

# ARCHIVE

An Undergraduate Journal of History



Volume 25, May 2022  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

# ARCHIVE

AN UNDERGRADUATE JOURNAL OF HISTORY

Volume 25, May 2022

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Cover Image

This photo depicts a waitlisted student seated outside the entrance  
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Image: Wisconsin Governor Walter Kohler (far left), University President E.B. Fred, and Theodore Crabb (far right) stand looking at the 25th Anniversary cake for the Memorial Union. Courtesy of University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, S01096.

## A Note from the Editors

From the bottom of our hearts, we are honored and proud to publish Volume 25 of *ARCHIVE*. UW-Madison's Undergraduate History Journal has now been advocating for student's projects and their incredible historical analysis for over two and a half decades. This spring, similar to all years past, our board received a high volume of exceptional historical works from students and universities all around the world. While we could not publish every work that was submitted, *ARCHIVE* would like to thank everyone who wrote to us. Our board worked relentlessly this semester with authors hundreds of miles away. Throughout the publishing process, our editors assist an author with their project's argument, structure, grammar, flow, and layout. This year, we present four unique projects. Each of these projects are written about separate topics, but all fit under our journal's theme: Memory of the 20th century. The first three pieces are works from students outside UW-Madison. Meanwhile, the fourth piece is an homage to *ARCHIVE*'s twenty-five year history from two editors on our board. While ranging widely in topic and style, we believe that each of these historical works are enlightening, insightful, and add to the historical conversation they participate in.

The journal begins with Riley Rogers' "Schlafly's Girls: The Humanization of Counter-movement Studies in the Context of the STOP ERA Movement." Riley argues that, throughout history, historians have been too quick to villainize American conservative movements. As a result, the complexities of these movements have not been analyzed fully and overlooked. She proves her argument through examining Phyllis Schlafly and her STOP ERA movement of the later twentieth century. Riley begins her project by outlining the tumultuous life of the Equal Rights Amendment for women's equality in the United States. In her abridged history, she emphasizes that there was support for the amendment, but that it never passed due to long-standing patriarchal ideals. Riley then moves on to describe how mainstream feminism of the time further alienated housewives from joining the pro-ERA movement by belittling their humble lifestyle. Meanwhile, Phyllis Schlafly, the leader of the conservative STOP ERA movement, embraced housewives and fought back against mainstream feminism. Rogers argues that Schlafly became so popular because she spoke to women's fears about social progress, that this progress would bring homosexuality and other social deviants.

But even though this movement was clearly not progressive or healthy, Rogers still analyzes the STOP ERA movement through an objective lens. In the latter half of her work, she asserts that STOP ERA and other conservative movements are inherently reactionary and cannot exist without an earlier liberal counterpart. This implies that conservatives are not necessarily against certain issues such as women's rights, but that they are simply against change. Because liberal and conservative movements are quick to dismiss one another, there is never any real discussion between the two parties, leading to the political polarization and stagnation we see today.

Then, we move on to "‘To Your Descendants I Give This Land:’ Covenant and Pragmatism in Moral Majority Zionism (1979-1985)" by Katherine Booska. Another piece about the New Right, Booska takes our readers on a tour of Jerry Falwell's wildly successful Religious Right movement throughout the later twentieth century. She begins with a description of Jerry Falwell himself. Falwell was an extremely traditional, fundamentalist Christian pastor that vehemently supported the official state of Israel. And while he never intended to enter the political arena, these traditional Christian beliefs and that the United States had a sacred obligation to assist Israel were politically popular with American conservatives at the time. So Falwell began to preach to the Republican Party and founded what we now know as the 'New Right,' spearheaded by Ronald Reagan.

Booska asserts that Falwell's fundamentalist Christian beliefs, however, ran into direct conflict with his pro-Israel stance. In fact, American Jews primarily detested Jerry Falwell and accused him of anti-semitism on several occasions throughout his career. Katherine showcases that even though Falwell attempted to reconcile with the American Jewish community by changing his rhetoric to create a covenant with Jewish people. According to Booska, Falwell began preaching restorationist values, believing that the Jewish people would eventually come to rule over Jerusalem once again. But the American Jewish community still never forgave him for his early anti-semitism. In the end, Falwell proves that a fundamentalist Christian identity has limitations when attempting to create a popular political platform. In general, Booska asserts that being a steadfast radical can gain wild popularity within one's own bloc, but is ultimately defeated when introduced to a wider political audience.



Our third work presented in the journal is Melina Testin's, "POW Graphic Novels: Illustrating to Illuminate the Past." This project is easily one of the most unique ever published in ARCHIVE's history. Throughout the project, Testin explores the lives of four different soldiers: Don Casey, Mac Ekstrand, Lucky Lockhart, and Carver McGriff. Each of these soldiers were captured in WWII and tell their harrowing tales with detail in oral histories. Melina then brought these testimonies to life through her pen and brush. These stories each highlight a different hardship of being caught by the enemy in war. For example, Mac Ekstrand's tale is one about how fear permeates the soul while captured. Ekstrand, while brave otherwise, found himself unable to speak up for himself even when liberated because he was still afraid of Nazi savagery. Meanwhile, other soldiers such as Lucky Lockhart were able to rationalize their fear and normalize their physical abuse while captured as, "wartime tensions."

What Melina proves through this work is that while the American public constantly consumes the sanitized valor stories of World War II, they do not truly understand the lasting trauma of capture and war. In fact, most POWs were shamed into silence after their time behind enemy lines and were only able to speak about their experiences decades after. As a whole, Americans need to show more compassion towards the real faces that suffer and die for us overseas, not just the valorized stories.

Finally, our last work is by two of our own editors, Samantha Sharpe and Kayla Parker, called "Reflections of the Cold War: Understanding the Russo-Ukrainian conflict through ARCHIVE's Twenty-Five Year History." This piece is both an homage to ARCHIVE's history of exceptional student historical research and an examination of the Russo-Ukrainian war of 2022. In this piece, Sharpe and Parker assert that this conflict between Russia and Ukraine is simply a continuation of their tenuous relationship throughout the twentieth century and a product of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. They prove their argument by reflecting upon past works in ARCHIVE's volumes discussing precedents to the war. Our editors analyze excerpts from works such as Jacob Loshkin's "The Starvation of a Nation: The Ukrainian Famine of 1932-1933 as a Soviet Engineered Genocide" and Shauna Fitzmahan's "Shestydesiatnyky: The Generation of the Sixties." These works contextualize the Russian and Ukrainian conflict into a larger, oppressive trend perpetuated by the Russians towards the Ukrainian people.



After analyzing the shaky relationship between Russia and Ukraine throughout the twentieth century, Sharpe and Parker argue that the conflict between these two countries actually is deeply rooted in the Cold War between the USSR and the United States, and that Ukraine is an unfortunate victim caught in between the two major powers. Our editors showcase how the Cold War has affected uninvolved parties by analyzing older works such as Ryan Panzer's "Karl Barth: The 'Silent' Voice of Reason Between East and West," Kazu Matsushima's "The Secret War in Laos: A Revolutionary Way of War," and Arthur Zarate's "Waging a Propaganda War Against Iran: The American Effort to Oust Mohammad Mosaddeq." These works show that even though the Cold War was perpetuated by the United States and the Soviet Union, the true victims are the ones that were crushed between these two major powers. Finally, Sharpe and Parker interviewed each of these previous *ARCHIVE* authors to gain perspective on why studying history is so important towards our understanding of current events. Throughout this project, it became clearer than ever that history is a powerful tool that allows us to absorb perspectives we might not have otherwise considered. And when history is remembered, we can learn from our past and try to move forward better than before.

At last, we would like to thank our incredible editorial board, who has been tireless throughout this publishing process. Their efforts made this experience possible, and enjoyable the whole way through, and we cannot be more grateful for every single one of them. I want to specifically thank all of our editors in the Class of 2022. We wish you only the best as you transition into post-graduation life, wherever it may take you! In addition, thank you to our faculty advisor, Professor Judd Kinzley, who was always there whenever we needed a little extra editing or advice on how to proceed. To our amazing History Department, especially to Scott Burkhardt and Sophie Olsen, thank you for supporting us to publish another volume of *ARCHIVE* even before the Spring Semester began. And of course, we could not have done any of this without our authors. To Melina, Katherine, and Riley, thank you for your dedication to our project, we could not be more honored to bring your vision to light! May this journal be proof towards your historical accomplishments. With that, we are excited to invite you all to enjoy Volume 25 of *ARCHIVE*.

Sincerely,  
Julia Derzay and Haley Drost



# Schlafly's Girls

Humanizing counter-movement studies in the  
context of the STOP ERA movement

*Riley Rogers*



Image: *Phyllis Schlafly, 1977* Copyright © Diana Mara Henry / [www.dianamarahenry.com](http://www.dianamarahenry.com)

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Riley Rogers is a graduating senior at the University of Washington, Seattle majoring in english and history. Her studies center on American visions of gender and sexuality through the twentieth century, focusing on subversive literature as a dialogic reinterpretation of national motifs. This article was written for Professor James Gregory's senior colloquium, "American Social Movements Since 1900," in Fall 2021.

Beginning in September of 1972, Phyllis Schlafly — housewife, mother of six, and radical conservative activist — spent over a decade mobilizing disparate and often politically disengaged swaths of the American public.<sup>1</sup> Concerned by the implications of the newly reintroduced Equal Rights Amendment, she and her supporters built a campaign of distrust, disavowal, and defamation. From the earliest anti-ERA publication, her vow remained the same: to defeat an amendment that had achieved 84-8 and 354-23 approval by the Senate and House of Representatives, respectively.<sup>2</sup> Initially, her efforts seemed futile. However, Schlafly's stubborn disbelief in a legislative effort she viewed as inherently destructive to the everyday privileges of American women buoyed the movement beyond all expectation. By 1982, the ERA failed to acquire the three-fourths state majority necessary to ratify a congressional amendment; somehow, Schlafly had done the impossible. Given her success in the face of such staggering odds, it should follow that her work as a social movement mobilizer would cement her place in American history, and — in a way — it did. Her legacy, though tainted by ridicule and vitriol, was assured.

This adverse framework, a pervasive theme of academic counter-movement studies which favors lenses of vilification and neatly obscured historical import, is disappointingly common. Schlafly's success through the 1970s and 1980s illustrated the immense power of a reactive majority unsettled by disruptions to socio-cultural conventions of hierarchy and prestige. Her careful orchestration of this hidden constituency is incompatible with traditional methods of historical analysis, poorly served by theoretical structures compiled on the ideological, organizational and methodological structures of liberal social movements. Indeed, this case study of Schlafly and her historical moment indicates the necessity of a uniquely conservative analytical model unburdened by suppositions of hate, ignorance, and absurdity.

### **Early Days: Congressional History, 1923-1970**

The National Women's Party (NWP), an organization founded in 1913 to aid the suffragette effort, was the catalyzing force that launched the ERA into the national consciousness.<sup>3</sup> Born of intra-organization conversations in 1920, the Equal Rights Amendment was a product of post-suffrage momentum encouraged by the successful ratification of the 19th amendment.<sup>4</sup> Women had achieved enfranchisement — constitutionally enforced equality was

the next step. NWP members would spend the next three years engaged in this debate, questioning the nature of institutionalized gender hierarchies and lobbying for the proposed amendment's introduction to Congress. By 1923, Senator Charles Curtis and Representative Daniel Anthony — both Kentucky Republicans — formally sponsored the ERA, and the amendment made the first of many entrances into Congressional proceedings.<sup>5</sup> The amendment failed its initial run, facing staunch opposition by the National Consumer League over potential negative repercussions on recent protective legislation for women in the workforce.<sup>6</sup>

Between 1923 and 1970, the ERA would reappear “at least ten times,” acquiring a tumultuous history of support and rejection and a contentious lineage that would inform debates for decades to come.<sup>7</sup> For example, the amendment's 1947 reappearance saw widespread, bi-partisan Congressional support, only to be rebuffed by conservative women who argued against the conflation of “equal rights with identical rights.”<sup>8</sup> This disconnected vision of “equal” and “identical” evoked a broader conversation, drawing on nearly fifty years of ideological debate; the controversies of early ERA discourse directly shaped an opposition ideology that Schlafly would unknowingly echo in her campaigning throughout the 1970s.

Congressional reintroductions often featured riders — added provisions attached to bills or other measures that attempt to circumnavigate the legislative process by “riding” a pre-existing piece of legislature. These additions aimed to impair or restrict the intended function of the amendment, including, most notably, the Hayden clause. In 1950, Senator Carl Hayden of Arizona attached a rider, reading: “the provisions of this article shall not be construed to impair any rights, benefits, or exemptions conferred by law upon the persons of the female sex.”<sup>9</sup> Surprisingly, this amended iteration of the ERA would pass the Senate 63-19, though it faced prompt rejection in the House.<sup>10</sup> To proponents of the ERA, Hayden's amendment was patronizing and paternalistic, implying that equal rights were a futile effort and American women required disproportionate legal protection on the basis of sex alone. The implications of the clause were less than subtle — in fact, they openly condescended the intentions of the amendment.

Hayden's rider never succeeded beyond Senate approval. Feminist disavowal of his efforts made it clear that the ERA intended to dismantle gendered protections, even where they benefitted women. The removal of these protections was a

functional necessity for the pursuit of true equality; however, feminist rejection of Hayden's preserved rights would reappear two decades later as a critical argument co-opted and reinterpreted by Schlafly's fear-inducing rhetoric. Hayden and like-minded legislators added amendments "designed to defeat the ERA, and they did."<sup>11</sup> Their legislative measures — though unsuccessful — were responsible for controversial, lingering dialogues that echoed through the decades of debate to come. These early discourses on subtly altered wording became profoundly impactful sites of contention with influence far beyond the limited scope of these legislators' initial efforts.

### **Feminist Mobilization: The Equal Rights Fight from 1966-1972**

While the ERA stagnated in Congress, feminist mobilization escalated, intensified by Betty Friedan's 1963 publication, *The Feminine Mystique*. Friedan's work was foundational; her book sparked a divisive dialogue and popularized radical, subversive notions of gendered social performance. Readily incorporated into the ERA debate, *The Feminine Mystique* provided an ideological backdrop for the pro-amendment lobbying of the late 1960s and early 1970s as well as the conservative backlash it set into motion. A catalyst for feminist and anti-feminist advocacy alike, Friedan's thesis was rapidly indexed into the rhetorical framework of pro-ERA ideology, a dangerous correlation that worked to the movement's detriment.

Controversial and combative, Friedan argued that American women shared a growing sense of nameless discontent produced by their passive acquiescence to unfulfilling, externally-induced roles. Wife, mother, homemaker — these limited avenues of female fulfillment held women captive, confined to the expectations of a society that actively decried female individuality. Quiet dissatisfaction was common and expected; women had little room for self-actualization or accomplishment beyond prescriptive, gendered notions of success.

