Charles Colson, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA, author's archival photo 20170302_103716.

[126] "Memorandum, Charles Colson to John Dean," 11 October 1971, folder Subject File: 145 W Vietnam Veterans Against the War V. Laird, box 77, White House Special Files: Staff Member and Office Files: John Dean, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA, author's archival photo 20170302_102947.

[127] "Plan to Counteract Viet Nam Veterans Against the War," no date, folder Subject Files: Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) [2 of 2], box 117, White House Special Files: Staff Member and Office Files: Charles Colson, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA, author's archival photo 20170302_104659.

[128] Woodward, *The Last of the President's Men*, 55.

[129] Woodward 52. Seymour M. Hersh, "An Atrocity is Uncovered, November 1969: The My Lai Massacre," *The St. Louis Dispatch*, reproduced at http://pierretristam.com/Bobst/library/wf-200.htm.

[130] In his memoir, *RN*, Nixon claimed that, following Calley's life sentence, "More than 5,000 telegrams arrived at the White House, running 100 to 1 in favor of clemency. As Woodward and Bernstein's famous *Washington Post* articles (and book *All the President's Men*) exposed, the Nixon Administration often paid people under the table to send bogus telegrams so that the president could later claim such a flood of correspondence from the people, showing that he indeed spoke for them. Furthermore, if we think of who sends telegrams, it makes sense that the majority of telegram senders would be more conservative (telegrams were a bit old-fashioned in the 70s and they cost money).

[131] Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front* (New York: Random House, 1957). See page 22 in particular.

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[132] Woodward 51.
[133] #69481.
[134] Woodward 53-55; corroborated by many stories, written for the 45th anniversary of the massacre, that cited Nixon Library evidence.
[135] Nixon, *RN* 499-500.
[136] Campbell 75 and 86.
[137] Campbell 60.
[138] A July 1968 *Esquire* Q&A with author James Baldwin starkly evidences this point. The Q&A title is "Q: How can we get the black people to cool it? James Baldwin: It is not for us to cool it. Q: But aren't you the ones who are getting hurt the most? James Baldwin: No, we are only the ones who are dying the fastest."
[139] Jeffords xi; Given her retrospective take on Vietnam and her choice to work with popular culture artifacts rather than, as I do, presidential rhetoric, I decided it was not within the scope of this chapter to discuss Jeffords in my analysis.
[140] Jeffords 116; Nixon always, always asserted in his presidential rhetoric that the goal in Vietnam was preserving American's honor. Campbell states, "Here [in the Silent Majority speech] and later, preserving American prestige and credibility seemed to be indistinguishable from preserving President Nixon's personal prestige and credibility" (69). However, for all Nixon's talk of "peace with honor," history today generally considers Vietnam a defeat for the United States.
[141] In #72350, Nixon declared: "The increasingly urbanized, technological, crowded, pluralistic, affluent, leisure oriented society which America has become in these final decades of the 20th century poses complex new dangers to our traditional concepts of personal safety, human dignity, moral values." His disdain for the vocal minority is obvious in this passage.

CHAPTER 4

"HARD" AND "SOFT" MASCULINITY IN WATERGATE

"FROST: Let me, sum up this prologue this way, Mr. President. You're saying that in your judgment, you would say that history will pay much more attention to your achievements in foreign policy and domestic policy than it will to Watergate or to abuses of power?
NIXON: No, I can't… What history says about this administration will depend on who writes the history." *-Frost/Nixon Interviews, 23 March 1977*[1]

"But I know that in the history books twenty-five years from now what will really matters is the fact that the President of the United States in the period from 1969 to 1976 changed the world."
-Richard Nixon, RN[2]

Since 1974, the suffix "-gate" has been a useful meme to indicate some political scandal, like Gamergate or Pizzagate, but as they say: you can't beat the original.[3] In this turbulent 2017 political climate, not only do "-gate" portmanteaus abound, so too do references to the actual Watergate scandal as Donald Trump finds himself implicated in one scandal after another. Whenever there is an allegation of shocking covert government activity, the American public is quick to draw similarities with the early 1970s Watergate scandal.

Watergate is the stuff of political legend. Although public memory recalls Watergate as an explosive scandal that brought down a president, those involved remember it as a slow-boiling, confusing situation of illegal activity and cover-up that ended in Nixon's resignation.[4] Watergate was primarily about political trickery, money, and hiding untoward activity. The three articles of Nixon's impeachment summarized this, characterizing Watergate as "Obstruction of Justice," "Abuse of Power," and "Contempt of Congress."[5] The scandal took its name from the 1972 incident when police arrested five burglars attempting to steal documents from and to bug the Democratic National Committee headquarters in the Watergate hotel and office building in the months leading up to the 1972 presidential election. Nixon supporters tend to stress that

covert activities like bugging, stealing documents, disrupting rallies, and political pranks (such as the "Cannuck Letter") were common practice for all political parties at least since the 1960 Kennedy campaign.[6] Whether it was common or not, the break-in was still illegal, and the burglars were still charged.

The slippery slope of cover-ups began when the burglars' White House affiliations were exposed. A series of decisions at the White House and the Committee to Re-elect the President led to money changing hands in an attempt to ensure that that the burglars and one White House officer, G. Gordon Liddy, and no one else within the Administration would take the blame. While the "hush money" worked for a time, the burglars eventually began to talk, in some cases out of greed and jealousy and in others out of guilt and fear. Former White House counsel John Dean recounts the elaborate series of "leak-plugging" that those within the White House performed to "protect the President" from Watergate.[7] What the Watergate investigations eventually unveiled was that President Nixon definitely needed protecting, given his knowledge of and involvement in the cover-up. The leak-plugging could not, however, stop Nixon's ship from sinking. On 8 August 1974, Richard Nixon did what he vowed never to do: he resigned the U.S. presidency, and Gerald Ford became the 38th President of the United States.

When it comes to Watergate, Howard Baker's infamous question reverberates through the decades: "What did the president know, and when did he know it?" However, those hoping for my answers to Baker's question, for a psychological profile of the 37th president, or for an exposé on his role in Watergate will be disappointed. Focusing on these questions would obscure the knowledge Watergate can share about hegemonic

masculinity in the United States.[8] I choose instead to focus on how Richard Nixon's Watergate rhetoric reflects hegemonic understanding of "hard" and "soft" masculinity and its role in a crisis. This chapter is not about Watergate itself; instead, I use Watergate to examine how hegemonic masculinity reacts when under threat.

Several questions guide my inquiry in this chapter. Chiefly, they are: (1) What does it mean when the mainstream man's metonym suddenly seems no longer to represent the mainstream image? Or worse: what does it mean when the mainstream man's metonym is exposed, on a public stage, as the dark antithesis of an upstanding American? (2) Once exposed, what rhetoric provides a means for hegemonic masculinity to retain a dominant status?

To address these questions, I argue that the Watergate scandal demonstrates that, when under attack, mainstream masculinity opts for the rhetorical techniques of victimage and demonization and relies on the social fiction of "hard" versus "soft" masculinity. Watergate represents the tenuousness of mainstream masculinity, for who in this scandal was a "leader" and who a "follower"? It also represents the deleteriousness of hegemonic masculinity: Watergate validates R.W. Connell's thesis that hegemonic masculinity is an impossible, unachievable standard to which men attempt to conform, to their detriment. Furthermore, Nixon's attempt to reconstitute his dominance is metonymic of rhetorical tactics used to maintain the dominance of hegemonic masculinity in the United States.[9]

In pursuit of this thesis, I analyze five of Richard Nixon's Watergate texts.[10] These five texts—the final version of the Watergate Speech, the final version of the Resignation Speech, the full transcript of the Frost/Nixon interviews, Nixon's memoir

RN, and the Watergate exhibit at the Nixon Presidential Library and Museum—represent wide differences in genre. I have selected these particular artifacts for two reasons. First, nearly every American knew about and consumed them contemporarily. These were public, not esoteric, texts. Second, these five artifacts allow Nixon to speak to Watergate and the end of his presidency both in the historical moment and in retrospective.[11] What unites these varied artifacts is the consistent Watergate narrative they present. These are evidentiary sources for the stability of Nixon's account of the scandal throughout the final two decades of his life. Additionally, considered together, these Watergate sources show the vital role maintenance of self-image played, both for Nixon and, representatively, for hegemonic masculinity. As these texts follow a single theme, I treat them as five parts of a whole, rather than performing five individual analyses.

Though I focus primarily on these Nixonian artifacts, I do take into account two other highly relevant Watergate books, John W. Dean III's *Blind Ambition* (1976) and Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward's *All the President's Men* (1974). These books provide a counterpoint to Nixon's Watergate narrative, underscoring many of the same incidences as Nixon but framing them in opposite terms. What Nixon saw as his hardness, these men saw as Nixon's softness and metonymic unsuitability. These three men—Dean, Woodward, and Bernstein—arguably stood to seize the helm of mainstream masculinity and to steer it in a different direction when Watergate threw Nixonian masculinity so off its mooring.

In the pages to follow, I first offer some history on "hard" and "soft" masculinity discourse in the United States and on the postwar "crisis of masculinity." I then explore the primary rhetorical techniques Nixon used to establish his definitions of "hard" and

"soft" masculinity. Among other things, these definitions attempted to maintain his metonymic status and his fitness to maintain the presidency during the Watergate affair. I then pivot towards the counterpoint, examining the alternative narrative to Watergate provided in *Blind Ambition* and *All the President's Men*, which reinforced Nixon's unfitness. The previous two chapters of this project examined how Nixon's presidential rhetoric attempted to repair cracks in the hard carapace of American hegemonic masculinity. This chapter investigates what happened when that shell finally broke.

"Hard" and "Soft" Masculinity

The terms, "hard" and "soft" masculinity entered the mainstream United States cultural lexicon in the years following WWII. Deeply disturbed by Nazi sympathizers and lower officers "just following orders" and by the increasing dominance of wives within homes, a great fear of unmanliness gripped American culture. This was not the first era in which a masculine panic had consumed the country; Michael Kimmel and Gail Bederman each account for similar panics throughout American history.[12]

Both primary and secondary sources account for this so-called "crisis of masculinity." This "crisis of masculinity" vocabulary came from

> the work of prominent sociologists such as David Riesman, whose book *The Lonely Crowd* (1950) pointed to the "demise" of the strong, self-made, "inner-directed" American "character" and the subsequent rise of a feminized, "other-directed" organization man whose principal goal was to conform to mass culture rather than assert his own individuality. Although Riesman repeatedly claimed that he was not calling for a nostalgia-inspired return to "inner direction," his work was read as an attack on modern conformity and an endorsement of traditional American individualism.[13]

The Riesman book was just one in a series of many similar titles, including Whyte's *Organization Man* (1956) and Mills's *White Collar* (1951). Essayists used other contemporary sources, as with *LOOK!* magazine's *The Decline of the American Male* (1958), to lament the "softening" of American men. Also among this genre was work by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., a prominent member of the Kennedy White House and a vigorous opponent of Richard Nixon. Examining the era in retrospect, K.A. Cuordileone and Ian Nicholson each provide outstanding histories of this period of United States society and gender politics.[14]

What exactly was this "crisis of masculinity"? Immediately after WWII, men no longer had a war in which to prove their masculinity, and as industrialization turned to corporatization, men found their skills measured no longer by the skills of their hands but by an evaluation assessed by another, superior man. Facing a loss of the active, masculine self, it became *doxa* that the middle-management white color drone was a thing to be feared and avoided. This was "soft" masculinity; "hard" masculinity represented those men who resisted "softness" and followed their own internal beat. The hard man was the unquestioned head of his household and worked hard so his wife could stay home with the children.

It is difficult to say whether this "crisis" ever truly existed; it seems a great example of what Michael Kimmel called "real, but not true," where persons experience a phenomenon in a real way but the phenomenon does not reflect facts. While it was true that American men's experiences were changing—for example, they had only unpopular proxy wars in which to show their warrior worth, and white-collar work became dominant—white men in the United States still absolutely held high social status and

privileges, and the United States never caved to communism's influence. This echoes another of Kimmel's points: masculinity, he claims, is a performance by men for the benefit of other men, not women. It is other men's judgment of masculinity that males seek. The performance of "hardness" became an important element of the United States after the end of the Second World War.

The crisis of masculinity permeated American life in the early Cold War.[15] In the immediate post-war years, *doxa* held that masculine softness made a man susceptible to being pushed around by other men and, worse, by women, to "turning" gay, and to falling under communist influence. The growing fear of the global spread of communism, K.A. Cuordileone asserts, "put a new premium on hard masculine toughness and rendered anything less than that soft and feminine and, as such, a real or potential threat to the security of the nation."[16] Masculinity and national security became one.