Couched in a combative tone often perceived as angry or condescending, Friedan's claims — though perhaps warranted — actively alienated certain demographics of American women from mainstream feminism. In the book's opening chapter, "The Problem That Has No Name," she imagines housewives as harshly characterized caricatures of feminine archetypes:

“Their only dream was to be perfect wives and mothers; their highest ambition to have 5 children and a beautiful house, their only fight to get and keep their husbands. They had no thought for the unfeminine problems of the world outside the home; they wanted the men to make the major decisions. They gloried in their role as women.”<sup>12</sup>

This dismissive tone remains consistent throughout, bulldozing through white picket fences to tear at this facade of traditional female fulfillment. The prose is hostile and intentionally so — in part, her rageful disillusionment bolstered the book’s success. But in so doing, Friedan established a clear hierarchy that divided American women, patronizing not only those who lived the life she described but also those who would actively choose to. She concludes her landmark publication with a rousing call to action that demands female determinism: “The time is at hand when the voices of the feminine mystique can no longer drown out the inner voice that is driving women on to become complete.”<sup>13</sup>

Friedan’s vision of female agency was blind to its own subjectivity; she advocated for self-actualization and independence while strictly defining the sites in which such values could be found. The book slips into a recurring schema of liberal intellectualism which paints progressivism as an effort in moral, analytical, and logical competence neatly juxtaposed with a curated vision of a backward, unenlightened, and delusional opponent. Caught in this narrow framework, Schlafly and STOP ERA acquired a set of projected meanings; their definition of womanhood was characterized as limited, confining, and painfully traditional. Here, Friedan’s aggressive feminism reflected a similar trap, as she attempted to dictate the ‘right’ or ‘correct’ forms female performance should conform to. While she may have been correct in speaking to the mystification of womanhood, Friedan’s sentiments projected a perverse sense of equally authoritarian determinism. Her ideology imposed arbitrary standards of gendered performance that directly mirrored the feminist criticism directed at Schlafly and STOP ERA’s traditionalism. Her work grasped at prescriptive authority and diminished women’s right to self-determination; regardless of its appeal to the feminist palate, the choice of female expression remained, as always, personal and individual. The reactive backlash of many American women, then, was not simply a Schlafly-induced phenomenon as the women of the ERA may have liked to think. Indeed, it was the self-induced



product of a movement that, at its core, "implied a criticism of life as a full-time homemaker."<sup>14</sup>

In 1966, Friedan, alongside several other high-profile organizers, founded the National Organization for Women (NOW), an organization dedicated to the acquisition of quantifiable, legally enforced rights for American women. Inspired by the 1963 Equal Pay Act and the workplace anti-discrimination protections of the 1964 Title VII amendment to the Civil Rights Act, the women of NOW saw the reintroduction of the ERA as the next step in the logical lineage of legislative equality.<sup>15</sup> These legislative contemporaries ensured fair wages and deterred workplace discrimination, an evolution in legal equality that permitted the introduction of new political allies, once opposed, to the pro-ERA fight. By 1970, the ERA had gained formal support from the ACLU, the United Automobile Workers union, and the U.S. Department of Labor.<sup>16</sup> Engaged in a flurry of conventional mobilization, NOW embarked on a campaign of attrition. In the spring of 1970, the Pittsburgh chapter stormed a Senate hearing on the amendment, forcing Indiana Senator Birch Bayh to promise new hearings the following year.<sup>17</sup> In New York City, Betty Friedan organized the Women's March for Equality; the August 26th protest mobilized nearly 50,000 women and effectively shut down Fifth Avenue.<sup>18</sup> These dramatic moments in NOW's early history were emblematic of the era, granting the organization meteoric escalation in public support, social prestige, and political visibility.

The lobbying of 1967 through 1970 would soon see tangible returns. In the summer of 1970, Representative Martha Griffiths, a Michigan Democrat, mobilized a House majority to discharge the amendment from its twenty-year stagnation in the Judiciary Committee.<sup>19</sup> Released on August 10th, the amendment was approved by the House after less than an hour of debate.<sup>20</sup> But if the House moved fast, the Senate moved faster. Senators were already attempting to diminish the amendment's intended returns, pursuing "riders... protecting women from the military draft, alimony, custody rights, and protective labor laws."<sup>21</sup> These riders largely failed to gain traction, with one critical exception: the Wiggins Amendment. An April 1971 contrivance of the House Judiciary Committee, the Wiggins amendment intended to "exempt women from 'compulsory military service' and... preserve other laws 'which reasonably promote the health and safety of the people.'"<sup>22</sup> Similar to the Hayden rider, the amendment supported a "qualified form of equality" that reiterated paternalistic narratives

of women's need for extra protection.<sup>23</sup> The Wiggins amendment introduced an additional dimension of readily exploitable nuance: the draft. In deliberations, representatives voted against the amendment and the ERA passed in its original, unmodified form. The implications of Wiggins's rider, however, remained a weak spot for state-ratification campaigns, indicating that the pro-ERA contingent was so thoroughly uninterested in preserving tradition that they would willingly send women to war.

On October 12, 1971, the House of Representatives approved an unmodified ERA 354-23. After five months of deliberation, the Senate would echo this approval 84-8, granting the amendment seven years to achieve the three-fourths state majority necessary for ratification. If, by March 22, 1979, the ERA had not achieved ratification in thirty eight states, the proposed amendment would expire.<sup>24</sup> Composed of three relatively non-controversial sections, the Equal Rights Amendment in its 1972 form read as follows:

“Section 1: Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.

Section 2: The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

Section 3: This amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification.”<sup>25</sup>

The wording of the Equal Rights Amendment was left intentionally vague to permit judicial interpretation and broad applicability. Devised as a “blank check,” the ERA's structure followed the lineage of its loosely framed predecessors, the first, fifth, and fourteenth amendments.<sup>26</sup> Legislative ambiguity was a staple of the time — the expansive, symbolic nature of earlier amendments had directly permitted massive success in contemporary liberal rights movements such as the Civil Rights Movement. If the wording of the amendment was beholden to this time, so too was the response to its carefully tailored vagaries. The non-committal construction and lack of tangible definition made the question of potential effects abstract, and, therefore, vulnerable. Open to diverse interpretations, the amendment's vague wording unintentionally permitted an ease of undesirable enframement that the anti-ERA faction could — and would — eagerly exploit.

**“What’s Wrong with Equal Rights”: 1972 and the  
Conservative Imagination**

Phyllis Schlafly's ascent into the national consciousness was meteoric. Her 1964 book, *A Choice Not An Echo*, written in support of Barry Goldwater's campaign for the Republican nomination sold three million copies in a single year, a wild success that cemented her as a conservative authority.<sup>27</sup> A thrice-failed Congressional candidate, Schlafly's politics often fell outside the comfortable bounds of the conservative establishment.<sup>28</sup> During her 1967 presidential campaign for the National Federation of Republican Women (NFRW), Schlafly found herself at odds with an organization she had long called home. Criticized as too radical, she was defeated on May 5th, a loss that echoed into the early days of STOP ERA. Just four months later, the first edition of *The Phyllis Schlafly Report* was published, reaching a wide constituency of disillusioned NFRW members.<sup>29</sup> Abandoning the Federation in droves, these women formed “Schlafly Clubs” and wrote pamphlets decrying liberalism in the organization.<sup>30</sup> Already, Schlafly had a knack for transformation, a trait she would carry into the STOP ERA fight alongside the new body of staunch supporters her failed campaign had so presciently rallied.

Schafly's first exposure to the ERA was in December of 1971. She mulled the issue over for three months before publishing a scathingly critical article in her conservative newsletter, *The Phyllis Schlafly Report*.<sup>31</sup> A mere month before the amendment achieved Senate approval, “What’s Wrong with ‘Equal Rights’ for Women” was published. A pivotal moment in the anti-ERA movement, her article outlined the key ideological tenets of opposition and solidified her role as “the rhetorical fulcrum of the movement.”<sup>32</sup> Founded on July 7, 1972, Schlafly's “Stop Taking Our Privileges, Equal Rights Amendment” movement began humbly, composed of a few like-minded women from her home state, Illinois.<sup>33</sup> By September, STOP ERA had expanded to the national level, gathering just over one hundred dedicated women from across the country to begin the slow process of grassroots mobilization.

STOP ERA would rapidly expand in scope and support beyond this unimpressive scale, reaching deep into the heart of a little-politicized but contemporarily controversial demographic and successfully mobilizing it. Inherently reactionary, Schlafly's rhetoric leaned away from ideological self-determinism, relying instead on tactics that ridiculed, rebutted, and degraded popular

pro-ERA sentiments. Much of STOP ERA rhetoric operated in direct contrast to that espoused by prominent figures in NOW and other pro-ERA organizations. The conservative coalition explicitly focused on estranging the presentation of womanhood and femininity that Friedan implied. As such, the conversation transformed from the amendment's potential for tangible rights and legislative returns to discourses on trivial meanings and definitions. In short, Schlafly "shift[ed] debate away from equal rights and focus[ed] it on the possibility that the ERA might bring substantive changes in women's roles and behavior."<sup>34</sup>

Schlafly's rhetoric emphasized the radical elements of the pro-ERA contingent; she gave voice to extremity, offering a contorted vision of feminist ideology that exploited and exaggerated in equal measure. Her characterization painted feminism as intrinsically opposed to traditional lifestyles. For housewives — the demographic so violently demeaned by Friedan's work — this derogatory construction was understandably concerning. These women often found themselves "alienated from a feminist movement the values of which seemed elitist and disconnected from the lives of ordinary people," a defining disillusionment that fed into changing public perceptions of pro-ERA narratives.<sup>35</sup> While it was unlikely that the amendment would have dramatically impacted the traditional structure of the American family, its association with "a movement that was profoundly opposed to traditional conceptions of how families should be organized" created circumstances in which "homemakers could feel... that they were being asked 'to relinquish tangible benefits in exchange for a vague promise of dubious value.'"<sup>36</sup> Adopting and popularizing this radical sensibility allowed Schlafly access to an undervalued and oft-forgotten constituency; motivated by the open acknowledgment of their positional vulnerability, these women quickly constituted the demographic and organizational backbone of her coalition.

The correlation of the ERA with radical, socially revisionary feminist doctrine was a carefully directed rhetorical attack coordinated by Schlafly and delivered via the Phyllis Schlafly Report. If the 1972 publication had solidified her position as an authority in the anti-ERA movement, the ease with which she exerted influence only further reinforced it. Speaking to the core of contemporary concerns, Schlafly's strategy was to fearmonger, centering her rhetoric around this defining claim: "of all the classes of people that have ever lived, the American woman is

the most privileged. We have the most rights and rewards, and the fewest duties."<sup>37</sup> This mentality reflects the lingering vestiges of 1950s-esque, Hayden-inspired paternalism. In Schlafly's understanding, legal equality was blind to the realities of gendered living and, therefore, decidedly undesirable. Her idea of women's privilege was limited and exclusionary, losing sight of the multitudes of American women who lacked access to such luxuries. Yet, to those who did — and those who aspired to them — this framing not only accepted their chosen position but honored it, intending to preserve homemaking as an institution of paramount importance to American life. Compared to Friedan's open hostility, Schlafly's rhetoric was reassuring, even comforting.

Friedan, however, might argue that to accept Schlafly's ideation of women's privilege was to epitomize yet another symptom of the 'feminine mystique' — women were so deeply indoctrinated that their oppression had become Stockholm in nature — but such a framing removes individual agency, a condescension unproductive to proper social movement study. But in truth, the individual agents of STOP ERA had their own diverse set of motivations. These women were unequivocally influenced by Schlafly's interpretive framing, but their support was equally informed by a schema of lived experience that recognized and faithfully reflected her words. Speaking exclusively in extremes, Schlafly argued: "the women's libbers are... waging a total war on the family, on marriage, on children [and] ... a total assault on the role of the American woman as wife and mother, and on the family as the basic unit of society."<sup>38</sup> Vast swaths of American women readily accepted this radical mentality, a willing adherence to conservative values that indicated the coercive power such terrifying feminist disruptions to the status quo wrought.

Speech communication scholar Martha Solomon contextualizes STOP ERA's early organizational ethos in a 1978 article which reveals "the inception period of a movement is a time of indecision... the innovation of public tension... a time for the identification of destination and devils, the 'Mecca' of the movement, and the 'evil principles' it opposes."<sup>39</sup> This effort to create an ideological 'Mecca' preoccupied Schlafly's early groundwork, framing the ERA as a direct threat to traditional, widely accepted ways of life, an attack promulgated by a specific subset of undesirables. It was, she claimed: "the unkempt, the lesbians, the radicals, the Socialists, and the government employees who are trying... to force us to conform."<sup>40</sup> In so doing, she pinned

a perverse set of negative associations on the ERA; limited by Schlafly's negative frame, the amendment became a threat to convention and, therefore, the normal individual. This contrived image of the opposition soon became a feature of ERA rhetoric across ideological lines. Feminists and anti-feminists alike lost sight of the shared, objective truths lurking beneath the divisive confines of intentional rhetorical estrangement. As Jane Mansbridge describes it, the ERA debate "was both grossly oversimplified and extremely antagonistic."<sup>41</sup> Nuance was abandoned by two movements that had extended far beyond the familiar boundaries of their single-issue conception. Externally equated with a broader ideological undercurrent, the ratification effort reflected national trends; it represented both the liberal throughlines of the preceding decades and their responsive mobilization of radical conservative backlash.

The socio-cultural landscape of the nation was changing — many, however, were unwilling to change with it. Schlafly's campaign was a symptom of this stubborn unrest, steeped in misogynistic conventions and co-opted by a growing milieu of conservative resistance quietly roiling just beneath the surface. The fight for the Equal Rights Amendment consumed the better part of the 1970s and early 1980s, priming the nation for the birth and popularization of the New Right. In 1969, Peter Schrag argued: "if there is a revolution in this country... in our official sense of what America is — there is also a counter revolt."<sup>42</sup> Changing notions of American life were openly celebrated but quietly decried, a rapid, difficult-to-parse evolution that quickly became the "trauma and frustration of those in the middle."<sup>43</sup> The dissatisfaction of American housewives, their distaste for the ideas and individuals that defied their specific, limited conceptualization of acceptable convention, and their willing mobilization indicated a critical shift, one neatly aligned with Schrag's prophetic warning. No longer would this middle sit idle. When it chose to rally, as it did with the ERA, it would be a force to be reckoned with.