As concerns about communist infiltration grew in the United States alongside fears of the "crisis of masculinity," Americans needed reassurance that democratic citizens could resist. The infamous Milgram shock experiments attempted to measure scientifically whether the American man was tough enough to resist corrupt authority. In Nicholson's words, "Milgram wanted to show real American men submitting to other men or defiantly asserting their own masculine power in the face of irresponsible male authority," spurred by fears that American men might be as weak as Nazi men who were "just following orders."[17] The "soft" man would, according to the hypothesis, continue to bend under the pressure the researcher put upon him and continue to shock another man, even when the shocker felt it was wrong or knew he was causing harm or even death. But

from the start, the Milgram experiments demonstrated that the definitions of hard/soft are subjective, depending completely on who is doing the defining.

Definitions matter, especially when a certain terms come to define the boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable; this is the trouble with "hard" and "soft" masculinity. Ian Nicholson's rhetorical inquiry into the Stanley Milgram experiments perfectly explains this trouble. Nicholson explains of the experiments: "much of the obedience study's appeal lay in its 'scientific' and visual 'confirmation' that such fears [about other-directed masculinity] were justified."[18] Science could become propaganda about American gender norms. Nicholson points out a paradox in the research design: was it morally right and "hard" to stand up to the researcher and say, "I will not do this," or was the moral, manly hard-ground the ability to follow through on tough jobs to protect national security? Nicholson points out that research participants in the first Milgram studies who "failed" to stand up to the researcher saw themselves as the hardest men:

> For some, resisting authority was an indication of their "hardness." … [But] Several men drew on their own experience as soldiers in World War II and framed the study as a test to identify tough guys who could get the job done against a determined Communist foe. … For these men, the experiment was not a test of an abstract inner morality but a measure of their warrior masculinity.[19]

The results and even the very design of the Milgram shock experiments embodied R.W. Connell's assertion in *Masculinities* that hegemonic masculinity is ephemeral; chasing it is like trying to hold smoke. How should a man in the Cold War United States conduct himself? Did he demonstrate his "hardness" by standing up to authority, or was he doing the "hard" thing by following along if it meant achieving the greater good?

The great fear both during the Watergate crisis and into the middle Cold War years was the loss of the "inner drum" or "inner-directedness" that allowed previous generations of Americans to prevail over fascism during the World Wars. Ian Nicholson explains that in the post-World-Wars years, the American public engaged "in a discourse of national decline that centered on the idea that American culture was losing its ability to produce autonomous, strong-willed individuals."[20] This fear particularly applied to men, for women in the early Cold War years were already presumed passive and other-focused and in need of direction from a strong husband.[21] The president is the head of the national household, and he must thus be possessed of hard masculine leadership.

There is no evidence that Nixon read books like *The Lonely Crowd*, but one may safely conclude that he would have been steeped in this rhetoric of the "crisis of masculinity." As a WWII veteran and politician in his mid-thirties during the boom in this rhetoric, Nixon could not have missed the cultural mood that these books attempted to address (or as one might argue, that they in fact exacerbated). Furthermore, given his civic republican sensibilities, the restoration of the hard American male would likely have been very appealing. The language of a "crisis of masculinity" may have fallen out of the mainstream, but its attendant fears pervaded the American male consciousness, especially as major social change threatened the hegemonic dominance of the white American man.

Nixon's Definitions of "Hard" and "Soft"

Were Nixon and his staff members involved in Watergate "hard" because they stayed the course to protect United States interests in the Cold War, even if it meant

orchestrating or at least tolerating some covert activities and corruption along the way? Or were they "soft" because no one in the toxically masculine White House environment would stand up to presidential authority and say "this is wrong"? For the 20 years between resignation and death, Nixon provided a consistent answer to these questions, characterizing himself as the definition of hard masculinity, the quintessential civic republican who put the greater good of the country above all else. However, this unwavering commitment came at a cost: many of the qualities essential to his "staying the course" led to a tunnel-blindness that revealed that which ultimately made Nixon an unfit metonym for American mainstream masculinity. Nixon's Watergate rhetoric is a metonymic demonstration of how hegemonic masculinity responds to challenges to its dominance and the limits of that response.

Watergate presented a rupture both to Nixon and to the office of the presidency. Universal approval of a president is impossible in a democratic society, but pre-Watergate *doxa* held that the office of the presidency was respectable, honorable, and good. Revelations about Watergate, especially the White House tapes, violated *doxastic* understanding of presidential decorum.[22] Nixon's violent anger and ugly, curse-filled language blew apart common sense knowledge of how a president—and by extension, how an American man—should act. The vulgarity on the tapes was hyper-masculine, which at this level of excess performed the upper limits of acceptable American male behavior. Performances of "hardness" can become unacceptably soft when overstated. Watergate and all its attendant scandals exposed the president as a soft, immoral man, unfit to serve as president and as metonym for mainstream American masculinity. In the Watergate crisis, we see how mainstream American masculinity and the presidency link

inextricably and the high stakes for a rupture in either. Under threat, Nixon needed to go on the offensive to recast his behavior as both hard and acceptable. This attempt meant to save his presidency as well as the version of American maleness he represented.

Richard Nixon's various Watergate texts are a form of image-management rhetoric. Social scientist Claude Steele theorized "self-affirmation theory" in the late 1980s, and writing on his work, David Sherman and Geoffrey Cohen note the four tenets of this theory:

> 1. People are motivated to protect the perceived integrity and worth of self.
> 2. Motivations to protect self-integrity can result in defensive responses.
> 3. The self-system is flexible.
> 4. People can be affirmed by engaging in activities that remind them of "who they are" (and doing so reduces the implications for self-integrity of threatening events).[23]

Self-affirmation theory explains the central role of identity maintenance for humans; our self-image is important enough to defend vigorously when attacked. In fact, Sherman and Cohen comment that, "When this image of self-integrity is threatened, people respond in such a way as to restore self-worth."[24] Under threat, this theory holds that a person will dig in their heels to maintain their sense of self.

Self-affirmation theory explains Richard Nixon's Watergate rhetoric surprisingly well. Consistency characterizes Nixon's Watergate discourse; over the two decades between Watergate and his death, he never wavered from his story. Many public figures come to reevaluate their stance on a scandal with the benefit of time, but not Nixon.[25] While invoking self-affirmation theory may seem like I am psychologizing the 37th president, I consider it only to help explain the rhetorical choices he made in the two decades of his Watergate discourse. Indeed, Nixon's role as mainstream masculinity's

metonym and his stubborn adherence to his innocence narrative, even in the face of overwhelming evidence of guilt, combine to make Watergate a superb historical example of how hegemonic masculinity performs under pressure.

Watergate shook the foundations of public trust in the president and the presidency, as well as in the form of masculinity the president metonymically represented. His Watergate discourse reveals clear definitions of "hard" and "soft" masculinities that cast Nixon as hard and his opponents—principally Congress, liberals, Democrats, the media, and John Dean—as soft. Nixon drew on "crisis of masculinity" rhetoric to stabilize his position of power and to recast his failings in a better light. He aggressively defended himself through victimage and verbose rationalizing.

The Martyrdom of Cincinnatus

Scandal characterized much Nixon's very long political career. From the "fund affair" during his vice-presidency all the way to Watergate, Nixon often found himself mired in controversy.[26] Like perceived crises of masculinity, the Watergate crisis presented a potentially devastating challenge to the *status quo*, and in both cases, rhetors deployed resources to fight each challenge as it emerged. Consistent throughout his career was Nixon's response to moments of political turmoil: his written works reveal that he always he saw himself personally and presented himself publically as a martyred Cincinnatus. Called to public service from rural Yorba Linda, Nixon gave exhaustively of himself only to be destroyed by the dirty tricks of his enemies, the Democrats, liberal elites, and liberal media. His willingness to do the unthinkable—to resign—in order to

save the "greater good" of the United States completed his martyred Cincinnatus identity. This victimage was therefore a fundamental part of weathering Watergate.

By casting himself as the martyred Cincinnatus, Nixon marshaled civic republican virtues to cast himself as both magnanimous and victimized. As I explained in Chapters I and III, the civic republican demonstrates cool reason, supports public deliberation, and rebuffs anti-factionalism, all to seek the greater good of society.[27] Civic republicanism celebrates the virtuous, intelligent, preferably military veteran man, who takes up the mantle of power to lead the passion-governed masses.[28] Nixon's presidential rhetoric drew on the symbolism of the average citizen called to civic leadership and who sacrificed himself to those "who know not what they do." These symbols draw on Christian iconography as well as on elements of United States civil religion, creating a doubly resonant narrative.

In addition to resonating with American and Christian audiences, these symbols would have been even more persuasive to a 1970s mainstream male audience of Americans. The 1970s saw the explosive growth of today's largest social movements, such as LGBTQA+, feminist, and civil rights movements. Previously marginalized groups were increasingly voicing—and often winning—social capital and rights. This was perhaps the first time in the 20th century that "normal" white men were outnumbered on multiple fronts. These movements attacked a *status quo* that greatly benefitted white males in the United States.

Although not a casualty of social movements, the Watergate crisis presented mainstream masculinity with a serious threat to its legitimacy. The presidency represents both the essence of the State and of mainstream masculinity; Nixon could therefore

interpret any attack on him as an attack on the United States and on the dominance of mainstream masculinity. In response, his Watergate rhetoric named him a Cincinnatus, victimized by liberals, Washington elites, and media who attacked him. These groups were preventing him from continuing the good work he believed he was doing for the United States during his presidency.[29]

Nixon's various Watergate texts draw on this martyred Cincinnatus rhetoric. *RN* in particular constantly blames Democrats and the liberal media for attacking the administration in ways that made it difficult (sometimes even impossible) to attend to "important" matters of government.[30] Particularly, Nixon lamented that Watergate was distracting the public from the successes the United States made brokering peace among warring Middle East nations.[31] In the memoir and in the Frost interviews, Nixon described his work in the Middle East as an unprecedented achievement. He simultaneously expressed bitterness and disappointment that the Congress, media, and American public chose instead to focus on what he saw as the far less important matter of Watergate.[32] This lamentation is at least a redirection or even a red herring: Nixon offered the public an alternative to Watergate that highlighted those qualities that made him a fit leader and downplayed those that challenged this image. Furthermore, by placing himself on the side of righteousness, Nixon's opponents appeared as immoral attackers.

Kenneth Burke famously explained the rhetorical role of scapegoating; identification among an in-group requires an out-group.[33] Nixon's Watergate rhetoric labeled an irresponsible press and a bloodthirsty and factional Congress and political leadership class as those worthy of blame. As the *Washington Post* continued to publish

articles on Watergate through 1973, Nixon expressed in his memoir disdain for the paper's "double standards" and "irresponsible" practices:

> In December 1971, the Washington *Post* [sic] had proudly announced a new policy: it would always insist on public accountability for public business—government officials would not be allowed to talk on a "source" basis. In the spring of 1973…the *Post* guaranteed anonymity to anyone who proffered an exciting and exclusive Watergate leak or story. Other papers followed this lead, reacting to the combination of commercial pressure and professional competitiveness. They called it "investigative journalism," but it was not that at all. There is nothing "investigative" about publicizing leaks from sources in the FBI, the Justice Department, or congressional committees who have easy access to confidential material. This was rumor journalism, some true, some false, some a mixture of truth and fiction, all prejudicial. That it was a dangerous form of journalism should have been understood by the *Post*, whose editor, Ben Bradlee, has since observed: 'We don't print the truth. We print what we know, what people tell us. So we print lies.'"[34]

It is a lengthy but telling passage. In the first two sentences, Nixon presented two contrasting statements about the *Washington Post*'s policies. The first sentence recounts an achievement and the second a selling-out; juxtaposing these sentences acts as an antithesis, highlighting the contradictions. By placing "December 1971" and "1973" in such close proximity, Nixon condemned the *Post*'s radical alteration of their policies in less than 24 months. The passage also shows Nixon's commitments to civic republicanism: terms like "exciting," "exclusive," "rumor," and "fiction" carry a negative connotation in the passage, for these words are associated with inappropriate passion. The utility of scapegoating is twofold in Watergate, reinforcing in-group bonds and framing all actions as defensive reactions to threat.

Nixon also used a common presidential image-management tactic: untoward, covert activities like Watergate were excusable because they protected "national

security." Recasting Watergate as the by-product of national security helped justify it; actions that protect the United States and the welfare of the American public are ostensibly welcome and proper. The above passage castigating the *Post* shows Nixon's opinion that the press consists of "soft men" who do not care about US national security. Instead, thrill-seeking journalists and an immoral editorial staff governed the public's access to the Watergate story. Scapegoating helped Nixon delegitimize his enemies, and by drawing on the rhetorical resources of soft masculinity, Nixon implied by contrast that he was "hard" and therefore a worthy leader.