### **Exploited Fear and Contemporary America: Contorted Motivations**

In their article, "The Rhetoric of Mobilization," Ralph Smith and Russell Windes propose a social movement theory that frames organizational rhetoric as a calculated response to motivational and mobilizational exigencies. Essentially, the rhetorical construction of any given movement operates as an amalgam

of external contexts, melding ideological intent with situational reality. Movement activity, as they frame it, is innately reactive, responding to circumstance and tailoring itself to suit. In other words, they are born of the “perceived social problems or strains, which provide the principal motive or reason for the development of a movement” and are established through the “process of forming ‘crowds, groups, associations, and organizations for the pursuit of collective goals’; further, movement responses to contextual exigencies are critical sites of organizational construction and doctrinal formulation.”<sup>44</sup>

In the context of this paper, STOP ERA's exigency-motivated response was contingent on tangentially related threats loosely attributed to the ERA by their association with shared liberalism and their fragmented support by discordant pro-ERA groups. Abortion, homosexual rights, and the draft, became critical battlegrounds indexed into the core of the STOP ERA platform by the legislative dysfunction of the amendment's intentional vagaries. Americanist and political historian Donald Critchlow argues: “these kinds of arguments fed into Schlafy's larger point that the ratification of ERA would have unforeseen consequences when activist courts began to interpret the amendment.”<sup>45</sup> The dreaded “unforeseen consequence” was a crucial element that fueled anti-ERA mobilization. For both pro-ERA and anti-ERA activists, the amendment was a symptom of a broader fight over accepted definitions and acted as an outlet for hyperbolic conservative projections of liberal extremism and progress-induced fears.

These contentious debates, at first adjacent, soon became fundamental to public perception of the amendment. By altering public uptake, STOP ERA broadened its constituent base, gaining adherents willing to combat proposed shifts to traditional rhythms of national socio-cultural performance. Increased rights for undesirable demographics, access to controversial avenues of women's healthcare, and the unprecedented inclusion of women into male-coded spaces, as in the case of the draft — these ideas were controversial and generally disliked. When conflated with the ERA, these same ideas became an incredible mobilizing force which sourced support across demographic categories. As powerful as these frames were, nothing mobilized American women more than the outrage wrought by the amendment's potential to discontinue their perceived protections.

Perceived protections included privileges in family law — the right to alimony, the obligation of child support, and the ‘tender



years' arrangement that disproportionately granted mothers more desirable custody agreements in divorce settlements. These issues became integral sites of contention for American women. If legal abortion, homosexual rights, and a non-gendered draft threatened their way of life, Schlafly's characterization of the ERA's disruptions to the American family destroyed the comfortable veneer of this familiar social compact completely. Her threats succeeded as a motivational tool because they directly diminished the value and protection of homemaking, a rhetorical appeal that actively bred a "natural constituency" of unsettled wives, mothers, and homemakers.<sup>46</sup> The fear and urgency of this threat quickly coalesced, igniting worries that legally obligated avenues of support would disappear — despite the reality that their historic enforcement had been unreliable at best.

Anne Follis, an Illinois native, homemaker, and active member of Housewives for ERA, framed this issue of legal protection as a question of position and privilege. In an interview with *Woman's Day*, she argued: "the 'right to support'... is largely a myth... [it] implies legal protection that just isn't there... women married to good men with good incomes have no problems with support, nor will they under ERA. Other women are not so lucky — and the law is no help."<sup>47</sup> From Follis' perspective, the potential for ERA-induced harm was negligible. This reality, however, was irrelevant — already, the sphere of family law had been completely consumed by Schlafly's careful, consistent exploitation of emotionally charged nodes of meaning.

STOP ERA relied heavily on this stylized vision, a view that vindicated growing fears in a subtle appeal to an ever-expanding, rapidly radicalizing conservative demography. The discomfiting development of social change and lost gendered privileges fueled an increasingly conservative atmosphere that encouraged adherence to convention and decried liberal-coded progress. Not only were constituents unwilling to change — they were openly antagonistic to the prospect. Schlafly's abstract imagination took tangible root in a public consciousness that "support[ed] the principle of 'equal rights' only insofar as it [was] compatible with the status quo."<sup>48</sup> The ERA saw early success because the notion of legislative equality was not threatening in and of itself — only with the introduction of these arguably hyperbolic potentials did support begin to wane.

Here, it becomes clear how carefully coordinated the frames the Phyllis Schlafly Report portrayed were. Identity politics and

definition divisions were essential features of her rhetorical construction, reliant on intentional fear-mongering to expand her audience. Indeed, many of the frequently espoused sentiments mimicked a burgeoning dialogue on government rights, depicting ERA supporters as “whining radicals... overly dependent on federal intervention” who offered themselves up as “pliant tools of government control” in exchange for congressional support.<sup>49</sup> Anti-ERA ideology misrepresented ratification as a reaffirmation of federal power, a critical affront that spoke to an explicitly targeted New Right constituency. Schlafly's catering to the conservative consciousness was less than subtle. Pro-ERA journalist Sasha Gregory-Lewis scathingly described this phenomenon in the June 1977 edition of *The Advocate*, writing: “with the ERA issue, if sex can't get them heated up, then losing state control gets them. The anti-federal government issue is a good one.”<sup>50</sup> If STOP ERA did one thing especially well, it was the ease with which it found, developed, and exploited social grievances, conflating contemporary social issues with images of the proposed socio-cultural reconstruction attributed to the ERA.

### **Gender Tokens and Conservative Solidarity: Mobilization Methodology**

These frames appealed to a broad, if dissonant, swath of the American public, which rapidly expanded the opposition force and necessitated a critical structure to preserve the unity and momentum of the movement. Richard Viguerie, a prominent conservative figure and author, recalls an interview with Schlafly. He details her description of STOP ERA's organizational methodology: “I appointed a STOP ERA chairmen in a lot of states, but we didn't go for any structure beyond that... I laid down the party line.”<sup>51</sup> As her February 1972 publication indicated, Schlafly was the driving force of STOP ERA and the sole ideological arbiter of its national doctrine. To effectively — and single-handedly — mobilize a nationwide organization was no small task, a difficulty exacerbated by the diverse socio-political constituency she appealed to. The women of STOP ERA, unlike their feminist counterparts, were “not the kind who normally like to make themselves obnoxious.”<sup>52</sup>

Traditional mobilization tactics, then, had to be cast aside. Schlafly understood her supporters and the “dilemma of asking women to leave their homes in order to defend their right to be there,” so she tailored her mobilization efforts to best suit this

contextual necessity.<sup>53</sup> She turned, as she had with The Phyllis Schlafly Report, to alternate methods of communication and coordination. Mansbridge explains, “she shifted her tactics to include activities that homemakers could do in interrupted time like phoning talk shows, sending letters to the editor in local papers and writing state legislators.”<sup>54</sup> Innovative to a fault, Schlafly’s mobilization ethos was informed by her unique situation. To mobilize this largely apolitical constituency, her tactics operated contrary to expectation, a subversion of traditional social movement engagement that proved incredibly effective.

Unshakeable and perfectly poised, Schlafly’s public persona figured heavily into her mobilizational methodology. Her coordinated performance of traditional femininity and personal image became the mold that the women of the STOP ERA enthusiastically emulated. Female-coded physicality was a defining hallmark of the movement, as one supporter explained: “‘looking feminine is important’ in winning support.”<sup>55</sup> Schlafly carefully plied this performance, relying on desirable behaviors and tokens of womanhood that catered to the gendered gaze of the legislators they lobbied. This subtle seduction was contingent on “language that appealed to the paternalistic instinct of male legislators” and visits to the state capital made “wearing dresses... to deliver home-baked bread and pies.”<sup>56</sup> This facade of female naivete was cleverly devised, hiding the cunning, well-coordinated machinations of a dedicated organization behind a veil of vapidty. To male legislators, their tactics were non-threatening, more palatable than the harsh, often misandrist, methods of NOW and its peers. To feminists, Schlafly’s performance was a pure absurdity, a caricature of womanhood that, though organized, seemed incapable of acquiring tangible gains. Regardless of feminist condescension, these efforts saw wild success through the mid-to-late-seventies, and the support base of STOP ERA continued to expand.

While Schlafly was determined to conduct her movement as a single-issue organization, she did not confine her supporters to this narrow mentality. Across religious denominations, political affiliations, gender, class, and racial lines, all were welcome, unified in the pursuit of this singular, shared goal. “Her success,” wrote Viguerie, “[lay] in her ability to motivate both the hard-core conservatives... and the masses.”<sup>57</sup> STOP ERA was an open invitation organization, building an unprecedented conservative base composed of historically distant allies. Schlafly integrated dissonant perspectives, unifying to effectively forestall the social

change she viewed as threatening and transgressive. Her willing and open inclusivity was contemporarily unprecedented and marked a critical evolution in right-wing mobilizational efficacy. Schlafly's coordination efforts were buoyed by their innovative reinterpretation of organizational expectation; pies and petticoats lined the road to legislative success, an appealing trail that attracted Senators and supporters alike. As a mother of six and lifelong homemaker, she took the title "hostess" seriously; as a firebrand conservative organizer, STOP ERA was a metaphorical extension of her home; all who were willing to take their shoes — and conflicting socio-political affiliations — off at the door and join the anti-ERA crusade were welcome.

### **Making Space in the Liberal Milieu: STOP ERA and Counter-Movement Theory**

In their study of conservative movements, Kathleen Blee and Kimberly Creasap note that "rightist movements fit awkwardly into the theoretical templates of social movements" due to their progressive, liberal skew.<sup>58</sup> Their methodologies are simply not comparable, rooted in social dynamics that offer "poor models... for movements of privileged groups."<sup>59</sup> That is to say: an analysis of STOP ERA requires a new structure, one this paper amalgamates from the limited literary history of conservative studies. To decode the historically under-studied phenomenon of American conservatism, it becomes necessary to locate sites of dissonance, questioning where motivation and mobilization diverge from expectation and what this divergence represents.

Answering these questions necessitates synthesis, drawing from a collection of academic studies and theoretical works that investigate the inverted mechanics of conservatism. This paper calls on a number of works, specifically Rory McVeigh's understanding of conservatism as a defensive force. Additionally, this work is indebted to Lee Ann Banaszak and Heather L. Ondercin's evaluation of conservative mobilization as a response to liberal action rather than internal determinism, Justin Tetrault's assessment of negative associations and the radicalizing effect these images have on individuals, and John Kincaid's integration of conservative subjectivities into traditional frameworks. When placed in conversation with each other, these works offer insight into Schlafly's organizational ethos and position STOP ERA as an early expression of the complex interactions that fuel oppositional counter movements.

Decoding the success of STOP ERA necessitates a preliminary understanding of conservatism; Rory McVeigh's 1999 study of KKK activism throughout the 1920s details the critical features of opposition organization. His theory reverses movement motivation, turning away from progress and toward preservation. He offers a helpful definition, tailoring his explanation to this less-studied subsection of social movement history. In his view, counter-movements are composed of "relatively advantaged groups with the goal of preserving, restoring, and expanding the rights and privileges of its members and constituents."<sup>60</sup> McVeigh's preservation thesis fits neatly in the context of STOP ERA's rhetorical enframing and its appeal to diverse demographics. The platform was rooted in terrifying terms, castigating ERA-supporters for their supposed abandonment of tradition and the 'privileging' conventions it provided to women. The ERA's intentions, however, were disjointed, though predominantly two-fold. They worked to both broaden access to protections for disproportionality disadvantaged women and permit the luxury of choice for American women. Instead, these lofty aspirations were framed purely by their interpretive potential for personal detriment and the loss of perceived privilege the dismantling of such systems implied. McVeigh's framework, useful in its own right, is critical to decoding grievance, a motivational theory readily applicable to Schlafly's perverse construction of ERA ideology, structure, and support.

While McVeigh's theory notes the reactionary nature implicit to conservative motivation, Banaszak and Ondercin's "Explaining the Dynamics between the Women's Movement and the Conservative Movement in the United States," take this element a step further, extending reactivity into the realms of coalition organization, mobilization, and action. In their framework, the tokens which represent tangible change — legislation in particular — are most responsible for counter-movement organization. These quantifiable moments occupy a distinct motivational position, fueling the rhetoric and action of opposition movements. Congressional approval of the amendment in 1972 shot the developing debate on gender roles and presentation to the forefront of the collective national consciousness. ERA proponents viewed this new dialogue as a success, but to many, the omnipresence of this now pressing threat demanded action. Organized mobilization requires a trigger, and unlike progressive movements, Banaszak and Ondercin's portrayal of conservative

movements highlight their existence as a “response to [the] movement activity and policy success” that leftist movements seek to evoke.<sup>61</sup>

In their effort to unravel the volatile relationship between social movements and their conservative counterparts, Banaszak and Ondercin rely on mobilizational history and legislative policy success. Their work established opposition as a product of the inherent reflexivity of cross-movement communication, implying that inter-movement relations are typically instinctual acts that respond to external threats. In a 2016 article they argue: “feminist mobilization inspires the conservative movement... the feminist movement mobilizes in response.”<sup>62</sup> This study is rooted in an empirical analysis of responsive event ratios, analyzing how organized liberal action corresponds to the magnitude of opposition organization. They conclude that conservative social movements — in this case, Schlafly's STOP ERA — are not self-determined creatures constructed of their own accord. Indeed, STOP ERA's empirical correlation indicates that mobilizational efficacy is a corollary to the motivating grievances of feminist success. Therefore, right-wing reactivity is a recurring, genre-defining theme and the driving force that mobilizes McVeigh's grievance-motivated, preservation-oriented demographics.

Counter-movement goals tend to run opposite to traditional expectations; instead of striving for change and reconstruction, conservative coalitions seek to maintain comfortable consistency. Rather than pursuing the often abstract, impossible-to-quantify success of their progressive counterparts, McVeigh's preservation theory and Banaszak and Ondercin's grievance motivation characterize the catalytic spark for conservative movements. Their marker of success is quite simple: prevent change at all costs. In this theoretical lineage, the poorly framed bastions of STOP ERA ideology and organization acquire a rational structure that they were not granted by their contemporaries. Despite the complicated socio-cultural interactions that inform conservatism, its multidimensional nature and individuality was, and remains, overlooked by contemporary opponents and modern historians. This willful ignorance allows projected stereotypes and paranoid imaginations to supersede the autonomy of individual members, a comforting set of falsehoods that limit realistic estimations of conservative influence.