Hard/soft rhetoric created an easy vocabulary for tying masculinity to political victimage; if Nixon's enemies were soft, he was therefore hard. This rhetoric simultaneously advocated both for his fitness as president and masculine metonym and for the unfitness of any alternatives. In addition to castigating the press, Nixon had to recast Congress and the political leadership class of Washington, D.C., as "soft" to bolster his "hardness." Nixon's civic republicanism yielded little tolerance for softness and factionalism in Congress, and civic republicanism gave him a system-sanctioned rhetoric by which to condemn these groups.[35] Especially throughout his memoir, Nixon emphasized how an unfit Congress and out-of-touch "elites" constantly undermined the strong domestic policies and heroic foreign policies the Nixon administration pursued.[36] In a diary entry from September 1972 reproduced in *RN*, Nixon railed against the incompetence of the "leader class":

> The American leader class has really had it in terms of their ability to lead. It's really sickening to have to receive them at the White House as I often do and to hear them whine and whimper and that's one of the reasons why I enjoy very much more receiving labor leaders and people from middle American who still have character and guts and a bit of patriotism.[37]

Nixon created a clear "hard/us" and "soft/them" dichotomy, lumping himself and his administration in with blue-collar American men. By contrast, he used infantilizing and traditionally feminine terms, "whine and whimper," to describe the leader class. Furthermore, by using "sickening" to describe those who "whine and whimper," Nixon expressed how completely inappropriate, un-masculine, and given the passage's ending, un-American such behavior was.

These Watergate texts expressed the great danger of softness in traditional "crisis of masculinity" terms. Soft leadership created a soft public, which would lead to the downfall of American democracy. Lacking masculine hardness, the public could destroy Cincinnatus. Nixon saw ideological and political peril for the United States if the public flocked sheep-like to the soft Democrats, liberal elites, and the liberal media. The ultimate "soft" scapegoat metonym was John Dean III. In *RN*, Nixon baldly stated:

> If the May 22 statement was the American public's first introduction to the covert activities undertaken by the government for national security, Dean's testimony was a primer in the dark underside of White House politics. Thanks to the way he did it, everything was perfectly arranged for the Democrats to distance themselves from their own political past and proclaim that my administration had invented original sin.[38]

In this passage, Dean is a pied piper, leading Americans into danger. Four of the five Watergate texts tell the same story of Dean: this man misled the President (likely to save his own skin), then misled the Ervin Committee with his embellished account of Watergate during testimony, and worse still, misled the American public.

Nixon expressed increasing frustration and anger with Dean as Watergate unfolded and Nixon's presidency collapsed around him.[39] Answering Frost's question "why didn't you burn the tapes?," Nixon brought up how Dean's testimony to the Ervin Committee directly contradicted the facts present on the tapes but that it did not seem to

matter to the Committee or to the media, and therefore to the increasingly soft public. He continued with Frost in a later interview session, explaining of Dean:

> I was relying on him and he doesn't tell me these facts… he doesn't tell me that the reason he doesn't want to make a sworn statement is that he's afraid of his own vulnerability.. that the reason he can't write a report is that it will reveal his own vulnerability.. and all the rest. If i'd [sic] been in his position.. I would have been afraid too. And I must say the mistake was mind in the final analysis.. The mistake was mine in not as I say, smelling the rat that we has then, and then coming on…[40]

Note the subtle contrast in this passage. Nixon began by establishing himself as a rational person; Dean failed when he did not disclose Watergate facts to the president. Next, he appeared to give Dean the benefit of the doubt, acknowledging human error, when Nixon said he would be afraid too. After some verbal clutter, Nixon drove home the point, saying he should have smelled a rat with John Dean. What initially reads as a benefit of the doubt statement is, upon a second reading, an indictment, emphasizing Dean's softness by dehumanizing him. He is not just a soft man; he is a rat. And worse still, Dean is a rat the public chose to believe instead of Nixon. Dean became a rhetorical scapegoat in Nixon's self-defense. Stressing John Dean's duplicity provided a villain for Nixon's self-affirming narrative of victimage.

In addition to scapegoating his "soft" opponents, Nixon also associated hard masculinity with the "greater good" philosophy of civic republicanism. Increasing the nobility of his narrative, his opponents look worse by comparison. One such condemnation of ineffective Washington leadership appears in the introduction to the Resignation Speech, when Nixon implied that the end of his presidency would damage America. He stated, "In the past few days, however, it has become evident to me that I no longer have a strong enough political base in the Congress to justify continuing that effort

[to stay in office].”[41] This phrase paints the choice to resign as a hand forced; Nixon’s commitment to the welfare of the United States, combined with the flight of all “soft” politicians, made resignation the only “hard” choice. Attacks on him came at the expense of America’s well-being, both at home and abroad.

No matter the depravity of the opposition, the martyr must “turn the other cheek” in public. In his public Watergate rhetoric, Nixon showed his hardness by not retaliating against his enemies.[42] As he would say in the “Remarks on Departure from the White House,” “always remember, others may hate you, but those who hate you don’t win unless you hate them, and then you destroy yourself.”[43] While this magnanimity contradicted evidence and rumors of Nixon’s fiery temper, it increased the potency of the martyred Cincinnatus narrative. For example, in the Resignation Speech, he stated, “To those who have not felt able to give me your support – let me say that I leave with no bitterness toward those who opposed me.”[44] For all his talk of betrayal, he chooses to “be the bigger person” and forgive those who destroyed him. Nixon discussed a similar forgiveness during his interviews with Frost, and again later in his memoir, *RN*.[45] Although he was quick to fight his opponents on political issues, Nixon’s civic republican commitments usually prevented him from engaging in *ad hominem* attacks or other vicious public behavior, opting instead for coolly reasoned debate with opponents.[46] The White House tapes, therefore, presented a devastating challenge to this image.

In his April 1973 Watergate speech, Nixon pledged to reveal everything on the subpoenaed White House tapes, “blemishes and all.”[47] After the revelation of the tapes but before their public release, Nixon attempted to prepare the public for the tapes’ content. He was just like any average man, he explained, who sometimes cursed,

sometimes displayed a foul temper, and so on. However, this did little to mitigate the intensely negative public response to the un-presidential language the tapes contained. The hyper-masculine language on the tapes threatened to shatter the carefully crafted image of victimization Nixon had peddled throughout the Watergate affair. This was masculinity at its most offensive, racist, and sexist, the very opposite of civic republican virtue. To stay within the boundaries of his martyred role, Nixon had little choice but to do more minimizing than apologizing. Indeed, in the Frost interviews, Nixon described some of the tapes' content as "embarrassing rhetoric" for which he was certainly not proud.[48]

In what little apologizing he did, however, Nixon tried to demonstrate hardness by admitting his less-admirable, less-presidential traits. In addition to being brave, Nixon accepting responsibility for his imperfections provided definitional room for him to recast his failings as qualities of the average man. There is rhetorical utility in imperfection, for identification with a perfect being is nearly impossible. Where before Nixon offered his own civic republicanism as a model for proper American masculinity, he later publicly acknowledged some rougher traits of the mainstream American male. A president taking on these traits collapses the distance between president and people, which, as Watergate made clear, the public did not want.

In addition to anger, Nixon's Watergate rhetoric attempted to "recuperate" other male emotions as "hard." Earlier in his presidential career, this was perhaps unthinkable. Ed Muskie maybe could have beaten Richard Nixon in the 1972 election, but George McGovern, the far more radical and less qualified candidate, got the Democratic nomination. History attributes this in no small part to an episode where, frustrated with

personal attacks on his family and his character, Senator Muskie broke down during a press conference. A soft, unmanly crybaby was unfit to be president, and Nixon's Committee to Re-Elect the President used this incident to its fullest advantage. The stakes of this episode rise when we recognize that it arguably never happened. Nixon's and other conservatives' accounts talk about Muskie sobbing, but other versions say that the "tears" were merely melted snowflakes on his cheeks.[49] Given these political stakes for male tears, why would Nixon later admit his own tears?

Both in the Watergate portions of the Frost/Nixon interviews and in the final part of *RN*, Nixon discusses many emotional moments when he shared heartfelt tears with his family or his staff, which are "hard" because they come at appropriate moments. Like Christ crying out "may this cup pass from me" and "why have you abandoned me," Nixon explained his emotions as manifestations of hardness by shedding tears only in the direst moment, when his political life was at its end at the hands of vicious opponents.[50] What the public saw as Nixon coming unhinged under the strain of Watergate, Nixon attempted to recast as relatable, full of both humanity and masculinity. That this and other tactics failed shows that the American citizens, especially mainstream men, could not identify with Nixon's self-proclaimed martyred Cincinnatus role. His claims to hardness fell on the deaf ears of the soft public.

The Lawyer's Mainstay

Twenty-five U.S. presidents, including Richard Nixon, were trained lawyers, and this law background lends certain qualities to presidential rhetoric. Bill Clinton's "depends what your definition of 'is' is" is perhaps the most famous example of how

politicians use semantics and excessive details in the face of political crisis. Whether those details are a political ploy or the mark of an honest man depends on how one reads them. Regardless of the motive, this technique is deeply masculine. As I recounted in Chapter 3, Western cultures label "emotion" as a feminine trait and "logic" as its masculine opposite. Performing one's rationality in public is also a performance of one's maleness. This also enacts civic republican values; if factionalism is associated with emotion, logic associates with strong leadership for the greater good. In U.S. federal politics and especially in Watergate, we see a clear method at work: "bury 'em in explanations; semantics will save you."

To call *RN* "detailed" is to understate the case. Richard Nixon's memoir is 1,090 pages long.[51] Of the final 440 pages of this memoir, at least 330 pages (75%) are about Watergate, and minutia of the various Watergate events occupy at least half of these 330 pages. Nixon went into truly exhaustive detail about every political move he ever made, offering readers all the information they could possibly need to "draw their own conclusions" about Nixon's legacy. Instead of telling the public what to believe, Nixon instead gave his readers an extremely thorough account of his presidency and trusted them to reach the same, obvious, and rational conclusions as him: Nixon is innocent and an excellent public servant. He demonstrated a particularly American form of hardness in this detail-giving, for a truly democratic man gives his peers freedom of rationality, where a weak dictatorial man forces ideas on his people.[52] Nixon's civic republicanism gave him faith that, with enough explanation, the public would see that he was hard, right, and fit to lead.

Nixon consistently framed himself as righteous and insisted that, given the right amount of detail, the public would come to agree. In fact, throughout the latter half of *RN*, Nixon many times recalled his strong belief that the White House tapes—if consumed in their entirety and ignoring the breaches of decorum—would exonerate him. Similarly, in his interviews with David Frost, Nixon never cracked under Frost's repeated attempts to gain an admission of guilt. When Frost would ask a direct question, Nixon would answer with a very long, very detailed response.[53] In such answers, Nixon denied the rationality of Frost's assumption that his questions had simple answers, and offered instead a lengthy, nuanced answer. Doing this made room for Nixon to maintain his self-image of innocence without directly lying to Frost and, therefore, to the public.

The final Watergate artifact, the exhibit rooms in the Nixon Library and Museum, shows how this resolve never faltered.[54] Although there are some images and interactive displays, text dominates these rooms.[55] Most panels invite the visitor to consume all elements of the exhibits and to draw their own conclusions.[56] The Museum exhibit uses strategic disclosure and withholding, often presented as rhetorical questions, to entice the viewer to draw individual conclusions. For example, one panel reads "What Did The White House Know?" and proceeds to recount claims made by the various players in Watergate, like G. Gordon Liddy and John Dean III, during their Watergate testimony. It ends with what the *Washington Post* would call a "non-denial denial"—an answer that does not quite address the question: "President Nixon denied knowing anything about GEMSTONE [Liddy's elaborate political black-ops plan] before the Watergate arrests, and investigators found no evidence to contradict his assertion."[57] Consistent with his other Watergate rhetoric, the Watergate exhibit of the Museum presents the public with

excessive fact, stepping aside so they may reach their own conclusions. If the viewer is rational, such thinking holds, the viewer would reach a conclusion sympathetic to Nixon.

The "lawyer's mainstay" technique works in concert with the "martyred Cincinnatus" role to affirm a victimized identity. For Nixon, "hard" masculinity is patriotic and loyal, fights rather than complains, and channels cool rationality while demonstrating appropriate emotion. The flimsy nature of "hard" and "soft masculinity" terminology requires definition by contrast; each needs the other for definition. Because logic is masculine, those who disagree with a logical person are, by contrast, un-masculine and soft. Not only does this delegitimize opponents, but it also feeds the sense of victimage central to Nixon's Watergate rhetoric. Soft people ignore rationality and attack someone dedicating his life to American politics. Thinking about Nixon as a masculine metonym, one sees the rhetorical utility in these techniques for maintaining the dominance of the *status quo*.

Tunnel Vision

When Nixon called John Dean a rat, David Frost asked whether that description depended on whom one asked.[58] Frost's comment hits the heart of the issue. As with any history of some event, hard and soft masculinity are entirely a matter of whose story one believes or how one interprets events.[59] What Nixon framed as a frivolous distraction from "the real issues," the public (and later, Congress) obviously saw as a major crime against the integrity of the Executive branch and the overall welfare of the United States. Nixon maintained his victimage rhetoric with little variation, but he could effectively sustain it only as long as the public would accept it.

In Nixon's Watergate rhetoric, there existed a sense of poor public prioritization. It was as if he constantly queried, "Can't we just put this to bed so I can get back to important work?" In his reckoning, Watergate was a fundamentally simple issue exponentially bloated when fed by unbridled passions and factionalism. This comes into even clearer focus when contrasted with those issues Nixon identified as important, namely major foreign policy initiatives unfolding contemporarily with Watergate. A neatly phrased example in the Resignation Speech is a series of "The Administration accomplished X goal; here is the next goal" statements, a much lengthier version of which occupies a substantial portion of the final 440 pages of the memoir.[60]

While this rhetorical re-prioritizing may have worked for Bill Clinton during his sex scandal, the public rejected Nixon's attempt to deprioritize Watergate. Clinton's scandal raised questions about presidential *ethos* and the relationship between private and public fidelity, but Watergate brought the integrity of the entire Executive branch into question. When Nixon framed himself as one of few remaining rational beings who was desperate to snap the American public back to their senses and free them from the damaging grip of passion and factionalism, he appeared to be "missing the point" of why Watergate upset Americans.

Interpreting Watergate relies entirely on one's perspective. From one angle, Nixon's commitment to "the real issues" is a demonstration of his civic republicanism. From a different angle, however, these same traits are a very soft, sad attempt to cover up illegal acts for the selfish motivation of keeping himself in power. Indeed, at many times in Nixon's Watergate rhetoric, the president appeared to suffer a case of tunnel vision. He was so committed to his civic republicanism and his own sense of rightness that the

Watergate texts can make him seem passionate, irrational, and soft. In his memoir, for example, Nixon ended a description of a Watergate "containment" strategy conversation with Dean explaining, "We had to turn off any further involvement at the lowest possible cost but at whatever cost it took; because, as [Haldeman] pointed out, [the Watergate affair] was now beginning to get near me."[61] To a reader not predisposed to favoring Nixon, such a passage confirms that Nixon was a bad, soft man who surrounded himself with other-directed staff too soft to stand up to corruption. What Nixon saw as a means to protect his presidential ends could be conversely interpreted as a vivid demonstration of his unfitness for the presidency.

Similarly contingent, the softness Nixon attributed to the media, to Washington liberals, and to John Dean is very easy to reframe as hardness. Unlike the Nixon staff that covered up corruption, these people persevered against it to expose the truth no matter the stakes. Dean and others like him becomes a *parrhesiastes*, speaking truth to power at great personal cost.[62] So easy is it to reframe the narrative, in fact, that Dean's and others' accounts of Watergate, not Nixon's, characterize this tumultuous period of American history.

New Blueprints, New Mirror

Nixon's Watergate rhetoric offered the public one, remarkably consistent account of this infamous political scandal. This account cast Nixon as the victim of "softness"; his enemies were not hard enough to see that Watergate just a blip on the radar of presidential politics. As Watergate reached its climax, however, it became clear that

Nixon was an unfit president and an unfit metonym for mainstream American masculinity.

Many other accounts of Watergate were available to the public, and, except perhaps for his Frost interviews, Nixon's various accounts were not the most popular. Books by John W. Dean III, former special counsel to the President, and by *Washington Post* reporters Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward captivated the public's attention immediately after the resignation. *Blind Ambition* (1976) and *All the President's Men* (1974) circulated at lightning speed among Americans, which gives evidence that these accounts of Watergate were more persuasive than Nixon's own.[63]

Nixon's presidential rhetoric established him as the blueprint and the mirror for American mainstream masculinity, but Watergate essentially scrapped those blueprints and smashed that mirror. No matter how hard he tried to rationalize and explain, no matter how desperately he clung to this role, Nixon could not maintain his status as the mainstream man's metonym in the United States. Nixon had allowed the carapace of mainstream masculinity not just to crack, but to break wide open, and thus American men needed a new, fitter man for their metonym. They wanted a new blueprint, a new mirror, and John Dean, Bob Woodward, and Carl Bernstein offered one.

Blind Ambition

Famed newspaperman Joe Alsop once described John Dean III as "a bottom-dwelling slug," and perhaps rightly so. As he presents himself in *Blind Ambition,* Dean exudes a slimy, obsequious opportunism.[64] At the beginning of this political novel, Dean recounted his arrogant status-seeking and emphasizes the different beautiful women he

hopes to woo, like the female flight attendants on his airplane ride to San Clemente, California.[65] While such stories might turn the stomach of a feminist reader, they may endear Dean to a hegemonically masculine reader (especially one reading this book at the time of its publication), who might see himself in the roguish young lawyer.

In addition to expressing many of the values traditional to mainstream men in the mid- to late-1970s, John Dean's imperfections made him an attractive alternative to Richard Nixon as the mainstream man's metonym. It is difficult to relate to perfection, and unlike Nixon, Dean admitted his culpability throughout his account of Watergate.[66] Throughout *Blind Ambition*, Dean emphasized his own illegal activities, his own moral dilemmas, and laid bare his shortcomings (e.g., his sexism and his alcoholism). A common criticism of Richard Nixon throughout his political career was that he was a phony, that his public personae came in near-endless varieties and that he would constantly alter himself for political gains.[67] When he strategically discloses his own misdeeds, Dean's honesty reads as a symbolic performance of his trustworthiness. These disclosures do not alone make him a strong metonym; his redemption does equal work.

Blind Ambition is a tale of redemption. Like Icarus, Dean's desire for power and status led to his downfall, but coming clean saved him being destroyed by the fall. He was willing not only to blow the whistle on the White House but also to serve time for his role in Watergate. Dean's ritualized redemption story made him a worthy alternative metonym for American men because he did not simply insist on his innocence; he performed, and thus redeemed, his guilt.[68]

All the President's Men

Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward's 1974 *All the President's Men* offered another alternative to Nixon. The book, written in a similar "political novel" style as the Dean monograph, walked readers through the *Washington Post* reporters' investigative journey that ultimately exposed Watergate.[69] "Woodstein," as they were nicknamed at the *Post*, were like Dean in that they were young, hardworking, and in the "working class" at the paper.[70] But their investigative reporting demonstrated their perseverance no matter the consequences, threats to their safety, or lack of believing followers.

The Woodstein tale scratched a persistent itch in the American psyche, a tale of the virtuous underdog prevailing. Woodward and Bernstein faced incredible odds when investigating the president and reporting persistently on Watergate, and armed with public support, exposed the corruption of the Nixon presidency. As the book's dedication page explains, their Watergate reporting would have been impossible if not for the bravery of U.S. citizens who opted to speak out instead of quietly following the *status quo*. Both the journalists and the public on which they relied for evidence exemplified a version of "hardness" more persuasive than Nixon's definition.

In addition to performing hard masculinity, *All the President's Men* often refers to instances of hard and soft masculinity. Like the Dean book, their narrative reframed Watergate to show the investigative journalists as imperfect but genuinely good men, standing up and speaking truth to power no matter the risks. By contrast, the book casts the Nixon administration as soft followers and conspirators who did not have the mettle to follow their moral compass and do what was right. The Woodstein book features the distinctive quality of using physical traits and descriptions as evidence for hardness and

softness. For example, Donald Segretti, chief "ratfucker" (the political mischief committee to disrupt Democratic campaigns), was "baby-faced" and his "eyes filled with tears" knowing he would likely go to jail.[71] Bernstein and Woodward's narrative did not hesitate to use traditionally feminine descriptors to describe men's softness. Lack of manliness, softness, and immorality align; physical characteristics become evidence of moral failure and metonymic unfitness.

Both the Woodstein and Dean books share formal and stylistic qualities. Unlike the detailed and dry Nixon memoir, Bernstein, Woodward, and Dean created monographs that read more like fiction than like nonfiction.[72] From a strict utilitarian perspective, these books were simply more readable than *RN*. They also shared stylistic qualities absent from the many Nixon accounts of Watergate. Dean and Woodstein were "the little guy"—something Nixon, no matter how metonymic he was, could never achieve once elected president (twice). Additionally, these three writers were not shy about their own weaknesses or their own questionable moral or legal activity. They tended to express these tensions as a genuine human drama, as the struggle to decide whether actions were proper or should be challenged. The difference between these three men's and Nixon's responses to Watergate was that Dean and Woodstein were willing to change and Nixon was not.

Nixon's accounts of Watergate always seemed to make excuses or to blame others for Nixon's downfall. Popular memory of Nixon holds—and I would argue, rightly so—that Nixon lacked the humility to admit his wrongdoing, to perform a public *mea culpa,* and perhaps to salvage his image in posterity. So, was Dean the hero and Nixon the crook? Or was Nixon right in claiming that he lost his presidency because of unfettered

and unethical attacks by bloodthirsty *Washington Post* journalists and the traitorousness of his "rat" of a former counsel? How do we judge hardness and softness? How do we assess a man's fitness to be a metonym for hegemonic masculinity?

Conclusions: Watergate's Legacy

Watergate symbolically performed the fragility of hegemonic masculinity and the ways it acts when put under threat. Richard Nixon and John Dean III are both highly contentious figures, and both are metonymic of the tension between hard and soft masculinity, each representing a different vision of the relationship between masculinity and U.S. national identity. Regardless of Dean's motives, his exposure of the corruption in the Nixon White House was traditionally masculine, hard, and patriotic by most accounts. Regardless of Nixon's guilt/innocence in Watergate, he performed traditionally un-masculine, soft, unpatriotic acts when he made excuses and laid blame for Watergate on everyone but himself. As Nixon went to any lengths to save his presidency, so too do the many triumphs and failures of masculinity during Watergate show the lengths to which defenders of mainstream masculinity will go to save it. Watergate laid bare the hypocrisy of hegemonic masculinity—hard masculinity is contingent and unachievable—and the extent of its ties to national identity and the presidency.

I have reviewed the ways in which Nixon's Watergate rhetoric established his definitions of "hard" and "soft" masculinity. By casting himself as a Cincinnatus martyred for the good of America and by explaining his side of the Watergate story in exhaustive detail, Nixon's Watergate texts defined Nixon as classically "hard" and his enemies as "soft." Those "soft" individuals who lost sight of (or never possessed) the

civic republican virtue victimized Nixon. Given his civic republican commitments, it should be no surprise that Nixon saw Watergate as the political equivalent of dying from a paper cut.

Victimage is a rich rhetorical resource. Few people in the United States have more power or privilege than the president, and few groups in the United States have more power and privilege than the mainstream men whom the president represents. Victimage inverts reality, casting the dominant group as a group under dire threat. Based on the social fiction of a "crisis of masculinity," Nixon's Watergate strategy used victimage in an attempt to salvage his position of power and to delegitimize his enemies. Additionally, the consistency of his Watergate narrative demonstrates the lengths to which one will go to affirm one's self-image. Even though this victimage was not rational, it protected the sense of self that Nixon (and by extension the group he represented) understood as true.

Nixon's response to Watergate also demonstrates the limits of this strategy: an inflexible object placed under stress will eventually crack or break. Nixon was so committed to the self-affirming narrative of his own innocence in Watergate that he allowed the carapace of masculinity and power that he represented to break open, exposing everything ugly about presidential politics and mainstream masculinity. His unwavering, inflexible Watergate rhetoric exposed the social fiction of hard and soft masculinity; in his attempt to maintain his own dominance, he threatened the dominance of the group.