McVeigh and Banaszak and Ondercin's works clarified the nature of conservative movements, allowing trends of form and

function to acquire a sense of rational sincerity. But academic studies of these organized efforts often deny them an apolitical analysis, a phenomenon highlighted by Justin Tetrault's 'hate theory.' His 2021 article "What's hate got to do with it?" illustrates the volatile, radicalizing effects of liberal-coded perceptions on counter-movement studies. Tetrault reveals the consistent, highly-subjective bias that negatively enframes studies of condemned opposition movements and openly advocates for compassion and nuance. He emphasizes personal agency and the autonomous nature of individual belief, arguing that membership does not imply unwavering support for a movement's entire ideological platform. Assumptions of hate motivation wrongly paint right-wing movements as monoliths of radical conservatism and disregard the nuance of the under-acknowledged social undercurrents that inform them. Such oversimplifications encourage historians to lose sight of the meaningful motivational and mobilizational exigencies that induce organized action. This framing is perpetuated by past analytical works, though as previously indicated in this deconstruction of the powerful implications of STOP ERA rhetoric, it could not be further from the truth.

Feminist interrogations of the anti-feminist collective prove Tetrault right. Pro-ERA advocates grated at their performance of womanhood, the paternalism they submitted to, and their open distaste for non-traditional modes of female expression. Unpalatable to their more progressive sensibilities, women backing the ERA came to a stark conclusion that relegated STOP ERA to an unduly negative lineage. Tetrault writes: "hate too often functions as a placeholder for missing knowledge about right-wing movements," an ironic reality that removed agency and self-determinism from conservative women when they failed to perform femininity as it aligned with acceptable feminist expectation.<sup>63</sup> Similarly, the article notes: "even if a movement explicitly communicates its hatred... researchers should avoid equating [this]... with the goals and motivations of its members."<sup>64</sup> The fears, concerns, and insecurities of STOP ERA and its supporters underscored their perceived endemic social ailments, a flawed reality that offered insights into a population consigned to conservatism by the feminist movement's intentional avoidance of their concerns.

Changing the traditional schemas of shared socio-cultural truths is a discomfiting notion, particularly when one's identity



rests solely on their preservation. Rather than reaffirming the position of these women, ERA proponents instead chose to frame these lifestyles as innately ignorant and hateful, succeeding only in further radicalizing an already alienated constituency. But by choosing to turn away from the subjectivities that informed STOP ERA support, pro-amendment agents effectively handicapped themselves. Their blithe dismissal condescended the anti-ERA movement, situating it as an ignorant absurdity that lost sight of its immense potential for tangible returns and progress.

While traditional social movement study is less apt in discussions of the initial conception and long-term orientation of conservative mobilization, conventional theoretical constructions can be equally critical to discussions of longevity and attraction. Conservative-directed studies correctly identify that counter-movement origins are inherently reactive and follow well-trod paths, motivated by tangible grievances and fears of lost social prestige. Specific, counter-movement oriented studies meld well with traditional studies, synthesizing a unique structure that features a surprising overlap between liberal and conservative organizations. John Kincaid outlines this sense of movement progression in his 2017 article "Theorizing the Radical Right," which is dedicated to mapping the trends of conservative organization and lifespan. He argues that beyond the points of obvious dissonance outlined by McVeigh, Blee, and Banaszak, right-wing movements occupy similar modes of function to left-wing movements: those which "can best capture and express material and symbolic grievances... will be best positioned to make convincing appeals to potential constituents."<sup>65</sup> He notes, too, "that the movements that ultimately survive and succeed will be those that are best able to marshal, organize, and mobilize the opportunities that emerging grievances present them."<sup>66</sup> Remarkably similar to traditional liberal movement methodology, Kincaid's identification of conservative adherence to expected modes of resource mobilization explains how Schlafy's initial tumult evoked a decade-long national reckoning.

Insomuch as her successes can be attributed to careful tactics and skillful mobilization, they can be equally attributed to the comparative failures of her opposition. Counter-movements, as this paper has argued, succeed as a result of their desire to preserve tradition, privilege, and perceived positions of social prestige. Grievance-motivated, right-wing organizers utilize the actions of their oppositional counterparts to further this

rhetoric of retention. Though initially reactive and contingent on external action, these movements soon develop into their own, accessing traditional modes of movement motivation and mobilization to achieve their desired end. In Schlafly's case, the rhetorical enframing of social grievances — as much as it is contingent on the agent of enframing — is equally reliant on the actions and meanings offered by their opposition. Essentially, the success of conservative social movements is dependent on the motivational and mobilizational failures of its counterpart. In the case of the fight for ratification, the pro-ERA feminist contingency overwhelmingly permitted this theoretical structure.

### **Death of the Movement: 1972-1979**

The early days of the fight for ratification saw landmark success. Just an hour after the Senate voted “yes,” Hawaii became the first state to ratify the proposed amendment.<sup>67</sup> In the coming months, another twenty-one states would follow suit, with a total of twenty-two states voting to ratify in the first of its seven-year ratification period.<sup>68</sup> Given the overwhelming public and legislative support that accompanied the early years of the pro-ERA fight, the amendment's success seemed assured. Soon, however, the flood of state approval would slow to a trickle before stalling completely. In 1973, an additional eight states indicated their approval. By 1974, that total would halve, ratified only by Maine, Montana, and Ohio. 1975 would see success in North Dakota, followed by a two-year hiatus until Indiana's 1977 ratification.<sup>69</sup> It would be the last state to do so.

Martha Griffiths, the representative responsible for the ERA's reintroduction, predicted in a retroactively over-confident statement that: “the necessary thirty eight states would ratify before the end of 1973.”<sup>70</sup> Her confidence was unfortunately misplaced, blind to the growing undercurrent of anti-ERA sentiment. Before the amendment acquired Senate approval in March of 1972, Schlafly's February publication, “What's Wrong with ‘Equal Rights?’” had already begun to harness widespread support. Schlafly's voice, though grassroots in nature, unified a disconnected movement and ensured a comforting consistency that the fractured, often factionalized, feminist movement simply could not replicate. STOP ERA found its battleground in states that had yet to ratify, relying on rhetorical assaults that drew on discourses of abstract meaning rather than tangible rights. Reliant on the confused tumult of feminist ideology, Schlafly's rhetoric

capitalized on issues such as abortion, homosexuality, the draft, and other threats to tradition as vehicles to evoke support. They had wrested ideological authority from the feminist contingent and successfully turned the debate on its head. The amendment's intended vagaries, feminist disunity, and poor appeal to a broader public all fed into a milieu permitting redefinition; if Schlafly can be blamed for orchestrating the ERA's downfall, equal blame should also be placed on the fallible bastions of feminist support.

Not until 1977 would supporters of the amendment realize the importance of ideological cohesion and platform consistency. On November 18th, the International Women's Year Conference was held in Houston, intending to reconcile platform divisions and establish a united front for the fading days of the ratification effort.<sup>71</sup> The conference yielded resolutions detailing national platform support for controversial issues such as access to abortion and homosexual rights, a conclusion that one STOP ERA supporter called "the best recruiting tool I've ever had... I just spend reading twenty minutes reading the Houston resolutions to them. That's all I have to do."<sup>72</sup> Schlafly's rhetorical framework had succeeded yet again; her unyielding association of the ERA with such issues had forced the hand of its proponents. The early claims of the ERA's terrifying, far-reaching effects — initially dismissed as irrational and hyperbolic — had suddenly been affirmed by the national arm of the amendment's support organization. Discourses of interpretation had defined the early days of ratification, but after five grueling years, Schlafly had triumphed. Just a month prior, Congress approved a motion to grant the amendment an extension, requiring a three-quarter majority by June 30, 1982.<sup>73</sup> Fruitless attempts were made to rally support, but the resolutions of the Houston conference compounded with a growing sense of malaise. By 1977, the ERA was, for all intents and purposes, dead in the water. In the five years that followed, the frantic efforts of the pro-ERA contingent exacerbated previous organizational issues and the coalition only grew more fractured and factionalized as time hurried on.

If the bastions of ERA support crumbled in the later years of the 1970s, their conservative counterpart flourished, expanding their influence beyond direct ERA associations and developing an open dialogue between Schlafly's anti-ERA base and the burgeoning conservative backlash it symbolized. Banaszak and Ondercin note a unique coalescence between female-oriented and right-wing motivations, writing: "the issues that mobilized the

women's movements, including the Equal Rights Amendment and abortion, also were catalysts for the rise of national conservative oppositional movements."<sup>74</sup> Women's rights — and the family values they supposedly reflected — became a unifying dimension for broader evangelical and conservative mobilization. The success of STOP ERA indicated an outgrowth of radicalism spiraling out of the simple tenets of an individual, single-issue social movement into a set of widely applicable, highly contentious New Right identity tokens. As Val Burris so aptly put it: "what has taken their place is a much more coherent political ideology which links antifeminism to a broader right-wing backlash against civil rights and social welfare legislation."<sup>75</sup> Her 1983 article links the ERA-induced questioning of the "private" sphere of the traditional family" as an appeal to a conservative imagination that supported the "protection of local government from federal intervention."<sup>76</sup> Essentially, the defining features of anti-ERA ideology aligned with a thriving right-wing context, actively contributed to and perpetuated the motivational ideals that fed the rapid expansion of the adolescent American New Right.

### Conclusion

To frame conservative movements as one would frame progressive movements diminishes the unique qualities that prime their quiet successes. This sobering reality defined the fight for ERA ratification through the 1970s. Analyzed within the scope of the ERA's initial seven-year ratification frame, the motivation, mobilization, and rhetorical situation of Schlafly's STOP ERA effort acquires a rational sincerity that it was not contemporarily granted. And when placed in conversation with Blee and Creasap's 2010 recognition of academic lapses in conservative studies, Schlafly's work and the responses it garnered over the course of fifty years renewed a much-debated conversation on the nature of theoretical conservatism that has yet to be adequately resolved. This paper has attempted to schematize the familiar rhythms of conservative organization in the limited scope of Schlafly's anti-ERA effort through a synthesis of McVeigh's "preservation" sentiment, Banaszak and Ondercin's implicit reactivity, Tetrault's "hate theory," and Kincaid's description of of right-wing and liberal patterns.

In so doing, it becomes clear that Schlafly's work, though motivated by a distaste for liberal progress, was not inherently hateful. Rather, when studied in tandem with theoretical

literature objectively examining the construction and function of conservative movements, it coalesces into a legible image of a nation painfully at odds with itself. Indeed, melding these theoretical frames results in a comprehensive, highly applicable image of Phyllis Schlafly's organizational ethos that gives shape to her support base, their subjective rationalizations of grievance-induced allegiance, and the harsh, generalized historical understanding that followed. Through these distinct, non-traditional lenses of social movement theory, the hazy confusion that followed Schlafly's seemingly inexplicable success becomes clear. In truth, there is a cunningly reflexive self-construction made present by studies of STOP ERA and conservative mobilization more generally. Such rightist movements are innately reactionary, emboldened by, and contingent upon liberal mobilizations which in turn transforms these coalitions into autonomous expressions of nuanced dissatisfaction.

To frame these movements as malignant outgrowths misaligned from a healthy national body condescends and further radicalizes subjective experience. Indeed, the summary dismissal of conservatism only fuels greater constituent returns. Schlafly's wild, unanticipated success made this phenomenon unmistakably apparent. Rapidly upset tradition and the perceived stifling of oppositional voices were the defining features of a successful movement deeply indebted to a receptive population willing to take up the mantle of conservatism when couched in her comforting, familiar terms. This study of Schlafly's paradigmatic STOP ERA effort reveals the pressing need for compassion and nuance and invites a more humanistic approach to conservative-directed academia that prioritizes dialogue over derision. For as Schlafly has taught historians so well: there is no progress without conversation.

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# “To Your Descendants I Give This Land”

Covenant and Pragmatism in Moral Majority  
Zionism

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*Image: Jerry Falwell, evangelist and leader of the Moral Majority in Tallahassee, Florida, 1984. Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.*

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At 10 a.m. eastern time, January 3, 1986, the new year had just begun, and Jerry Falwell was at the podium of the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. In front of the organization of journalists and communications professionals, Falwell stood, prepared to give an update on his influential conservative organization: the Moral Majority. In the seven years since its founding, Falwell intoned, “seldom, if ever, in history has one organization so impacted a nation.”<sup>1</sup> Several of the issues Falwell spoke about that day are familiar topics in conservative American political discourse during and since the 1980s. These themes include anti-Communist military strategy, the nuclear family, pro-life politics, and a strong national defense.<sup>2</sup> In the background of these widely debated topics, however, is Falwell’s avowed commitment to “the State of Israel.”<sup>3</sup> Listeners on January 3rd may have accepted Falwell’s Zionism as a logical part of his platform, not registering the complex history surrounding conservative Christian support for Israel on the American political stage.

Long before the twentieth century, the nation of Israel was of great importance to U.S. politicians, beginning with the American founding. Since the time of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, Americans have invested themselves in the sanctity and self-determination of Israel.<sup>4</sup> In varying ways, American Protestants have placed themselves in a triangular relationship with God and the Jewish people. The belief that God “has organized history around two peoples, the biblical Old Israel and the analogical New Israel,” allows Americans to imagine themselves within a sacralized history that gives their nation biblical significance. As such, Christian Zionism, the ideology espoused by Christians whose faith “leads them to support the modern state of Israel as the Jewish homeland,” is the 20th century manifestation of this centuries-old desire to place America within a biblical narrative.<sup>5</sup> This ideology features prominently on the Religious Right, the politically powerful coalition of conservative Christians which emerged as a coherent force in the United States during the second half of the twentieth century. Jerry Falwell, a preacher, political activist, and prominent leader of the Religious Right, directly engaged the multiple ways Christian Zionism features in a sacralized American narrative. Falwell began with a prophetic theology and transformed it into a rhetoric of covenant. At every moment, Falwell participated in the long history of association between American Christians and biblical Israel.

While Christian Zionists have become an ascendant political force only in recent decades, the roots of Zionism in the United States are deep. Restorationism, the idea that the Jewish people will rule Israel after their return from biblical exile, is a theological tenet from sixteenth-century Europe that took hold in the United States during its founding stages.<sup>6</sup> Early American ministers such as Ezra Stiles, a Revolutionary-era president of Yale College, emphasized the United States' role as a supporter of the Jewish claim to the physical land of Israel.<sup>7</sup> Nineteenth-century Anglican minister John Nelson Darby integrated the idea of Jews' return to the Holy Land into his system of dispensationalism. Dispensationalism divides time into a series of events that must take place before Jesus Christ's Second Advent. Darby, a nineteenth-century Anglo-Irish clergyman, wrote in the 1830s of a prophetic view of history and the future, which divided time into seven "dispensations."<sup>8</sup> These dispensations will result in the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, during which he will establish his thousand-year reign of peace in the millennial kingdom as prophesied in the Book of Revelation.<sup>9</sup> Darby's theology differed from his predecessors in that it was premillennial. Premillennialism prescribes specific events that will occur before the materialization of the millennial kingdom and the coming of Jesus Christ. Darby prophesied precursors to the Jesus Christ's millennial kingdom, including upheaval, the Rapture of the faithful into heaven, and the return of the Jews to their land, all of which would come to fruition during the battle of Armageddon.<sup>10</sup> Although Darby wrote in the early nineteenth century, his premillennial, dispensationalist ideas took hold in early-twentieth-century American fundamentalist Christian communities.<sup>11</sup> Thus, Jews' return to Biblical Israel, as a sign of the imminent coming of Jesus Christ, is part of a prophetic timeline that many fundamentalists held as truth. Darby's theology captivated evangelical communities American evangelical communities, and is scholars' most commonly cited theological root of modern Christian Zionism.

This alignment of a Jewish presence in the biblical land of Israel with fundamentalist theology produced an early allegiance between American Bible-believing Protestants and Zionists.<sup>12</sup> William E. Blackstone (1841-1935), called the "father of Zionism," was an early advocate for American material support for Jewish settlements in Palestine.<sup>13</sup> After the British established the Mandate of Palestine (1920-1948) in what is now Israel, Jordan, and parts

of Syria, popular support for a modern state of Israel emerged in the United States, primarily among liberal Protestants.<sup>14</sup> American dispensationalists, on the other hand, remained on the sidelines. Though some were passively enthusiastic about David Ben-Gurion's calls for the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, pro-Israel sentiments within dispensationalist communities failed to gain traction due to a lack of political cohesion.<sup>15</sup> In the 1960s, however, American evangelical Christians began to understand the significance of a modern state of Israel as a precursor of the millennial kingdom. Mid-twentieth-century American evangelicals believed in a theology of the Bible's final authority and the possibility of salvation in Jesus Christ.<sup>16</sup> Using this theological framework, evangelicals espoused missions, evangelism, and a spiritual life.<sup>17</sup> While these parameters of evangelicalism are instructive, they are also fluid. This paper understands evangelicalism to be shaped by Jerry Falwell's preaching, in a testament to his cultural influence on the movement. Evangelicals' heightened awareness of modern Israel as a premillennial event led to the gradual formation of an established evangelical Christian Zionist movement in the United States, which achieved greater political institutionalization after Israel's victory in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War.<sup>18</sup> One of the strongest iterations of this movement was the pro-Israel component of Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority.

Jerry Falwell was a man of singular fame and undeniable influence during the rise of the Religious Right in the 1980s. Falwell gained political fame as the leader of the Moral Majority, a political action group with over six million members at its height.<sup>19</sup> As a preacher, Falwell amassed over nineteen thousand followers at his Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia.<sup>20</sup> His televangelism show, *Old-Time Gospel Hour*, was nationally broadcasted on more than four hundred stations, and at his Liberty University, Falwell produced the next generation of fundamentalist pastors.<sup>21</sup> Jerry Falwell was heir to a rich history of Christian fundamentalist allegiance with Israel and unapologetic about this theology in his preaching. However, Falwell managed to do what previous fundamentalists had not: he gained mainstream political notoriety for his ecumenical lobbying efforts. Falwell combined religiously conservative, Christian Americans to advocate against what he perceived to be the immoral downfall of America.<sup>22</sup> He baked staunch Zionism and an unrelenting advocacy for the state of Israel into the values he espoused both in the pulpit and on his soapbox. I have chosen to observe Falwell's

Zionism because of the transition in his rhetoric; evolving from his fundamentalist, premillennial heritage, he was able to make politically viable a theology of a covenant allegiance between the United States and Israel.

### **Historiography**

Contemporary scholars have written extensively on the origins of Zionism as a Christian belief in the United States. Scholar Stephen Spector provided an excellent overview of the complicated politics of Christian Zionism, reaching beyond explanations situated in end-times beliefs through an exploration of evangelism during and before George Bush's presidency.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, Yaakov Ariel's contribution to the growing body of literature on Christian Zionism examined evangelical premillennial theology and its manifestation in a productive evangelical-Jewish relationship.<sup>24</sup> More recently, Samuel Goldman and Daniel G. Hummel have contributed critical, multilayered considerations of Christian Zionism to the discipline. Goldman asserts that Christian Zionism is not merely a dispensationalist theological tenet, but rather an ideology which has been repeatedly espoused by American Protestants since the Puritans.<sup>25</sup> Meanwhile, Hummel treats Christian Zionism as an act of interfaith reconciliation between Christians and Jews, focusing on the effects of evangelical Christian activism in the state of Israel.<sup>26</sup> Working from and contributing to this body of scholarship, the following analysis focuses on understanding Christian Zionism as it manifested in Jerry Falwell's theology and politics which characterized the transformational Religious Right of the 1980s.

While I follow Hummel and Goldman's approach by transitioning away from a dispensationalist framework in favor of understanding Zionism as a movement with multiple influences, my approach diverges from previous treatments of Falwell and Israel in a few crucial ways. This paper will first identify the nature and evolution of Jerry Falwell's covenantal support for the state of Israel. From there, I will move into a discussion of the tensions between Falwell and American Jews, despite their ostensible allegiance. I evaluate Falwell's theology and politics in conjunction, rather than separately, as some scholars have done. To achieve this, I have compiled an archival source base of both mainstream newspapers and Falwell's religious publications and sermons. I also focus substantially on Falwell's tumultuous relationship with American Jews, a history that precluded an unproblematic



relationship between the Moral Majority and the American Jewish community. From this varied source base, I contend that Falwell substantially deviated from the dispensationalist theology of his fundamentalist tradition. This is a distinction overlooked in previous treatments of Falwell as part of a larger group of Christian Zionists. Rather, I assert that Jerry Falwell embraced a rhetoric of covenant allyship that did not rely on premillennialist theology. When viewed in both theological and political contexts, Falwell's covenantal theology was not exactly dispensationalism, but an evolution of the prophecy. It functioned in a similar manner, granting the United States a sacred role as the facilitator of God's relationship with the Jews. Falwell's eschewal of dispensationalism in favor of a covenant rhetoric facilitated his successful politicization of this Christian-Jewish alliance. However, Falwell's fundamentalist identity, despite his support for Israel, triggered his alienation from American Jews.

### **Falwell's Fundamentalism**

Falwell's core identity as a fundamentalist Christian formed his theological and political position. Jerry Falwell (1933-2007) was called to ministry at the age of eighteen and began preaching at the newly formed Thomas Road Baptist Church in 1956. He was a self-ascribed Baptist fundamentalist; this identity dictated all areas of his life.<sup>27</sup> Falwell attempted to define the core tenets of his beliefs in his 1981 book, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*. Acknowledging fundamentalism's "common heritage with evangelical nonconformist movements," Falwell characterized fundamentalism as "reactionary Evangelicalism... born out of a doctrinal controversy with Liberalism."<sup>28</sup> Falwell's fundamentalism defined itself against the society its believers inhabit, with its followers affirming traditionalist Christian belief and a "distinctively Christian lifestyle" among their secular peers.<sup>29</sup> Further, Falwell's fundamentalism consisted of three intertwined parts, combining a reactionary , distinctive, Christian lifestyle, and a commitment to the literality of the Bible. The third, doctrinal aspect of fundamentalism, Falwell asserted, could be synthesized into five tenets: "1) The inspiration and infallibility of Scripture; 2) The deity of Christ, including His virgin birth; 3) The substitutionary atonement of Christ's death; 4) The literal resurrection of Christ from the dead; 5) The literal return of Christ in the Second Advent."<sup>30</sup> The infallibility of Scripture was crucial to Falwell's political stances, as Falwell believed in "the Bible as being God-breathed" and thus "being free from error."<sup>31</sup>

For Falwell, the fundamentalist's faith required a personal, emotional engagement with doctrine. In his view, for a fundamentalist believer, the inerrancy of the Bible and other theological tenets were symptoms of "their deep and personal devotion to the person of Jesus Christ Himself that will not enable them to ever let go of the Bible."<sup>32</sup> This emotional relationship with scripture allowed a fundamentalist to reject "rational arguments" for scriptural inerrancy, and Falwell argued, was the subject of critique, because "it is not understood by those who do not share it."<sup>33</sup> The "experiential relationship with the living Christ" fundamentalists shared precluded them from relinquishing scripture, "because it is the scripture that has led them" to this dedicated relationship.<sup>34</sup> Thus, biblical inerrancy and the fundamentalist's internal faith are mutually reinforcing, creating a Falwellian fundamentalism doubly strengthened by affective devotion and doctrinal consistency.

### **Falwell and Prophecy**

As for premillennial dispensationalism, which has been the center of many scholars' treatments of Christian Zionism, Falwell was less consistent in his end-times prophecy than in his assertion of biblical inerrancy and the other tenets of fundamentalism. The "bodily return of Christ" was "essential to the belief of Fundamentalism," since "the Scriptures indicated that He would return."<sup>35</sup> Falwell noted, however, that there were varied manifestations of this faith in Christ's advent within the different presentations of fundamentalism, premillennialism being just one of them.<sup>36</sup> The overarching belief that "Christ is coming again to judge the world and vindicate the righteous" united fundamentalists, but they remained divided on the intricacies of what the Second Advent exactly entailed.<sup>37</sup> Premillennial dispensationalism relied on a specific interpretation of the Second Coming that centered the role of the Jews' establishment of their own state as part of a series of scripturally prophesied events before Christ's advent.<sup>38</sup>

Falwell instead believed in the use of prophecy to interpret modern events, an application which revealed his premillennialism. In *The Future, The Bible, and You*, a mail-distributed booklet containing an "overview of the thrilling truths contained in God's Holy Word concerning the future days," Falwell described four prophetic eras.<sup>39</sup> They consisted of, first, the current Church Age, which would last two thousand years before the Rapture

occurred.<sup>40</sup> Tribulation would next ensue, lasting seven years, before ending with the Second Coming of Christ, the Millennium of Christ's rule on earth, and Eternity, wherein there would be a new heaven and earth.<sup>41</sup> The establishment of the state of Israel was one of the eleven "signs of the times" Falwell identified as a harbinger of the Second Coming of Christ. This event would catalyze the age of Tribulation.<sup>42</sup> "There have been many important dates in history," Falwell wrote, "the most significant" of which "occurred on May 14, 1948, when the remnant of Israel officially became a nation again."<sup>43</sup> This theology identified Falwell as a premillennialist, according to the traditional definition.<sup>44</sup> Clearly, the establishment of Israel was integral to Falwell's hope of a near Second Coming.

While Israel's role in Falwell's vision of the future was a crucial motivator of his passive interest in Zionism, Falwell possessed a simultaneous belief that no person could "force God's hand" to fulfill prophecy. Rather, the ages must be allowed to unfold spontaneously.<sup>45</sup> Perhaps incomprehensibly, Falwell also believed in premillennialist theology and political action. Toeing the line between a commitment to an end-times theology and the importance of political engagement, Falwell exhorted his followers to maintain their theological allegiances, while avoiding "this-worldly despair," and, instead, using "Christianity as a force for positive change."<sup>46</sup> Hence, Falwell's actionable support for the state of Israel had to evolve from a theological principle that did not involve the imminent end of the world.

### **From Dispensationalism to Covenant**

Rather than dispensationalism, then, Falwell's theological support for the state of Israel arose out of a covenantal commitment derived from a literal reading of the Bible, an integral component of his fundamentalism. A biblical covenant divinely bound the fates and fortunes of two entities. For example, God and Israel, Israel and the Christians, God and the Jews, or God and the Christians. Genesis 12:3 formed the foundation of Falwell's covenantal allegiance to Israel: God said to Abraham, "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee."<sup>47</sup> According to Falwell, a love for Israel and the Jews was an inalienable part of the fundamentalist faith, because "God loves the Jew," and "to stand against Israel is to stand against God."<sup>48</sup> Beyond the biblical nation of Israel, Falwell believed in the political aims of Zionism, stating his support for Jews' "historical, theological, and legal right to the

land called Israel.”<sup>49</sup> His support for Jews’ claim to the land came from a literal reading of Genesis 15:18, wherein God promised to Abraham “this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.”<sup>50</sup> Thus, Falwell’s spiritual allegiance with the Jews and material support for Israel’s territorial possessions, in his belief, was rooted in a literal biblical interpretation.

In Falwell’s view, Jesus Christ’s birth to a Jewish mother cemented the covenant between Christians and Jews. “The most important reason for Israel’s survival,” Falwell wrote, “is that Our Savior came from a Jewish family and the Lord Jesus Christ was a Jew.”<sup>51</sup> As such, Falwell’s political support for Israel was derived not from a desire to act towards the fulfillment of prophecy but from two central tenets of Falwell’s fundamentalism: the inerrancy of the Bible and the deity of Christ. The perceived perfection of the Bible’s every word produced a reading of Genesis 12:1-3 that required support for Israel’s land claim from all believers. Furthermore, a belief in the deity of Christ demanded attention to the Jewish religion of the family to which he was born. Falwell’s fundamentalism—as displayed in his Zionism—was a fundamentalism of strict doctrine, but adaptable in its allowance for believers to create meaning on Earth outside of an end-times context. This covenant allegiance between the United State and Israel allowed Falwell to elevate the United States as a sacred actor, making his covenantal fundamentalism functionally analogous to dispensationalism. Where the dispensationalists had viewed America’s role as a catalyst for the coming of Christ, Falwell’s covenantal theology allowed for the United States’ support for Israel to reach Biblical importance without an espousal of outright apocalypticism.

Falwell’s theological support for Israel was on full display in his sermons on *Old Time Gospel Hour*, his televangelism ministry. In September of 1984, *The Washington Post* reported that *Old Time Gospel Hour* was carried on 392 television stations and brought in \$72 million in donations during one fiscal year.<sup>52</sup> From this enormous platform, Falwell broadcasted sermons tying theology, fundamentalist teachings, and the issues of the day. The topic of Israel was no different. During his sermon on Sunday, September 13, 1981, titled “The Four Hot Buttons that Cause the Greatest Controversy,” Falwell’s fourth “hot button” was the Abrahamic Covenant.<sup>53</sup> Falwell loved the Jews, “number 1, because I love everybody. I love the Jews, number 2, because God said, ‘I’ll bless those who bless you, Abraham, and I’ll curse

those who curse you.’ I need the blessing of God in my life, and so do you.”<sup>54</sup> Falwell’s inclusion of the Abrahamic Covenant in his “Hot Button” broadcast demonstrated that Falwell determined the covenant central to fundamentalist belief, and that he recognized its potential for controversy among American voters, religious and secular.