Men like Woodward and Bernstein, as well as John Dean, seized the metonymic mantle once Nixon became unfit. They were more the everyman than the president could ever be, and they offered a flexibility that Nixon would never give. This shift from the

Nixon-type to the Dean-type metonym highlights how hegemonic masculinity best responds under pressure: put under stress by social change, hegemonic masculinity moves amoeba-like, absorbing other groups' traits to retain its dominance. In some ways, John Dean was a great departure from Richard Nixon, but in most ways, he represented very little change. Except for Bernstein's Jewish background, Dean, Woodward, and Bernstein were all straight, white, employed, able-bodied, moderately good-looking, cisgender males. They exemplified behavioral differences, but they retained nearly all previous demographic markers. White men did not lose their social dominance after Watergate because a suitably similar alternative was available in Dean-like figures. At large, Americans tend to celebrate relatively small change from the dominant group as proof of its adaptability and fundamental fitness for a continued dominant role in society.

Was there anything Richard Nixon could have done or said after Watergate to restore himself as the metonym for the mainstream American man? Just as a shattered mirror can never be restored, I think not. Michael Kimmel's assertion that men perform their masculinity much more for other men than for himself or for women helps clarify why, once Nixon became so publicly associated with the taint of "softness," mainstream American men could not risk claiming him as a metonym.[73] As the representative of their experiences and identities, their metonym had to be "hard." As I have asserted previously, "Concerns over decorum, presidential authority, and 'respect for the office' do not seem to have the same weight that they once did or, perhaps more accurately, they are not as widespread."[74] Watergate shattered both the image of mainstream masculinity Richard Nixon offered and the *doxa* of expected presidential behavior. Watergate demonstrated how hegemonic masculinity behaves under pressure, but it was neither the

first instance nor was it the last of this phenomenon. Watergate represents a rhetorical antecedent for many socio-political turbulences of the post-Nixon years. Since Watergate, expectations of decorum and (mis)trust of the United States presidency shifted immensely, and the cycle of fissure and repair continues to play out in the drama of hegemonic masculinity and social dominance. Hegemonic masculinity, the metonymic quality of the president, and U.S. national identity converged in 2016, opening the door of the Oval Office to Donald Trump.

Notes

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[1] "Interviews: March 23, 1977, Tape #3, page 78," 23 March 1977, folder Transcripts: Final Drafts 03/27/1977 (2 of 2), box 10, Frost Nixon Interview Collection, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA, author's archival photo 20170303_142523.

[2] Richard Nixon, *RN: The Memoirs of Richard Nixon* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1978), 948.

[3] Gamergate was the 2014 scandal when male "gamers" (people who play videogames online) began to "dox" (or share the personal information of someone for threatening purposes) women revealing sexism in Internet gamer culture. Many of these women received death threats. For more, see http://gawker.com/what-is-gamergate-and-why-an-explainer-for-non-geeks-1642909080. Pizzagate was a piece of fake news created by a Trump supporter during the 2016 election cycle, which accused Hillary Clinton of colluding with the owner of Washington, D.C., pizza shop in operating a child sex trafficking organization. It was (obviously) completely false. For more, see https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/12/10/business/media/pizzagate.html. There was even a "Windowgate" in my graduate student office in 2014.

[4] Accounts from Nixon, John Dean, Alexander Butterfield, and *Post* reporters Woodward and Bernstein all agree that Watergate was not a sudden explosion but was instead a slow burn.

[5] Two other articles failed: an article addressing the Cambodia bombing and "Failure to Pay Taxes."

[6] Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward, "FBI Finds Nixon Aides Sabotaged Democrats," *The Washington Post*, 10 October 1972, http://wapo.st/2dF9Vu9.

[7] John Dean, *Blind Ambition: The White House Years* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1976).

[8] As Pamela VanHaitsma explained of the archival work she conducts on romantic letters between same-sex partners in the 1800s, zeroing in on and obsessing over the "did they/didn't they" questions obscures other, more important and more interesting points. In her case, she focused on the genre of the romantic letter by setting aside the "were they queer?" question. Pamela VanHaitsma, "Queering Rhetorical Education: Romantic Engagement in the Postal Age," Communication Arts and Sciences Colloquium, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA, 20 March 2017.

[9] A reminder: "Mainstream masculinity" and "hegemonic masculinity" are used interchangeably in this dissertation, and they represent white, straight (usually married and likely whom have fathered children biologically), middle class and employed, able-bodied, English-speaking, Christian (usually Protestant), native born, cisgender males.

[10] These five texts are (1) the final version of the Watergate Speech (13th draft with President's final changes), 29 April 1973 (primary source material obtained by the author at the Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, March 2017) note: the speech was delivered the next day, 30 April 1973; (2) Drafts of and the final version of the Resignation Speech, 8 August 1974 (primary source material obtained by the author at the Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, March 2017); (3) The full transcript of the Frost/Nixon interviews, 9 August 1975 (primary source material obtained by the author at the Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, March 2017) Note: These FULL transcripts

are not available in any medium outside the presidential archive (the Frost/Nixon interviews available to the public are abridged, and I sometimes referred to digitized versions of the abridged interviews); (4) Richard M. Nixon, *RN: A Memoir* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1978); (5) The Nixon Presidential Museum (particularly the introductory video and the Watergate exhibit) as existed at the time of my visit on 2 March 2017. Allison Prasch's article on the Watergate exhibit at the Nixon presidential library was a vital foundation for this part of my Watergate chapter. See Allison M. Prasch, "Retelling Watergate: Apologia, Political Eulogy, and Richard Nixon's 'Final Campaign,'" *Southern Communication Journal* 80, no. 4 (2015): 271-292.

[11] This is especially true of especially of the two presidential speeches and the post-presidential interviews with David Frost. What will be noteworthy is whether and how Nixon's stance on Watergate remained unchanged over time, perhaps as a demonstration of his "inner-directedness" (discussed below).

[12] Kimmel *Manhood in America,* and Bederman *Manliness and Civilization*.

[13] Ian Nicholson, "'Shocking' Masculinity: Stanley Milgram, 'Obedience to Authority,' and the 'Crisis of Manhood' in Cold War America," *Isis* 102, no. 2 (2011): 247.

[14] In Chapter 3 of his *Manhood and American Political Culture in the Cold War*, Cuordileone offers a thorough review of the socioeconomic conditions of the post-WWII years that led to a gender "crisis" among American men. In tension during this period were dichotomies like capitalism/ communism, man/woman, and white collar/blue collar. "Whether middle-class Americans knew it or not," he writes, "they were psychologically plagued by the very prosperity that seemed to promise them freedom and security. The more sated and comfortable they grew, the more conformist and self-*less* they became; such was the price of affluence." Cuordileone 98, emphasis in original. I have found lots of conflicting information on K.A. Cuordileone's preferred gender pronouns, but most of the evidence points to a male name, so I am going to use he/him/his when using pronouns is necessary. My apologies to K.A. Cuordileone if I have misgendered you.

[15] As Brenton Malin puts it, analyzing the popular culture of a time can give one a sense of the "cultural zeitgeist" of a given moment (178). Brenton J. Malin, *American Masculinity Under Clinton: Popular Media and the Nineties "Crisis of Masculinity"* (New York: Peter Lang: 2005). To this point, Cuordileone cites *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955) as an excellent example of the devastation, both in the home and on society, resultant from soft masculinity run amok. In the film, Plato is the product of an overbearing mother and a soft father, and as a result he is soft too, effeminate and possibly even gay. Cuordileone, *Manhood and American Political Culture* 154-159.

[16] K.A. Cuordileone, "'Politics in an Age of Anxiety': Cold War Political Culture and the Crisis in American Masculinity, 1949-1960," *The Journal of American History* 87, no. 2 (2000), 516.

[17] Nicholson 251. The Milgram experiments were of course that famous series of "shock" tests in which the male participant would deliver an electric shock to another man (secretly a research confederate who was not being shocked at all, in truth) whenever that man incorrectly answered a question, goaded to continue the barbarous shocking, even to lethal levels, by a male researcher (also secretly a confederate).

[18] Nicholson 241. I am very grateful to my Spring 2017 "Persuasion and Propaganda" students for sharing with me their ideas on this section of my dissertation.

[19] Nicholson 255-256.
[20] Nicholson 247.
[21] For a marvelous read about how June Cleaver "killed" Rosie the Riveter, see Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound*: *American Families in the Cold War Era*, 20th anniversary edition (New York: Basic Books: 2008).
[22] Or as *Washington Post* informant "Deep Throat" said in *All the President's Men* (film), "These aren't very smart guys, and things got out of hand." In 2005, after over 30 years of speculation, *Vanity Fair* broke the story that former deputy FBI director Mark Felt was, in fact, Woodward and Bernstein's secret source on Watergate. For more, see John D. O'Connor, "'I'm the Guy They Called Deep Throat,'" *Vanity Fair*, July 2005, http://bit.ly/2vtGQat.
[23] David K. Sherman and Geoffrey L. Cohen, "The Psychology of Self-Defense: Self-Affirmation Theory," *Advances in Experimental Psychology* 38 (2006): 183-242.
[24] Sherman and O'Connor, PDF page 6.
[25] Coming specifically to mind are Bill Clinton's assessment of why he began his affair with Monica Lewinsky and OJ Simpson's post-acquittal book, *If I Did It* (2008).
[26] Nixon successfully weathered "the fund affair" through the famous "Checkers Speech."
[27] Cass R. Sunstein, "Beyond the Republican Revival," *The Yale Law Journal* 97, no. 8 (1988): 1539-1590. The civic republican exchanges passion and special interests for "virtuous power." John M. Murphy, "Civic Republicanism in the Modern Age: Adlai Stevenson in the 1952 Presidential Campaign," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 80 (1994): 326, emphasis in original.
[28] Sunstein 1539-1540; Robert Hariman and John Lucaites, "Performing Civic Identity: The Iconic Photograph of the Flag Raising on Iwo Jima," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88, no. 4 (2002): 373.
[29] I would normally hesitate to use "Nixon believed" and other such intentionality claims. When I use them in this chapter, however, I am speaking to what Nixon conveyed in his Watergate texts.
[30] Nixon's account of the Daniel Ellsberg/Pentagon Papers case is a great example of how this rhetoric existed beyond Watergate. See *RN* 785 for an example.
[31] For example, *RN* 1002-1023.
[32] "Interviews: April 15, 1977, Tape #2, Side A, Day 9, Pages 84-87," 15 April 1977, folder Transcripts: Final Drafts 04/15/1977 (1 of 3), box 10, Frost Nixon Interview Collection. Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA, author's archival photos 20170303_152959, 20170303_153000, 20170303_153002, and 20170303_153004.
[33] For more, see Kenneth Burke, *Permanence and Change: An Anatomy of Purpose*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1954).
[34] *RN* 851-853. For the quote about irresponsibility, see *RN* 508-515 and 856.
[35] On page 948 of his memoir, Nixon wrote, "Watergate had gone too far for me to be able to dispel it in one speech. As I told one Republican group that urged this as a solution, if I gave a speech and said, 'I didn't do it,' the Democrats would say 'The son of a bitch is lying'; and the Republicans would say, 'Ho hum, he is probably lying but he is our son of a bitch.'" Nixon expected that the Democrats would disbelieve him no matter

what he said about Watergate and that the Republican members of Congress were both too soft to believe him but too factionalist not to support their Republican president.
[36] Nixon reinforced his affinity with the "average" American man by often using terms like "elitists" and "intelligentsia" as epithets. *RN* 685-686 and 715-716, for example.
[37] *RN* 670.
[38] *RN* 894.
[39] *RN* 779, 784, 791, 798-801, 838-841, 869, and 890.
[40] "Interviews: April 15, 1977, Tape #2, Side A, Day 9, Page 51," 23 March 1977, folder Transcripts: Final Drafts 04/15/1977 (1 of 3), box 10, Frost Nixon Interview Collection. Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA, author's archival photo 20170303_152750.
[41]"President's Reading Copy, Resignation Speech, White House, August 8, 1974, Page 2," 8 August 1974, folder Thursday, August 8, 1974, Resignation Speech, box New 95, President's Personal File: President's Speech File. Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA, author's archival photo 20170303_123114.
[42] The diary entries in *RN*—and of course the tapes—show that he did not run such an even keel in private. Many biographical sources, like John Farrell's book, express how hate-motivated Nixon was. Fueled by fears of inadequacy and deep resentment, Nixon rarely truly forgave someone who had slighted him in the past. Similar assessments exist in *All the President's Men Revisited* and in the introduction to *The Haldeman Diaries*.
[43] Richard Nixon, "Remarks on Departure From the White House," 9 August 1974, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=4325.
[44] "President's Reading Copy, Resignation Speech, White House, August 8, 1974, Page 6," 8 August 1974, folder Thursday, August 8, 1974, Resignation Speech, box New 95, President's Personal File: President's Speech File. Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA, author's archival photo 20170303_123135.
[45] "Interviews: March 23, 1977, Tape #2, Pages 57-59," 23 March 1977, folder Transcripts: Final Drafts 03/27/1977 (2 of 2), box 10, Frost Nixon Interview Collection, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA, author's archival photos 20170303_14223, 20170303_142226, and 20170303_14228; and "Interviews: March 23, 1977, Tape #3, pages 60-62," 23 March 1977, folder Transcripts: Final Drafts 03/27/1977 (2 of 2), box 10, Frost Nixon Interview Collection, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA, author's archival photos 20170303_142230, 20170303_142239, and 20170303_142305. This comes up in the later chapters of *RN*, though it is peppered with bitterness throughout.
[46] In *RN*, for example, Nixon talks about an engaging discussion he had with some college student protestors one night when he walked over to the Lincoln Memorial for a stroll. However, as many of Nixon's personal diary entries and the White House tapes expose, the man was no cool cucumber. Furthermore, his willingness to engage in political sabotage (as discussed at length in the previous chapter) exposes his "coolness" as "all talk."
[47] *RN* 995, citing from his 30 April 1973 Watergate speech.
[48] "Interviews: March 23, 1977, Tape 1, Pages 8 and 13," 23 March 1977, folder Transcripts: Final Drafts 03/23/1977 (1 of 2), box 10, Frost Nixon Interview Collection.

Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA, author's archival photos 20170303_141631, 20170303_141649; "Interviews: March 23, 1977, Tape 2, Page 33," 23 March 1977, folder Transcripts: Final Drafts 03/23/1977 (1 of 2), box 10, Frost Nixon Interview Collection, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA, author's archival photo 20170303_141920, and 20170303_152412; and "Interviews: April 13, 1977, Tape 3, Side A, Page 111," 13 April 1977, folder Transcripts: Final Drafts 04/13/1977 (3 of 3), box 10, Frost Nixon Interview Collection, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA, author's archival photo 20170303_152412.

[49] For more on the Muskie tears controversy, see R.W. Apple, Jr., "Edmund S. Muskie, 81, Dies; Maine Senator and a Power on the National Scene," *New York Times*, 27 March 1996, http://nyti.ms/2x0kEEZ. See also Jim Windolf, "It's All Right to Cry, Dude," *New York Times*, 17 October 2015, http://nyti.ms/2fHY9kQ. The Windolf article links to a YouTube video of the Muskie speech (also available at http://bit.ly/1o9NhdL).

[50] This may remind one of the crocodile tear that spills down Kirk Douglas's face at the end of *Spartacus*; even the manliest of men cry when the stakes are high enough.

[51] Many presidential memoirs are extremely long like Nixon's. Harry Truman's and Bill Clinton's, for example, are over a thousand pages, and Ronald Reagan's is over 700. See Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs by Harry S. Truman, Volume 1: Year of Decisions* (New York: Doubleday, 1955); Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs by Harry S. Truman, Volume 2: Years of Trial and Hope* (New York: Doubleday, 1956); Bill Clinton, *My Life* (New York: Knopf, 2004); Ronald Reagan, *An American Life* (New York: Pocket Books, 1990).

[52] The excessive details in Nixon's Watergate texts include evidence of Nixon's inner-directed, hard behaviors. A main motif throughout Nixon's written works—not limited simply to those about Watergate—is Nixon-as-fighter. This image would have been (and I believe still is) very relatable and desirable to a mainstream male audience, and Nixon demonstrated a nearly unflappable commitment to never quitting throughout his life. True to his fighting spirit until the end, Nixon stated: "Then I came to the most difficult sentence I shall ever have to speak. Looking directly into the camera, I said, Therefore, I shall resign the presidency effective noon tomorrow," a conclusion he reached with no small amount of personal anguish. *RN* 1083. Indeed, when first pondering resignation, Nixon ended his notes and musings with the angry scribble: "End career as a fighter." See *RN* 1055-1057.

[53] For example, see "Interviews: April 15, 1977, Tape #2, Side A, Day 9, Pages 84-87," 15 April 1977, folder Transcripts: Final Drafts 04/15/1977 (1 of 3), box 10, Frost Nixon Interview Collection. Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA, author's archival photos 20170303_152959, 20170303_153000, 20170303_153002, and 20170303_153004. Frost has two small interjections, and Nixon goes on for a few pages.

[54] As stated earlier, Nixon had a central role in designing the Museum in Yorba Linda, so we can consider him a rhetor in the Museum as text.

[55] See Appendix C for a sample of these text-dominated panels.

[56] "Introduction to Watergate Gallery of Nixon Presidential Museum," Personal Photograph, Lauren R. Camacci, 2 March 2017, Photo 20170302_113348.

[57] "What Did the White House Know?" Personal Photograph, Lauren R. Camacci, 2 March 2017, Photo 20170302_113500.
[58] The actual quote reads: "I'ts [*sic*] obviously the key thing here is is [*sic*]… your story of the events rather than the Dean interviews as it were." "Interviews: April 15, 1977, Tape #2, Side A, Day 9, Page 51," 15 April 1977, folder Transcripts: Final Drafts 04/15/1977 (1 of 3), box 10, Frost Nixon Interview Collection. Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA, author's archival photo 20170303_152750.
[59] I am specifically thinking of the feminist theory of positionality, which basically represents the conglomeration of different aspects of a person's life that governs how that person experiences the world. The classic example, from Terri Elliott, is that the front of a building to an able-bodied person is just an entrance but to someone in a wheelchair, all they see is steps and no ramp – essentially a "you don't belong here" symbol. Or another, retold by Michael Kimmel in his presentation at Penn State in 8 February 2017, is that a white male looks in the mirror and sees "a person," a white female looks in the mirror and sees "a woman," and a person of color looks in the mirror and sees their Blackness or Brownness (etc.). Terri Elliott, "Making Strange What Had Appeared Familiar," *The Monist* 77, no. 4 (1994), 424-433.
[60] In the resignation announcement speech, for example, Nixon listed in his accomplishments/plan pairs included ending American involvement in Vietnam, opening China, and negotiating peace in the Middle East. For example, "We have unlocked the doors that for a quarter of a century stood between the United States and the People's Republic of China. We must now ensure that the one quarter of the world's people who live in the People's Republic of China will be and remain not our enemies, but our friends."
[61] *RN* 798.
[62] Woodward and Bernstein at times feared for their safety and even their lives, and Dean received a prison sentence for coming clean (up to three years, though he only served four months).
[63] These three figures—all Watergate whistle-blowers—are also currently experiencing a renaissance of public interest during the Trump/Russia investigations, something I touch on in the final chapter. I do not think it is coincidence that the public wants to hear from the whistle-blowers instead of from the still-living Nixon associates who went along with the Watergate cover-up.
[64] My attempts to communicate with him in 2017 have been thus far unsuccessful, so I don't have any first-hand evidence to debunk the impression that he is "a real slime-ball." That he is busy being famous because of Trump/Watergate comparisons seem to give me some answers, though.
[65] I am using a term Dean used in his 1961 College of Wooster Independent Study thesis, "The Social Responsibilities of the Political Novelist." *Blind Ambition* should be considered a political novel because of the way he has written it: The dialogue of the book looks very much like that of a fictional novel, even though it purportedly relates actual, historical conversations. In Dean's own words from *Blind Ambition*, "This book is a portrait—not a black-and-white photograph—of five years of my life. It represents my best effort to paint what I saw and reproduce what I heard. I have included detail, texture,

tone, to make this history more vivid. …in the book I have included dialogue and enclosed it in quotation marks, whereas in my [Ervin Committee] testimony I deliberately refrained from dramatizing the events I was relating" (5).

[66] To use religious studies terms, Dean was a Mary Magdalene, not a Virgin Mary; he is relatable because he is not an image of perfection.

[67] *Esquire*'s May 1968 publication featured on its cover an image of Nixon leaning back in a makeup chair with four disembodied hands, each wielding a cosmetic (hairspray, eye shadow, a powder poof, and lipstick), along with the caption, "Nixon's last chance. (This time he'd better look right!)," which obviously recalls his infamous refusal to wear makeup during his 1960 presidential campaign and the popular speculation that his "looking wrong" led to his defeat. The cover shows Nixon as literally "made up." "Nixon's Last Chance. (This Time He'd Better Look Right!)," *Esquire*, May 1968.

[68] I queried a few elder male family members and friends about their assessment of Dean, Woodward & Bernstein, and Nixon. I wanted the opinions of men far outside academia, white collar but with a working-class upbringing, who would have been in their 30s or 40s during Watergate. Without me leading them, they all described Dean (in varied ways) as a good man who did the right thing to get rid of "that crook," Nixon. Dean might be slimy, but he successfully became the metonym for this (albeit extremely tiny) cross-section of mainstream American men.

[69] Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward, *All the President's Men* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1974).

[70] Bernstein in particularly often got on his peers nerves for his intensity and presumption.

[71] Bernstein and Woodward 201-202.

[72] Because much of the memoir's content comes from Nixon's daily diaries, many entries recount what Nixon's breakfast menu each day (usually wheat germ…) and other such sundry details.

[73] Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 5-6.

[74] Lauren Rose Camacci, "Presidential Imaginaries: Narrative, *Phantasia*, and the Historical U.S. President in Fictional Film," Master's thesis, The Pennsylvania State University, 2014: 14. Former FBI agent Donald G. Sanders made a similar point: "One did not then lightly contemplate serious battle with the White House. There was a very different aura about the infallibility and inaccessibility of the White House. The balloon had yet to be punctured," quoted in Woodward's *The Last of the President's Men*, 155.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION: HOW DID WE GET HERE?

"I have never thought much of the notion that the presidency makes a man presidential. What has given the American presidency its vitality is that each man remains distinctive. His abilities become more obvious, and his faults become more glaring. The presidency is not a finishing school. It is a magnifying glass."

–Richard Nixon[1]

2016 was a big year. The War on Terror persisted. David Bowie's cancer death rocked the music-loving world, the first in a string of deaths of beloved celebrities. The third installment in the *Star Trek* reboot premiered, and Nintendo announced the N64 Switch game system. Britain made their shocking "Brexit," leaving the EU behind, fifty members of the LGBTQ+ community were murdered in a mass shooting at the Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, Florida, and Syria deteriorated into an abject state of civil war led by theocratic extremists. And Donald Trump assumed the highest political office in the United States.

In the intervening months between defending my prospectus in March 2016 and now finishing the dissertation project, dozens of people, from my academic colleagues to my thoroughly non-academic elder family members, have exclaimed, "What luck to be writing about Nixon during all this mess with Trump!" I have always felt that these enthused observations of *kairos* minimize how purposefully I embarked on a Nixon dissertation during Trump's ultimately successful bid for the presidency. This connection has been on my mind every day for almost 18 months.

Political rhetoricians, presidential librarians, and historians alike note the enormous differences between Nixon and Trump, and rightly so. Of course, ironic similarities exist, such as the Comey "tapes" Tweets, both men's obsessive belief of media persecution, and the climate of fear created as they attempt to quash dissent.[2] It

would, however, be an insult to Richard Nixon's many qualifications for the highest political office in the country and his lifelong record of public service to liken the two men too much.[3] Even with these important differences in mind, to a rhetorician focusing on critical studies of men and masculinities (CSOMM), observing the striking similarities between the two presidencies and their cultural milieu has been unsettling.[4]

Connections between critical studies of men and masculinities and the U.S. presidency drove this dissertation. As I asserted in Chapter 1, history is our best means to understand present reality. Although they rarely cite one another, sociologist and CSOMM scholar Eric Anderson and Critical Rhetoricians like Raymie McKerrow concur that academic research is at its finest when excellent scholarship can be used for "emancipatory" purposes, to aid some sort of positive change in society.[5] And as Mary Stuckey astutely observed, political situations are rarely "unprecedented."[6] The past can reveal how similar situations have previously resolved.

The similarities between the socio-political climate of the Nixon years and the Trump years nearly oblige scholarly attention. Interdisciplinary work that unites presidential rhetoric and CSOMM offers a unique perspective for understanding the current political climate. This interdisciplinary work may also be the way scholars can help. What Nixon's presidential rhetoric enacted as under threat was arguable actually threatened in 2016. American society has progressed and matured since 1974, and the groups fighting for equal rights have arguably more access to these rights than ever before. And for many mainstream, white American men, viewing rights as a zero-sum game, the promises of the American dream seem to be fading as other groups gain status. As the recent white nationalist rally in Charlottesville, VA, demonstrated, Trump's

followers believe he "will fulfill the promises…to take our country back."[7] Even if Trump does not agree with white nationalist and other hate groups invoking his name at their rallies (although there is a good case to be made that anything less than an outright denunciation is an act of complicity), the president does not always get to decide to be the mainstream man's metonym. If the American male public sees themselves in the president, he can become their metonym, and Trump has ushered in a new era of identification with hegemonic masculinity.