Falwell equated the American failure to support Israel with spiritual negligence, connecting Americans’ spiritual salvation with active Zionism. In a 1980 sermon on “the sins of America,” Falwell lamented America’s decision to “turn her back on Israel.”<sup>55</sup> “What did God tell Abraham?” Falwell asked, repeating Genesis 12:3.<sup>56</sup> Offering his unconditional support to the Jews based on this covenant, Falwell promised, “I don’t agree with all that the Jews are doing today. But you’ll find me walking behind them saying ‘Amen’ to everything they say, [because] I don’t want to be cursed of God.”<sup>57</sup> For America to erase its sins, Falwell and his followers had to turn the tide, choosing to say “Amen” to the Jews. Both in his publications and widely disseminated sermons, Falwell cultivated a message of support that tied his own fate, the fate of his believers, and God’s approval to fundamentalists’ covenantal allegiance to Jews and the nation of Israel. This theology would gain a massive political in the Moral Majority.

### **The Moral Majority and Israel**

Crucial to an understanding of Falwell’s rhetoric and influence is his dual identity as both a minister and political activist. While Falwell was called to ministry early in his life, he turned to politics later in his career. During the 1960s and early 1970s, Falwell maintained that he was uninterested in political activism, despite the conservative stances he shared with any white evangelicals.<sup>58</sup> As the cultural upheaval of the 1970s in the United States grew more dire, Falwell became skeptical of the federal government and incensed at the nation’s growing leniency toward issues such as abortion after *Roe v. Wade*.<sup>59</sup> His political philosophy began to change, evolving from a belief that the separation of church and state was meant to keep the church out of government to an interpretation of the First Amendment that kept the government “from interfering with the church.”<sup>60</sup> Falwell’s ethos for political action arose from his belief that America “is a nation under God... established upon the Judeo-Christian ethic.”<sup>61</sup> In practice, this meant the United States’ was intrinsically tied from its founding with “the premises set forth in the Ten Commandments and the

Sermon on the Mount, the great ethical precepts of the Old and the New Testament.”<sup>62</sup> Falwell feared for the wrath God would surely exert on a nation careening towards an abandonment of the nuclear family, the normalization of abortion, and an otherwise immoral future.<sup>63</sup> Falwell’s ascension to the national political stage occurred in tandem with evangelicals’ political activation in the United States. This ever-tightening relationship between Falwell’s religiosity and his politics was characteristic of other leaders of the new Religious Right.<sup>64</sup> While previously disorganized, religiously oriented political fervor would be channeled through Falwell’s formation of the Moral Majority in support of the Republican Party and its candidate in the 1980 presidential election, Ronald Reagan.<sup>65</sup>

Falwell’s policy platform in his seminal political project was deeply entwined with support for the state of Israel. In 1979, Jerry Falwell, Paul Weyrich, and Richard Vieguerie incorporated the Moral Majority, chartering the organization as “a political organization of religious conservatives who were pro-life, pro-traditional family and who supported a strong national defense and the State of Israel.”<sup>66</sup> The organization motivated “thousands of previously apolitical believers to get to the polls, most often on behalf of the GOP.”<sup>67</sup> A strong pro-Israel stance was an integral part of the Moral Majority’s political ethos; in Falwell’s view, support for Israel was just as important a policy priority as protecting the nuclear family and anti-abortion legislation.<sup>68</sup> Falwell extended his belief in the Abrahamic Covenant into the necessity of American support for Israel, because “God deals with nations in relation as those nations deal with the Jews.”<sup>69</sup> By emphasizing God’s interactions with sovereign nations rather than God’s relationship with believers – a narrative befitting a political platform – the appeal of Falwell’s theology was extended to patriots, not just fundamentalists. To be pro-Israel was to be pro-America, because America would be judged on its treatment of Israel. Such an extension to the American public was reflected in Falwell’s communication to his listeners, which encompassed a broad cross-section of American conservatives.

Although Falwell’s motivation for entering politics extended from his narrowly defined fundamentalism, the Moral Majority practiced a sort of right-wing ecumenism, uniting fundamentalists, non-fundamentalist Christians, Catholics, Jews, Mormons, and others under “shared moral values and a love for America.”<sup>70</sup> Assuming an inclusive tone, Falwell maintained

that the idea of a holy covenant with Israel was one reason, among others, for a member of the Moral Majority to espouse Zionism. In a 1982 brochure, Falwell acknowledged the differing “theological convictions” of many members of the organization, but emphasized that, despite these differences, the collective whole supported Israel because of a “stand upon the human and civil rights of all persons,” or “historical and legal arguments.”<sup>71</sup> Support for Israel was an imperative for members of the Moral Majority, regardless of their reasons for that support. One could not belong to the organization “without making the commitment to support the state of Israel in its battle for survival.”<sup>72</sup> Falwell’s shift towards a more inclusionary rhetoric reflected his ability to subsume his theological leanings under broader political goals in his activism.

Falwell’s theology of a covenant between America, Israel, and God proved conducive to extending into secular patriotic rhetoric, demonstrating the increased potential for mainstream political viability of Falwell’s version of Zionism. Constructing the ‘Abrahamic Covenant’ in political terms, Falwell emphasized that “Israel and the United States share a common sense of what is necessary to protect freedom in this dangerous time.”<sup>73</sup> In addition, he often connected the beliefs in the biblical origins of the United States to his Zionism. For example, Falwell believed that American aid for Israel was a necessary condition to the United States’ status as a “viable nation,” and that a partnership between the two nations was essential to protect “the Biblical values that have so enhanced freedom-loving societies.”<sup>74</sup> Acknowledging his theology in *Jerry Falwell and the Jews*, Falwell emphasized that “the American commitment to Israel is based on moral, historical, and security considerations.”<sup>75</sup> Just as Christians were blessed in accordance with their treatment of Jews and Israel, “America and Israel share common values and democratic traditions,” creating “a great political affinity between the two allies.”<sup>76</sup> In doing so, Falwell rejected a theology wherein Jews were a cog in the great machine of Christian destiny for one that emphasized a partnership between Christians and Jews; this transition allowed him to expand into a rhetoric of patriotic allegiance between two democratic nations.

But Falwell’s support for Israel was not limited to political speech. In 1983, *The Lynchburg News* reported that the Moral Majority formed a political action committee (PAC) in advance of the 1984 election. In a pragmatic effort to de-associate candidates from the Moral Majority name, which had since garnered a reputation for staunch Christian conservatism, Cal Thomas,



a spokesman for the Moral Majority, remarked that the PAC would not bear the “Moral Majority” moniker.<sup>77</sup> Instead, the PAC was called the “I Love America Committee.”<sup>78</sup> Falwell helped conceive the committee in order “to get involved in a tangible way” outside of the Moral Majority’s typical-lobbying efforts.<sup>79</sup> This new PAC heavily recruited “candidates who opposed abortion and supported Israel.”<sup>80</sup> According to Thomas, these two issues were highlighted because they were “most important to Falwell and his constituency.”<sup>81</sup> Successful candidates who received support from Falwell’s budding “war chest” would be the beneficiaries of the PAC’s independent supportive efforts as well as direct campaign contributions.<sup>82</sup> Falwell’s material support of candidates, conditioned upon their advocacy for the state of Israel, exemplified the depth of his commitment to substantive Zionism.<sup>83</sup> This is proven by the fact that any future candidates seeking financial support from the Moral Majority and its constituents would necessarily have to integrate a pro-Israel stance into their campaign platforms. By combining rhetoric with his campaign war chest in support of the Israeli state, Falwell cemented Zionism as an integral component of the political assumptions embedded within the new Religious Right.

### **Jerry Falwell and the Jews**

Despite Falwell’s unwavering commitment to the state of Israel and avowed allegiance with the Jewish people, he and the Moral Majority were plagued by accusations of antisemitism. Early in his political career at a rally in Richmond, Falwell evoked antisemitic stereotyping, claiming that he knew why “a few of you here don’t like Jews.”<sup>84</sup> “He can make more accidentally than you can make on purpose,” Falwell quipped, referring to a common stereotype that Jewish people care excessively about money.<sup>85</sup> Due to these comments and the antisemitism they implied, Falwell repeatedly found himself on the defensive against those who accused him of antisemitism. When asked to communicate his strategy to combat antisemitism in his circles, Falwell cited every preacher’s “obligation from God to work and preach toward putting an end to hate,” and denied the existence of antisemitism in evangelical churches.<sup>86</sup> “There is not one anti-Semite in a Bible-believing church in America,” Falwell proclaimed.<sup>87</sup> When John Rees of *The NEWS* asked Falwell if the Moral Majority had “a strong potential” for antisemitic “aberration,” Falwell responded that he doubted “that there is an organization in America that is

so committed to the Jewish people everywhere and to the state of Israel.”<sup>88</sup> In 1981, the Moral Majority published advertisements at around \$20,000 each in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The Washington Post*, to emphasize the organization’s support for “the state of Israel and ‘Jewish people everywhere.’”<sup>89</sup>

Though Falwell preemptively included statements of opposition to antisemitism in Moral Majority brochures and publications, these efforts failed to sever his association with bigotry.<sup>90</sup> A. Bartlett Giamatti, Yale University president, in an address to the entering freshman class of 1985, “contended that the atmosphere fostered by the Moral Majority had created a resurgence of ‘hating in public by the mad or the malevolent.’”<sup>91</sup> Giamatti further asserted that the Moral Majority and the political climate it created was responsible for a 192 percent increase in antisemitic crimes in 1980 alone, the year after Falwell founded the Moral Majority.<sup>92</sup> Cal Thomas challenged Giamatti’s statement, arguing that the Moral Majority was “one of the most pro-Semitic organizations in the country.”<sup>93</sup> This exchange showcased the Moral Majority’s attempts to counteract allegations of antisemitism by underscoring the priority Thomas and the organization placed on an alliance with American Jews, and by reinforcing their relationship with Israel.

Beyond this association with antisemitic behavior, an influential group of American Jews also took issue with Falwell’s motives for his support for Israel. Indicating his knowledge of his association with premillennial dispensationalism, Falwell sent a letter to rabbis in 1984 to “clarify” and “summarize” his position towards the state of Israel.<sup>94</sup> Falwell emphasized that he saw “the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 not as the fulfillment of Armageddon Prophecy, but as the fulfillment of Abrahamic Covenant promising the land of Israel to the Jewish people.”<sup>95</sup> Once again, Falwell’s rejection of dispensational theology for a covenant alliance between Americans and Jews proved useful for his mainstream political appeal. However, despite his attempts to disavow premillennialism, Falwell’s association with a cadre of fundamentalists who believed in the state of Israel’s role in hastening Armageddon and the necessity of Jews’ conversion to Christianity left a permanent stain on his reputation.<sup>96</sup> Even though Falwell went to great lengths to emphasize his covenantal theology and politics, his efforts had limited effects among American Jews.

Though calls by conservative candidates for the support of Israel were well-received in the Jewish community, Jews ultimately

found more to dislike about Falwell than they could accept.<sup>97</sup> Where Falwell once regarded “politically conservative American Jews as allies,” President Ronald Reagan’s “embrace of a ‘Christian nation’ and his association with Christian leaders such as Falwell” appeared to threaten church-state separation, halting the mass exodus of Jews from the Democratic Party into the GOP.<sup>98</sup> In 1981, Jewish leader Rabbi Jerald Brown, called the Moral Majority “the most serious threat to the fabric of our society” since McCarthyism in the 1950s.<sup>99</sup> Rabbi Brown acquiesced his support for certain Moral Majority policy positions, but vehemently opposed the Moral Majority’s profession “to know the will of God,” and desire to have “its views forced on everyone through legislation.”<sup>100</sup> The Moral Majority’s association with religion, Rabbi Brown feared, precluded debate because “claiming God on your side is no argument.”<sup>101</sup> Similarly, in 1985, Harry Siegman, director of the American Jewish Congress, acknowledged Falwell’s support for the Jews and Israel, and rejected the identification of the U.S. government with “any other group” as the basis for his opposition to Falwell rather than the rumors of antisemitism.<sup>102</sup> Rabbi Brown’s and Siegman’s statements demonstrate a fear of Christian infiltration into U.S. institutions that arose from Falwell’s fundamentalist identity. The Moral Majority’s mission to advance religiously conservative priorities through legislative action threatened the separation of church and state which preserves Jews’, along with other groups’, freedom to religiously differ. Thus, an association with premillennial dispensationalism, coupled with the threat Falwell posed to a secular U.S. government, precluded American Jews from throwing their political weight behind the Moral Majority.

### **Apology and Reconciliation**

Falwell’s ecumenical vision for the Moral Majority demanded attempts at reconciliation for American Jews. In December of 1984, Falwell held a town hall to describe “his conservative vision of America” and “a ‘new alliance’ between Jews and evangelical Christians.”<sup>103</sup> *The New York Times* reported that Falwell disavowed prophetic motives for his support for Israel during a 90-minute session moderated by Rabbi William Berkowitz of New York.<sup>104</sup> “I do not believe there is a single unfulfilled prophecy in the Bible that would prevent Jesus from coming today,” he stated, negating the necessity of a war of Armageddon in Israel to bring about the coming of Christ.<sup>105</sup> When asked about his stance on the

conversion of Jews, Falwell deflected, admitting that he preached “the Gospel of Jesus Christ,” and emphasized that he did not “single out any one person or one group;” his mandate was “universal.”<sup>106</sup> However, a biblical tinge to his support for Israel was still apparent when he described areas in the West Bank by their biblical names, “Judea and Samaria.”<sup>107</sup> By comparing Israeli settlers with American settlers, Falwell asserted that the Israelis’ alleged right to settle in the West Bank was comparable with Americans’ settlement in Texas.<sup>108</sup> This town hall displayed a shift in Falwell’s narrative: no longer was he the prophetic fundamentalist. Instead, he vehemently denied the targeting of Jews for conversion to Christianity and disavowed dispensationalist motives, synthesizing support for Israel with a pro-America stance. Falwell’s attempt to soften the origins of his Zionism and rhetoric towards Jews should be viewed as a product of his dual identity as an activist and a pastor. His activism required him to shoehorn his covenantal support for Israel into secularly understandable rhetoric.

In March of 1985, Falwell further displayed his commitment to reconciliation with the American Jewish community. At a meeting of the Rabbinical Assembly of Conservative Rabbis in Miami Beach, Falwell apologized to the rabbis for remarks made about America’s “Christian” character, several years prior.<sup>109</sup> In a significant evolution from the early priorities of the Moral Majority, Falwell acknowledged and apologized for his attempts to “Christianize” the United States, saying: “we were wrong and we are sorry. What more can I say?”<sup>110</sup> Shifting his rhetoric of a “Christian republic” to accommodate Jews, Falwell re-consecrated the United States as a “Judeo-Christian republic,” open to “a spirit of pluralism that did not [previously] exist.”<sup>111</sup> “I sincerely love you,” Falwell told his audience.<sup>112</sup> Distancing himself from his previous attempts to characterize the United States as an inherently Christian nation, Falwell emphasized he did not “want a state church,” and acknowledged that “schools should be neutral.”<sup>113</sup> Falwell acquiesced in a final act of reconciliation: “We are not a Christian nation.”<sup>114</sup> His apology for his rhetoric of Christianization was coupled with Zionist overtures, wherein he reiterated his commitment to Israel as “the best, if not the only, friend America has in that part of the world.”<sup>115</sup>

Falwell’s concessions did not go unnoticed by his counterparts on the Religious Right. Gary Jarmin, the field director of Christian voice, a conservative political organization, argued “that Falwell, who always gets the limelight, does not always speak for all of

us,” who “feel that America is a Christian nation, and there is no reason for anyone to apologize.”<sup>116</sup> The distinctively apologetic nature of Falwell’s rhetoric displays the same tendency of strategic thought that underpinned Falwell’s espousal of covenantal support for Israel over dispensationalism. Falwell’s dual priorities of political viability and religious purity often demanded concessions from either his political platform or his fundamentalism. However, no amount of apology on Falwell’s part could erase his fundamentalist identity. This was the enduring tension in Falwell’s relationship with American Jews: they were unable to overlook his fundamentalism and singularly consider the Zionist orientation of the Moral Majority, while Falwell was unable to fully set aside his uncompromising religion for political expediency.

### Conclusions

Jerry Falwell’s support for the State of Israel arose from a covenantal theology that overshadowed his premillennialism, especially when applied to his political activism. This focus on a covenant between God and the Jews to ensure the Jews’ return to biblical Israel, was transformed, by Falwell’s efforts, into a rhetoric of sacred allegiance between the United States and the Jews that demanded American support for the Zionist cause. When viewed in both theological and political contexts, Falwell’s covenantal theology was a functional evolution of dispensationalism, not a departure from it, insofar as it granted the United States a sacred historical role as the enabler of God’s covenant relationship with the Jews. Falwell’s covenant, however, still centered American interests, subsuming Zionism under a broader desire to place America within a sacralized history, and to lend theological weight to the United States’ global role. Falwell both cemented the importance of Israel in the American global imagination, and attached the new nation’s politics to fundamentalist Christians’ covenantal identities. Israel would remain a major foreign policy question for the United States during and after the 1980s, demonstrating the lasting power of Falwell and his fundamentalist cohort’s rhetoric. Falwell both cemented the importance of Israel in the American global imagination, and attached the new nation’s politics to fundamentalist Christians’ covenantal identities.

Falwell’s covenantal Zionism, distinguished from his fundamentalist predecessors and counterparts’ dispensationalism, exhibited the intricacies of fundamentalist political success. Falwell was forced had to stay true to his fundamentalist context, but still

found ways to adjust his theological principles towards more politically palatable forms. Falwell's peculiarly non-prophetic Zionism was just one element in a saga of adjustment to the realities of the secular world endured by the Religious Right during their rise to political influence. His choice to eschew prophecy for covenant displays the limited political viability of religious apocalypticism.

Even while calling himself a fundamentalist Christian, Falwell managed to construct a politically relevant persona by amplifying the potentially inclusive aspects of his religious conservatism and minimizing his belief in prophecy. The backlash he experienced from American Jews during this effort, though, shows the limitations of fundamentalist identity as an ecumenical political force. Falwell's rhetorical transition from dispensationalism to covenant illuminates the difficulty of maintaining an emotional, doctrinally consistent faith within the context of American party politics. In his concession to a covenantal political theology rather than a prophetic one, Falwell succeeded; his Moral Majority attained widespread political influence and notoriety. Falwell was a key participant in the process of integrating a workable politics with religious fervor. This marriage of the force of the pulpit with the political savvy of Falwell, Viguerie, and Thomas enabled the Religious Right's political ascendance in the late 1970s and early 1980s. However, Falwell lost one thing: prophecy. He was able to remain biblically consistent by drawing the Abrahamic Covenant into the Christian Zionist conversation. As he navigated the complicated terrain of Christian-Jewish relationships in the face of a newly powerful fundamentalist Christian voting bloc, "the signs of the times" receded into the not-so-distant past. Jerry Falwell's relationship with Christian Zionism demonstrates the instability of religiously inflected politics, making it a particularly instructive moment in the Religious Right's tumultuous history of compromise and success.

1. Official statement by Jerry Falwell at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., January 3, 1986, BANC MSS 2010/152, box 11, folder 33, Sara Diamond Collection on the U.S. Right, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley, California, United States (hereafter cited as Jerry Falwell at the National Press Club), 1.
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3. Jerry Falwell at the National Press Club, 1.
4. Samuel Goldman, *God's Country: Christian Zionism in America*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), 8.
5. Stephen Spector, *Evangelicals and Israel: The Story of American Christian Zionism*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 3.
6. Daniel G. Hummel, *Covenant Brothers: Evangelicals, Jews, and U.S.-Israeli Relations*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019), 8.
7. Goldman, *God's Country*, 8.
8. Hummel, *Covenant Brothers*, 8.
9. Goldman, *God's Country*, 4.
10. Goldman, *God's Country*, 4.
11. Hummel, *Covenant Brothers*, 8.
12. This paper uses Zionism to refer to the political movement that resulted in the secular Zionist and Jewish occupation of Palestine, and the formation of the modern state of Israel in 1948.
13. Hummel, *Covenant Brothers*, 10.
14. Hummel, *Covenant Brothers*, 11.
15. Hummel, *Covenant Brothers*, 11.
16. George Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.: Grand Rapids, 1991): 4-5.
17. Seeking a definition for evangelicalism is difficult. Scholars have defined the subgroup of Protestantism in a myriad of ways. George Marsden, one of the leading evangelical historians of the 20th century, included in evangelicalism "any Christians traditional enough to affirm the basic beliefs of the old nineteenth-century evangelical consensus." This consensus included "1) the Reformation doctrine of the final authority of the Bible, 2) the real historical character of God's Saving work recorded in Scripture, 3) salvation to eternal life based on the redemptive work of Christ, 4) the importance of evangelism and missions, and 5) the importance of a spiritually transformed life." A definition using these parameters encompasses "holiness churches, pentecostals, traditionalist Methodists, all sorts of Baptists, Presbyterians, black churches in all these traditions, fundamentalists, pietist groups, Reformed and Lutheran confessionals, Anabaptists such as Mennonites, Churches of Christ, Christians, and some Episcopalians." In recent years, as mentioned above, historians such as Matthew Avery Sutton (see: *American Apocalypse*) and Kristin Kobes Du Mez (see: *Jesus and John Wayne: How White Evangelicals Corrupted a Faith and Fractured a Nation*) have set aside the work of theological distinction for treatments of



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evangelicalism that focus on continuity of belief and its cultural markers. This paper attempts to use a similar methodology to examine Falwell's Zionism.

George Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.: Grand Rapids, 1991): 4-5.

18. Hummel, *Covenant Brothers*, 14.

19. "Jerry Falwell Spreads the Word: The Fundamentalist Leader Wages Political War on Immorality," *Time*, September 2, 1985.

20. Michael Sean Winters, *God's Right Hand* (New York: HarperCollins, 2012), 244.

21. Magazine article, "Jerry Falwell Spreads the Word: The Fundamentalist Leader Wages Political War on Immorality," *Time*, September 2, 1985. People for the American Way Collection of Conservative Political Ephemera, 1980-2004, BANC MSS 2010/152, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley, California, United States; Michael Sean Winters, *God's Right Hand* (New York: HarperCollins, 2012), 245.

22. Matthew Avery Sutton, *Jerry Falwell and the Rise of the Religious Right* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2013), 21.

23. For further discussion, see Spector, *Evangelicals and Israel: The Story of American Christian Zionism*, .

24. For further discussion, see Ariel, *An Unusual Relationship: Evangelical Christians and Jews*, (New York: NYU Press, 2013).

25. For further discussion, see Goldman, *God's Country: Christian Zionism in America*, .

26. For further discussion, see Hummel, *Covenant Brothers: Evangelicals, Jews, and U.S.-Israeli Relations*.

27. Matthew Avery Sutton, *Jerry Falwell and the Rise of the Religious Right* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2013), 10. There have been a multiplicity of attempts to define fundamentalism. One of the most influential of these was evangelical historian George Marsden's definition, which characterizes fundamentalism as "an evangelical who is militant in opposition to liberal theology in the churches or to changes in cultural values or mores, such as those associated with 'secular humanism.'" This term can be used broadly, "to designate any militant conservative," self-identified fundamentalists "are predominantly separatist Baptist dispensationalists." In view of this multiplicity of attempts at defining the denominational boundaries of fundamentalism, this paper will use Falwell's self-identified theology. Falwell does not represent all fundamentalists. This work employs theological distinction for the purpose it serves in providing context for Falwell's Zionism, not as an end in itself.

George M. Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1991), 4; Michael Sean Winters, *God's Right Hand* (New York: HarperCollins, 2012), 4.

28. Jerry Falwell and Ed Dobson, et al., *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*, (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981), 4, 6.

29. Falwell, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*, 7.
30. Falwell, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*, 7.
31. Falwell, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*, 8.
32. Falwell, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*, 9.
33. Falwell, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*, 9.
34. Falwell, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*, 9.
35. Falwell, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*, 11,
36. Falwell, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*, 11.
37. Falwell, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*, 1..
38. Stephen Spector, *Evangelicals and Israel: The Story of American Christian Zionism*,), 15.
39. Brochure, Jerry Falwell, *The Future, The Bible, and You*, publication of the Old-Time Gospel Hour, 1980, People for the American Way Collection of Conservative Political Ephemera, 1980-2004, BANC MSS 2010/152, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley, California, United States (hereafter cited as Brochure, Jerry Falwell, "The Future, The Bible, and You").
40. Jerry Falwell, *The Future, The Bible, and You*, 1980.
41. Jerry Falwell, *The Future, The Bible, and You*, 1980.
42. Jerry Falwell, *The Future, The Bible, and You*, 1980.
43. Jerry Falwell, *The Future, The Bible, and You*, 1980.
44. Stephen Spector, *Evangelicals and Israel: The Story of American Christian Zionism*, 14.
45. Samuel Goldman, *God's Country: Christian Zionism in America*, 168.
46. Matthew Avery Sutton, *American Apocalypse: A History of Modern Evangelicalism*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), 359.
47. Merrill Simon, *Jerry Falwell and the Jews*, (New York: Jonathan David Publishers, 1984), 64.
48. Falwell, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*, 215.
49. Falwell, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*, 215.
50. Genesis 15:18, King James Version; Merrill Simon, *Jerry Falwell and the Jews*, (New York: Jonathan David Publishers, 1984), 62.
51. Falwell, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*, 215.
52. "The Rise of the Falwell Empire," *The Washington Post*, September 26, 1984, BANC MSS 2010/152, box 74, folder 36, People for the American Way Collection of Conservative Political Ephemera, 1980-2004, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley, California, United States.
53. Excerpt from *The Old Time Gospel Hour* with Rev. Jerry Falwell on Sunday, Sep. 13, 1981, BANC MSS 2010/152, box 74, folder 42, People for the American Way Collection of Conservative Political Ephemera, 1980-2004, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley, California, United States (hereafter referred to as *Old Time Gospel Hour*, Sep. 13, 1981).
54. *Old Time Gospel Hour*, Sep. 13, 1981.
55. *Old Time Gospel Hour*, Sep. 13, 1981.

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56. *Old Time Gospel Hour*, Sep. 13, 1981.
57. *Old Time Gospel Hour*, Sep. 13, 1981.
58. Sutton, *Jerry Falwell*, 11.
59. Sutton, *Jerry Falwell*, 15.
60. Sutton, *Jerry Falwell*, 16.
61. John Rees, "Moral Majority Conservative Jerry Falwell: An Exclusive Interview With The Distinguished Clergyman Who Is The Far Left's Favorite Target," *The Review of the NEWS*, May 6, 1981, BANC MSS 2010/152, box 77, folder 4, People for the American Way Collection of Conservative Political Ephemera, 1980-2004, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley, California, United States (hereafter cited as John Rees, "Moral Majority").
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63. Sutton, *Jerry Falwell*, 16.
64. Sutton, *Jerry Falwell*, 19.
65. Sutton, *Jerry Falwell*, 20-21.
66. Sutton, *Jerry Falwell*, 21; Official statement by Jerry Falwell at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., January 3, 1986, BANC MSS 2010/152, box 11, folder 33, Sara Diamond Collection on the U.S. Right, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley, California, United States.
67. Matthew Avery Sutton, *American Apocalypse: A History of Modern Evangelicalism*, 354.
68. Newspaper article, "Jerry Falwell mixes pulpit and politics," *St. Louis, Missouri Globe-Democrat*, March 12, 1983, BANC MSS 2010/152, box 74, folder 32, People for the American Way Collection of Conservative Political Ephemera, 1980-2004, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley, California, United States (hereafter referred to as "Jerry Falwell mixes pulpit and politics").
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71. Jerry Falwell, *Here is where Moral Majority stands on the vital issues affecting America Today...* July 1982, BANC MSS 2010/152, box 74, folder 30, People for the American Way Collection of Conservative Political Ephemera, 1980-2004, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley, California, United States (hereafter cited as Falwell, *Here is where Moral Majority stands*).
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74. Simon, *Jerry Falwell*, 70.
75. Simon, *Jerry Falwell*, 64.
76. Simon, *Jerry Falwell*, 64.
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81. Kutrow, "Falwell to assist candidates."

82. Kutrow, "Falwell to assist candidates."

83. Kutrow, "Falwell to assist candidates."

84. "Falwell Strives for Role as Political Kingmaker," *The Washington Star*, July 3, 1980, BANC MSS 2010/152, box 74, folder 30, People for the American Way Collection of Conservative Political Ephemera, 1980-2004, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley, California, United States (hereafter cited as "Falwell Strives for Role as Political Kingmaker").

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87. "Evangelical Leaders Hail Election and Ask Continuation of Efforts."

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105. "Falwell, Booed and Heckled."