Presidents presumably represent the opinions of a majority of US citizens. The first "Twitter President" now occupies the White House—the result of a voting public motivated by the ideals of hegemonic masculinity, deep racial hatred, and allegedly aided by some behind-the-scenes political conspiracy. Now as much as ever, what a president says and when and how he says it gives the public an assessment of the majority's mood, and later gives historians and other scholars a snapshot of that mood. Although the differences are stark—Nixon was obsessively presidential in public and "scatological" in private, where Trump has no such decorum filter—Trump's utterances are deeply Nixonian. We see the same hegemonic masculine values reflected in Nixon's presidential rhetoric that offered a blueprint for a reconstituted dominant space for hegemonic structures of gender and race.

This dissertation hopes to contribute to presidential rhetoric studies as well as to the academic study of critical masculinities through its interdisciplinary approach. Studies of masculinity within rhetoric very often consider masculinity only in relation to another identity marker (e.g., homosexuality).[8] Throughout this dissertation, I have tried to avoid this "masculinity AND" approach and instead to remain faithful to Kimmel's

call for CSOMM scholars to study "men *as men*."[9] Without doubt, work within rhetoric and communication studies is adding to the scholarly conversations in critical studies of men and masculinities but interactions appear peripheral or unwitting.

Studying "men *as men*" avoids this too-common trend of "accidental" rhetorical contributions to CSOMM. Rhetoricians miss a prime opportunity to engage in CSOMM's interdisciplinary work, which is already so sympathetic to rhetorical scholarship. Furthermore, rhetoric contributes a vital perspective to scholarly conversations on gender, sexuality, and identity. Because we operate under the assumption that discourse has meaning and great power—to interpellate, negate, silence, empower—our scholarship works to answer the questions of "*what* identities does this discourse construct/call forth/etc.?" and "*how* do these identities resonate in discourse?" Our studies of discourse provide a vital angle from which to examine issues of identities like masculinities.

There are, in short, dual benefits gained by intersecting rhetoric and critical studies of men and masculinities, especially for the study of the U.S. presidency. I believe that this dissertation highlights the benefits of such interdisciplinary scholarship. Studying Nixon through the dual lenses of rhetoric and CSOMM brings into sharper focus the effects that the presidency and hegemonic masculinity have on one another and their relationship with language. The weapons of the war for gender equality are often linguistic, and therefore rhetorical analysis and masculinities studies should find a natural home together.

In this dissertation, I have offered the three case studies of space, war, and Watergate. In addition to being crisis events in Richard Nixon's presidency, they demonstrate the ways and to what extent Nixon was the metonym for mainstream

masculinity during his presidential years. Although he was both extraordinary and infamous, there was something quite average about Dick Nixon.[10] The perfect mix of old-fashioned values and conservatism, Nixon could both reflect the current state of hegemonic masculinity and offer up a vision for new directions to maintain dominance in a changing socio-political landscape.

Two theoretical concepts characterize how Nixon's presidential rhetoric accomplished this: *doxa* and civic republicanism. As I have operationalized it in this project, *doxa* (common sense knowledge) must be both sanctioned and maintained socially.[11] Civic republicanism arguably enacts *doxa*, given its perpetual presence in American political rhetoric. Civic republicanism's emphasis on cool reason to pursue the greater good of society and its aversion to passion and factionalism offer a time-honored means to disqualify those not satisfied with the *status quo.* Nixon relied on his cherry-picked, antiquated form of civic republicanism and on *doxa*, especially about gender, when he used the presidency to rearticulate the dominance of hegemonic masculinity during a time of major social change.

As the United States has matured, white men have appeared to lose dominance, and these perceived losses hit hard. Kimmel calls this phenomenon "real but not true"; feelings of loss are "experienced deeply and sincerely" but that they "are not an accurate analysis of the situation." White males in the U.S. retain the most dominant status and privilege as compared to women and minorities.[12] I have argued in this dissertation that Richard Nixon's presidential rhetoric was instrumental in re-rigging the game to create a new mode of dominance for hegemonic masculinity in the United States by rhetorically eliminating the other players' legitimacy and claim to a "real" American identity.

This study of Nixon has exposed or at least given additional evidence for six conclusions. Conclusion #1: Richard Nixon was so steeped in hegemonic masculinity as an identity that one is almost obligated to study his rhetoric with CSOMM in mind. Nixon was deeply aware of his own humble origins, and throughout his life, he obsessively worked to prove himself an intellectual equal to "liberal elites."[13] And in a more general sense, Nixon was a product of his time, a time when the "crisis of masculinity" dominated.

Conclusion #2: Richard Nixon came to be the public face of mainstream masculinity during his presidential years, and he used that position of power to carve out for hegemonic masculinity a new form of dominance in a changing socio-political terrain. Nixon's oratory on Apollo 13 reinforced *doxa* of gender norms in the United States. The would-be third Moon landing turned in-space emergency dramatized the qualities necessary for exploring the final frontier, and Lovell, Haise, and Swigert formed the perfect picture of the new American frontiersman. Manifest Destiny and the frontier myth provided Nixon with useful rhetorical antecedents by which to limit the astronaut corps to white men. Furthermore, Nixon's Apollo 13 rhetoric reinforced the righteousness of American values on the international stage as well as the *doxa* of white, male dominance on the domestic stage. In responding to Apollo 13, Nixon used an *epideictic* occasion for subtle but effective socio-political policy purposes.

Conclusion #3: *Doxa* runs deep; people prefer to keep their common-sense knowledge intact and will often fight to maintain the *status quo*. Like the new-frontiersman, the Nixonian "warrior" was also necessarily male. The Apollo 13 rhetoric limited dominant American identity to males, and he further limited the identity in

defining the warrior. 1950s-style racism and sexism were no longer the cultural *doxa* held by the vast majority of the US public by the 1970s. While the lynchings may have stopped, racism persisted. By deploying civic republican virtues in his presidential rhetoric, Nixon marked the boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable "warrior" behavior without seeming overly racist, ageist, or sexist. Characterizing Vietnam veterans as "warriors" and withholding the warrior title from Black and student protestors on the grounds of these civic republican ideals (i.e., Blacks were factionalist and students were passion-ruled), Nixon reinforced for mainstream masculinity a slightly different but still dominant place in American society. American society may have matured, but it had not changed entirely.

Conclusion #4: Nixon himself used any means necessary to maintain, or only slightly alter, the *status quo*, especially as it related to men-as-dominant, which benefitted Nixon himself, mainstream masculinity, and the GOP. Because his political power was tied so tightly to the *status quo*, protecting it also meant protecting himself. Defining "hard" and "soft" masculinity was as subjective as defining the "warrior." Nixon's two decades of Watergate rhetoric engaged these tropes to varying degrees of success. Nixon framed his Watergate involvement as a misguided attempt to pursue the greater good for the U.S. and performed his "hardness" by standing up for Executive Privilege. However, "soft" men encouraged a passion-ruled public to become "soft," ultimately costing Nixon the presidency. Other accounts of Watergate, however, and even a critical reading of Nixon's own Watergate rhetoric, invert these definitions: Nixon seems soft, while whistleblowers like Woodward and Bernstein seem hard for standing up for true American morals. Nixon had been a reflection of hegemonic masculinity and had offered

a blueprint for his ideal America, but revelations of Watergate shattered the mirror and scrapped the blueprints, for a man cannot claim to be "hard" while identifying with a man publicly exposed as "soft." Nixon could maintain mainstream masculinity's dominance, but he ultimately could not be a properly masculine role model while doing it.

Nixon's role as the stand-in for mainstream men yielded benefits not only for hegemonic masculinity but also for his political career and for the Republican Party. Nixon's political strategy in 1968 required him to court groups that the GOP previously ignored or considered outside their reach. In 1972, Nixon was the first Republican presidential candidate to command the national majority of the union vote, a group that traditionally voted for the more labor-friendly Democrats. Nixon, however, offered this group an alternative to the Democrats whom he characterized as effete, factionalist, and in favor of unmanly withdrawal from Vietnam.

Richard Nixon brought Southern Democrats and blue-collar white males into the fold of the Republican Party, two demographics consistently held by the GOP since the Nixon years.[14] Even though the GOP rarely produces benefits for either of these demographics, Republicans find great success with these groups by engaging in a rhetoric of dominance.[15] Very similar to what we saw in Nixon's war on drugs rhetoric, post-Nixonian Republicans invite white male listeners (sometimes more subtly than others) to blame minority groups for America's problems and to therefore see themselves as better than and more worthy of the "American Dream" than those minority groups. Nixon implicated Black Americans in his crime and drugs rhetoric, and clearly inferred that these are the enemies of "true" Americans. Reagan continued this theme in his rhetoric

on AIDS, as have most Republican presidents and presidential candidates in recent history (certainly Trump did).[16]

The post-Nixon Republican Party has masterfully harnessed the power of sympathizing with hegemonic masculinity by holding that group up as the tragic victim of vocal minorities and factions. Using "blue lies," lies told to strengthen in-group bonds and reinforce us/them divisions, conservative politicians have maintained the unwavering support of "the great silent majority of Americans" over the decades since Watergate and the Nixon presidency.[17] *TIME* writer Michael Sweeney observed:

> That Donald Trump is a draft-dodger hasn't stopped him from clearly communicating that he values traditional masculinity. During the 2016 campaign, he successfully reframed many issues through the lens of conservative masculinity. When GOP rivals said he had "New York values" (another city-based stereotype of "weak" liberalism), Trump instantly parried by evoking cops and firefighters on 9/11. When caught on tape bragging about sexual assault, he used men-being-men masculinity as a shield.[18]

This passage illustrates Karlyn Kohrs Campbell's point: Nixon's rhetoric of the "great silent majority" maintains its persuasive hold on conservative Americans, especially white males. Campbell notes that Nixon contrasted his "great silent majority" with a caricature of "the vocal minority," associating all dissenters with "factions" like the feminists, queers, Black Americans, and student protestors. By process of elimination, "the great silent majority" necessarily consists only of straight, white men. Though separated by nearly half a century (and many IQ points), we see Richard Nixon and Donald Trump use similar rhetorical tactics to send a message to white men in the U.S.: only they are the true Americans. American culture has in many ways shifted towards

inclusivity and equality, but the Trump election clearly demonstrates that, though white masculinity might be outnumbered, it is not finished fighting for its dominant status.

Conclusion #5: American presidential rhetoric is inseparable from masculinity; it is a hyper-masculine office. Any system reflects the identities and worldviews of those who formed it—in our case, as I stated in Chapter 1, not "founders" but "Founding *Fathers*." Representation matters, and a U.S. president who not only speaks for but also physically looks like the dominant group gives that group an extra advantage in this already-rigged game. Since obvious discrimination was no longer a universally viable political strategy, Nixon provided mainstream masculinity and political conservatism a great service through his presidency. He effectively cloaked his *doxastic* views on gender and race in rhetoric about other issues, like his Apollo 13 and Medal of Honor *epideictic* speeches and his "war on drugs" deliberative rhetoric. In doing this, Nixon offered mainstream masculinity a new way to reinforce its societal dominance, something cemented by Reagan's rhetoric of "colorblindness."[19] Americans saw this phenomenon reach its *telos* in the 2016 election; it was more important to have a president that looked "right" and who affirmed the dominant narrative than it was to have someone actually qualified to lead.[20]

Men who enter the public stage as a president or presidential candidate become available metonymic possibilities for the masculine public—whether he wants this role or not. Bob Woodward explains, "A great part of the Nixon presidency was designed to keep the outside world from seeing the real Nixon, from intruding into the inner sanctum. And here [after Butterfield revealed the White House taping system] was the possibility of the biggest exposure of all time, ripping open the curtain, peeling off the mask."[21]

Perhaps Nixon did not want to be metonymic of mainstream masculinity, but he was, and the stakes of losing that status were directly tied to his presidential service. Masculine performances are always under a microscope; performances of presidential masculinity receive even more rigorous critique.

Conclusion #6: America should have expected Trump. Donald Trump represents the very worst sum of the aforementioned conclusions. Threatened creatures flee or attack, and as Nixon's Vietnam rhetoric cemented in the GOP, real American men do not run. Nixon's presidential discourse provided the rhetorical antecedent for GOP rhetoric over the intervening decades between the 37th president and the 45th, moving racism "underground" and cementing for white masculinity a firm foothold on societal dominance. Trump is simply the *telos* of a system that refuses to confront its own dependence on an ideal of masculinity that not only oppresses women and minorities but that also oppresses the very men holding it up as an ideal. Donald Trump cannot restore white men to their perceived rightful place as society's unquestioned leaders, but that has not stopped his "Pittsburgh, Not Paris" rhetoric from persuading millions of Americans of all genders to buy a share in this castle in the sky. The rhetorical power of this narrative cost Hillary Clinton the 2016 election just as it cost Hubert Humphrey the election of 1968 and George McGovern the 1972 election. Nixon and Trump are very different, but they speak from the Oval Office in the same language of hegemonic masculinity that, if we hope to have any real impact on American society, scholars would be wise to study with great care.

Notes

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[1] Richard Nixon, *RN*: *The Memoirs of Richard Nixon* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1978): 1078. This chapter's title comes from lyrics to Jonathan Larson's *RENT* song, "Halloween."

[2] Actor Robert Redford, the man responsible for adapting Woodstein's *All the President's Men* for the screen, wrote an opinion column for the *Washington Post* in late March 2017 that argued "45 years after Watergate, the truth is again in danger."

[3] The former (first) Nixon Library director turned NYU professor Tim Naftali's *Slate* article, "How Nixonian Is Donald Trump?" takes on those who draw a faulty analogy between the two. He notes the similarities, but he spends most of the article exploring the extremely important differences between them. Nixon only looks positive by association with Trump, though: In an earlier piece for the *Washington Post*, Bernstein and Woodward suggested that "Nixon was far worse than we thought," revealing now-declassified information showing the depth of Nixon's conspiracies.

[4] I drafted this passage on 10 May 2017.

[5] Anderson, *Inclusive Masculinity*. Also see McGee Michael Calvin. "Text, Context, and the Fragmentation of Contemporary Culture." *The Routledge Reader in Rhetorical Criticism*, ed. Brian L. Ott and Greg Dickinson (New York: Routledge, 2013): 227-38; and Raymie E. McKerrow, "Critical Rhetoric: Theory and Praxis," reprinted in *The Routledge Reader in Rhetorical Criticism*, ed. Brian L. Ott and Greg Dickinson (New York: Routledge, 2013): 479-98.

[6] Mary E. Stuckey, "The Art of Anger in US Presidential Elections," 24th Annual Kenneth Burke Lecture, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA, 31 March 2016.

[7] Former KKK leader David Duke gave a brief statement in Charlottesville, which I have excerpted above. The full statement was, "This represents a turning point for the people of this country. We are determined to take our country back, we are going to fulfill the promises of Donald Trump. That's what we believed in, that's why we voted for Donald Trump, because he said he's going to take our country back, and that's what we gotta do." See "David Duke: Charlottesville Rally Part of Effort to 'Take Country Back,'" *NBC News*, 12 August 2017. http://www.nbcnews.com/video/david-duke-says-he-was-at-charlottesville-rally-to-fulfill-promise-of-trump-1023420483642.

[8] For example, Morris III on Lincoln/Kramer, on J. Edgar Hoover, and Foss on Milk. The post-AND fillers are many. Joshua Gunn, for example, often interrogates masculinity in his work, but often as masculinity AND psychoanalysis. In his and Frentz's analysis of *Fight Club*, masculinity is symptomatic of larger cultural psychoses. This is NOT to say that all rhetorical works engaging masculinity are "masculinity AND" studies. For example, Mary Vavrus's analysis of *Mr. Mom*. The general trend, however, is towards the "masculinity AND" mode.

[9] Kimmel, *Manhood*, 1.

[10] As my advisor says, he was "the everyman, but exceptionally so."

[11] As Hariman phrased it, doxa is "that which need not be said." Robert Hariman, "Critical Rhetoric and Postmodern Theory," *Quarterly Journal of Speech (Forum)* 77 (1991): 67-70.

[12] Kimmel observes, "The game has changed, but instead of questioning the rules, [white men] want to eliminate the other players." Hegemonic masculinity will not go down without a fight. Kimmel, *Angry White Men,* 9.
[13] Historian and author Garry Wills has been a Nixon commentator since the early 1960s, and much of his work on Nixon's identity, such as Nixon Agonistes and his regular contributions to Esquire magazine, has directly engaged masculinity. Garry Wills, *Nixon Agonistes: The Crisis of the Self-Made Man* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1969). Just one example of Wills's work in *Esquire* is "What Makes the Newest Nixon Run? The Old Nixon," *Esquire*, May 1968, 89-96 and 196-202. Also see *RN*; *The Haldeman Diaries;* and John A. Farrell, *Richard Nixon: The Life* (New York: DoubleDay, 2017).
[14] For example, see Michael A. Cohen, *American Maelstrom: The 1968 Election and the Politics of Division* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016); Paul Frymer and John Skrentyny, "Coalition-Building and the Politics of Electoral Capture During the Nixon Administration: African Americans, Labor, Latinos," *Studies in American Political Development* 12, no. 2 (1998): 131-161.
[15] For more, see Heather Cox Richardson, *To Make Men Free: A History of the Republican Party* (New York: Basic Books, 2014).
[16] I would be remiss not to mention the role of Bill Clinton's presidency in perpetuating the racially discriminatory policies of this "War on Drugs" rhetoric. His legislation worsened (if not merely upheld) laws that unequally target Black Americans.
[17] See Jeremy Adam Smith, "How the Science of 'Blue Lies' May Explain Trump's Support," *Scientific American – Guest Blog,* 24 March 2017, http://bit.ly/2uMOdJM.
[18] Michael Sweeney, "Donald Trump's New Slogan Isn't About the Climate. It's about Gender," *TIME,* 9 June 2017, http://ti.me/2wNZsTE. For a conservative's assessment, see Peggy Noonan, "Declarations: Trump is Woody Allen without the Humor," *Wall Street Journal,* 29 July 2017, http://on.wsj.com/2eS27Y0; and Michael Gerson, "Trump Babbles in the Face of Tragedy," *Washington Post,* 12 August 2017, http://wapo.st/2fJt94e.
[19] See works like Nicholas Laham, *The Reagan Presidency and the Politics of Race: In Pursuit of Colorblind Justice and Limited Government* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998).
[20] When presidential rhetoric reinforces *doxa* on issues like gender and race via purportedly civic republican rhetoric, speaking out against discrimination becomes extremely difficult. When something becomes so ingrained in the common sense of society and is consecrated by the US president so that it "need not be said," someone who "needs to say" it faces disbelief, denigration, and possibly even danger.
[21] Woodward, *The Last of the President's Men*, 171.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: Apollo 13 Contingency Statement In Case of Failure

(Price) JK April 16, 1970

Apollo 13 Contingency Statement In Case of Failure

In this tragic moment, the nation's first thoughts are with the Apollo 13 astronauts and their families. All of us must hope that the memory of the astronauts' own courage, so abundantly displayed, will now help sustain their loved ones.

These men were three of America's best. They dared greatly. They died bravely. The world will long remember the searing human drama of Apollo 13 -- and also the calm, the self-control, the quiet heroism, displayed by the men aboard it.

It was less than a year ago that people the world over shared the sense of triumph as man first walked on the moon. Now people the world over are joined in grief. Other explorers have been lost, and other adventurers have died -- but none while so many watched so intently, and hoped so fervently.

For us here on Earth, the need now is to distill the lessons of this tragedy -- not only to make future space voyages safer, but also to fulfill the dreams of Astronauts Lovell, Haise and Swigert. They went to the Moon, knowing the danger, because they believed in the mission. They stood in the noblest tradition of man's spirit, and by their courage even in the ultimate adversity they gave that tradition new luster.

# # # #

APPENDIX B: The President's News Conference on the My Lai Massacre

TEXT AND FOOTNOTES REPRODUCED FROM *THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY PROJECT* (http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=2365)

#481 – The President's News Conference – Excerpts
December 8, 1969

[Press Conference Question 2.] Mr. Cornell [Douglas B. Cornell, Associated Press]

Q. In your opinion, was what happened at Mylai[1] a massacre, an alleged massacre, or what was it? And what do you think can be done to prevent things like this? If it was a massacre, do you think it was justifiable on military or other grounds?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, trying to answer all of those questions and sorting it out, I would start first with this statement: What appears was certainly a massacre, and under no circumstances was it justified.

One of the goals we are fighting for in Vietnam is to keep the people from South Vietnam from having imposed upon them a government which has atrocity against civilians as one of its policies.

We cannot ever condone or use atrocities against civilians in order to accomplish that goal.

Now when you use the word "alleged" that is only proper in terms of the individuals involved. Under our system a man is not guilty until proved to be so. There are several individuals involved here who will be tried by military courts. Consequently, we should say "alleged" as far as they are concerned until they are proved guilty.

As far as this kind of activity is concerned, I believe that it is an isolated incident. Certainly within this administration we are doing everything possible to find out whether it was isolated and so far our investigation indicates that it was.

As far as the future is concerned, I would only add this one point: Looking at the other side of the coin, we have 1,200,000 Americans who have been in Vietnam. Forty thousand of them have given their lives. Virtually all of them have helped the people of Vietnam in one way or another. They built roads and schools. They built churches and

[1] Allegations against a U.S. Infantry unit concerning an incident which occurred on March 16, 1968, first appeared in the press on November 17, 1969.

pagodas. The Marines alone this year have built over 250,000[2] churches, pagodas, and temples for the people of Vietnam.

Our soldiers in Vietnam and sailors and airmen this year alone contributed three-quarter of a million dollars to help the people of South Vietnam.

Now this record of generosity, of decency, must not be allowed to be smeared and slurred because of this kind of an incident. That is why I am going to do everything I possibly can to see that all of the facts in this incident are brought to light and that those who are charged, if they are found guilty, are punished. Because if it is isolated, it is against our policy and we shall see to it that what these men did, if they did it, does not smear the decent men that have gone to Vietnam in a very, in my opinion, important cause.

[Press Conference Question 5.] Mr. Theis [J. William Theis, *Hearst Newspapers*]

Q. May I go back to Mr. Cornell's question to ask, in the light of the Mylai incident, would you prefer a civilian commission, something other than a military inquiry in this case?

THE PRESIDENT. Mr. Theis, I do not believe that a civilian commission at this time would be useful. I believe that the matter now is in the judicial process, and that a civilian commission might be, and very properly could be, used by the defendants' attorneys as having prejudiced their rights.

Now, if it should happen that the judicial process, as set up by the military under the new law passed by Congress,[3] does not prove to be adequate in bringing this incident completely before the public, as it should be brought before the public, then I would consider a commission, but not at this time.

On June 19, 1969, the President issued Executive Order 11476, effective August 1, 1969, prescribing the use of a revised edition of the Manual for Courts-Martial, United States Army.

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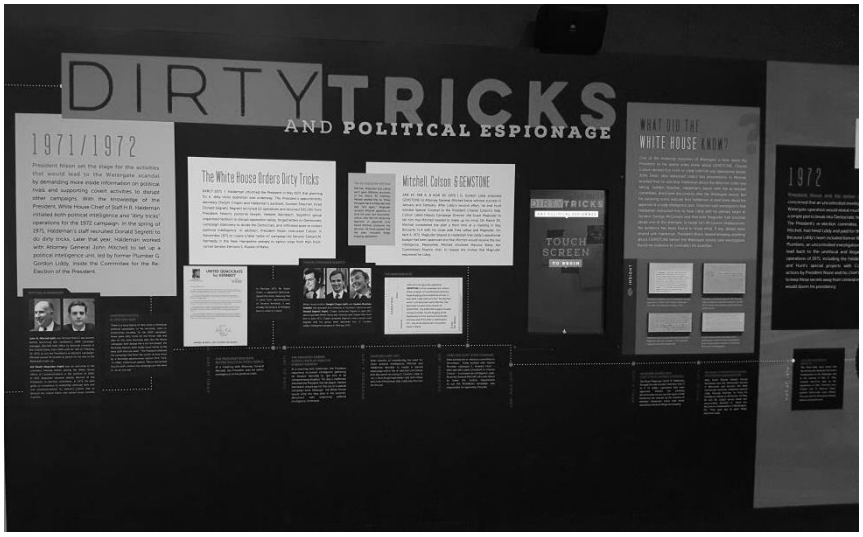
[2] The White House Press Office later explained that the President had inadvertently used an incorrect figure. The Marines had built 251 schools and 117 churches, pagodas, and temples.

[3] The Military Justice Act of 1968 (Public Law 90-632, 82 Stat. 1335) which took effect August 1, 1969, provided for increased participation of military judges and counsel on courts-martial.

APPENDIX C: Watergate Exhibit

Photographs taken by author during paid admission to the Museum in Yorba Linda, CA.



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Publications

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