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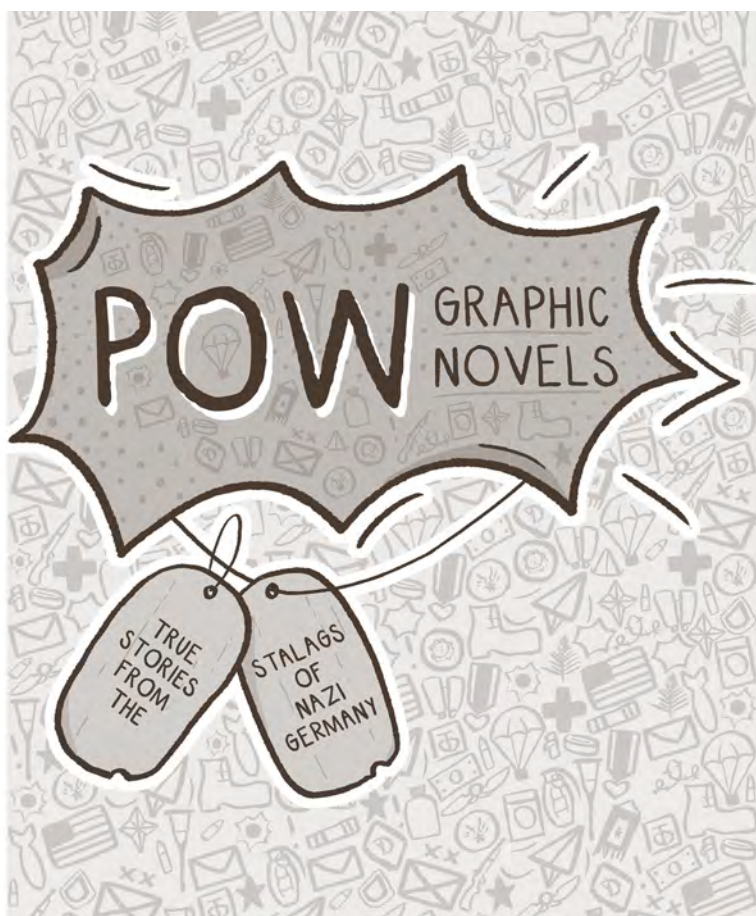
114. "Jewish leader asks Falwell to stop."

115. "Apologetic Falwell."

116. "Falwell Facing Heat."








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Melina Testin is a senior at Loyola University Chicago. She will graduate May 2022 with a BA in history, concentration in 20th century military history, and a minor in business marketing. In the fall, Melina will enter the Public History Graduate Program at Loyola Chicago. Awarded a Provost Fellowship to complete historical research, Melina uses her passion for military history and talents in art to create graphic novels that illustrate true stories of prisoner of war veterans in WWII, as told by the veterans themselves in oral history interviews. Her graphic novels are published by the Pritzker Military Museum & Library to accompany the exhibit *Life Behind the Wire: Prisoners of War*.



POW GRAPHIC NOVEL SERIES, VOL 1 ★ 1945

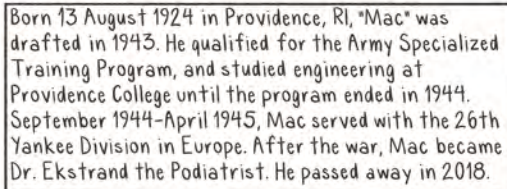
# NAZIS GIVE ME THE WILLYS

EXPERIENCE  
PFC EKSTRAND'S  
SERVICE AS A  
JEEP DRIVER  
IN WWII!



WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY MELINA TESTIN

STORY PROVIDED BY MALCOLM EKSTRAND VIA THE HOLT ORAL  
HISTORY PROGRAM, LISTEN AT [PRITZKERMILITARY.ORG](http://PRITZKERMILITARY.ORG)



In March 1945, Patton's Third Army crossed into Germany. The 26th spent the spring neutralizing Nazi forces in the southeast corner of Germany.

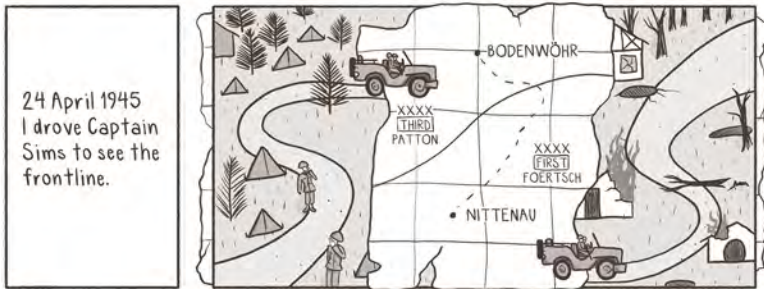
KP had kept me off the front lines, but came with its own hazards:





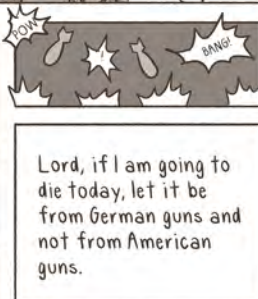
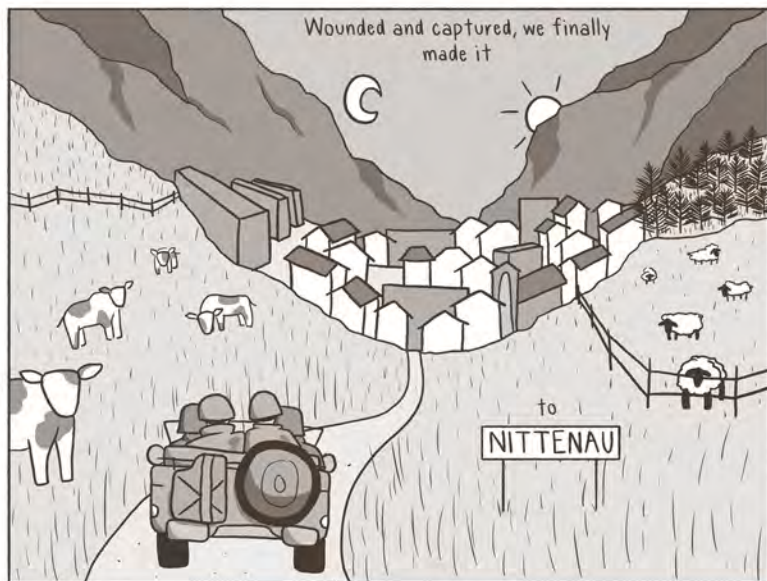
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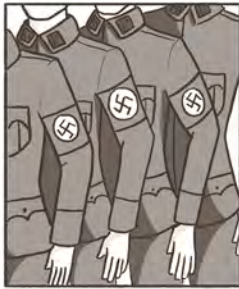
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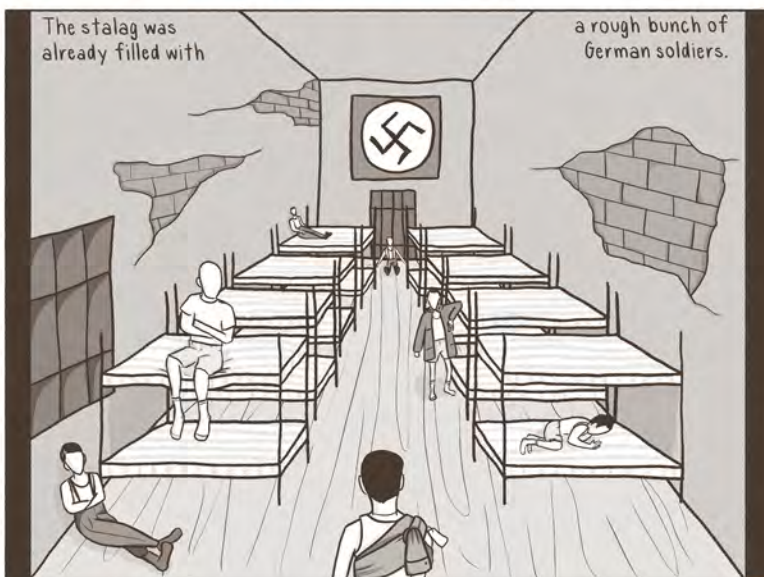
## Vol. 1: Malcolm Ekstrand



Melina Testin



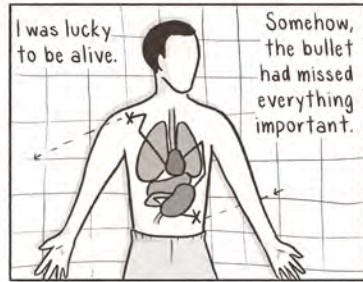
Vol. 1: Malcolm Ekstrand



Melina Testin

# POW Graphic Novels

## Vol. 1: Malcolm Ekstrand



Melina Testin



## Vol. 1: Malcolm Ekstrand



Willys MB jeeps were produced in the United States during WWII, 1941-1945. The Army selected auto manufacturer Willys (pronounced Willis) as the manufacturer of military jeeps, though Ford factories also manufactured a GPW (General Purpose Willys) jeep to keep up with demand. The Willys Military Model B became one of the most recognizable vehicles of the war. Thanks to their versatility and rugged design, more than 600,000 jeeps were built during WWII. American jeeps were valued tools and desirable even to the enemy, like the Germans who captured Mac's jeep.

The Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) was a wartime program, 1942-1944, designed to train officers for the Army in a college setting, while ROTC was suspended during WWII. During basic training, recruits took an exam to qualify for the program. Only 2% of Army recruits earned a spot in the ASTP to study Engineering, Medicine, or Foreign Language. As preparations began for the June 1944 D-Day invasion, ASTP dissolved, transferring thousands of students, like Mac, to combat divisions.



The Purple Heart is a medal awarded to service members wounded or killed in action. First awarded in 1932, the Purple Heart is a modern version of the Badge of Military Merit, introduced by George Washington in 1782. More than 1 million Purple Hearts, depicting George Washington, were awarded during WWII, and the medal continues to be awarded today. National Purple Heart day is celebrated annually on 7 August.

The 26th Yankee Division was founded as the Massachusetts Army National Guard. Mac found himself in the 26th after the ASTP dissolved, and soon landed with the division at Utah Beach three months after D-Day, 7 September 1944. The 26th spent the fall fighting through France and the winter locked in Luxemburg during the Battle of the Bulge. In March, the 26th crossed the Rhine River and spent the spring neutralizing Southeastern Germany. The equestrian German officers Mac encountered near Nittenau surrendered to the 26th within days of his capture.



Kitchen Patrol Duty (KP) is a generally undesirable job given to junior enlisted soldiers which involves preparing and serving chow, and cleaning the kitchen and mess tent.

George S. Patton was an American general during WWII. He commanded the Third US Army in France and Germany, including the 26th Yankee Division, 1944-1945.

Stalag is an abbreviation of the German word for Prisoner of War Camp. At the Stalag in Straubing, Mac and other POWs were only fed one slice of bread a day.

A Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (MASH) was a sophisticated field hospital introduced during WWII to treat major wounds requiring immediate attention.

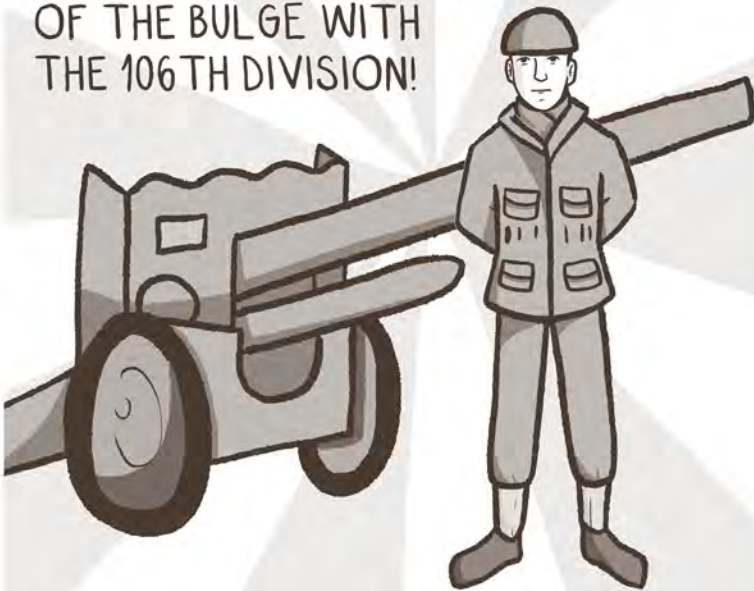
Melina Testin



POW GRAPHIC NOVEL SERIES, VOL 2 ★ 1945

# UN-BLEIALF-ABLY LUCKY

NAVIGATE THE BATTLE  
OF THE BULGE WITH  
THE 106TH DIVISION!



WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY MELINA TESTIN

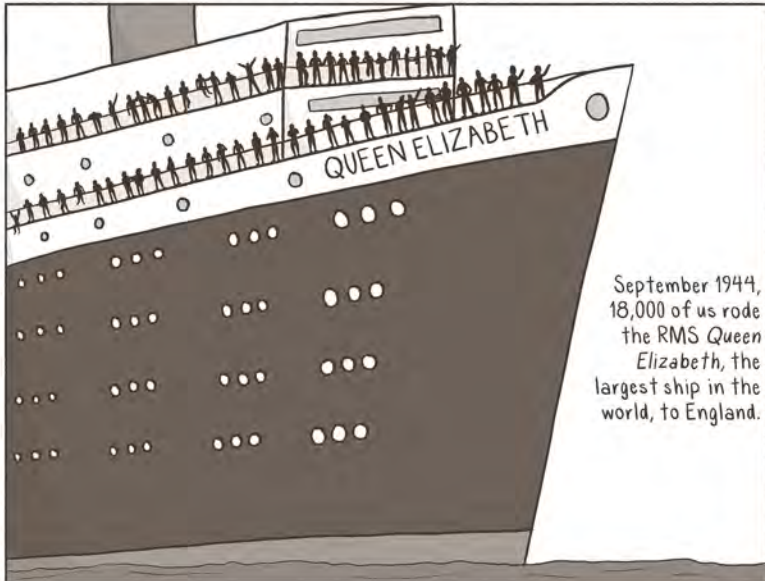
STORY PROVIDED BY RICHARD LOCKHART VIA THE HOLT ORAL  
HISTORY PROGRAM, LISTEN AT [PRITZKERMILITARY.ORG](http://PRITZKERMILITARY.ORG)

Vol. 2: Richard Lockhart



Born 20 January 1924 in Lima, OH, "Lucky Locky" grew up in Fort Wayne, IN where he dreamed of becoming a journalist. WWII delayed this dream, but Lucky's time in the Army taught him not to be complacent. By 1951, Lucky had a degree from Northwestern University, a wife, and a long, successful career in journalism and politics ahead of him, until his death in 2019.

I enlisted 7 December 1942. It was several months before I found my permanent place in the Army... just in time for the Battle of the Bulge.

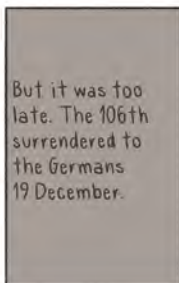
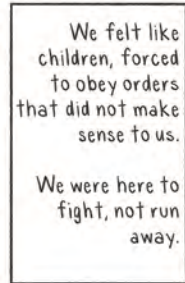
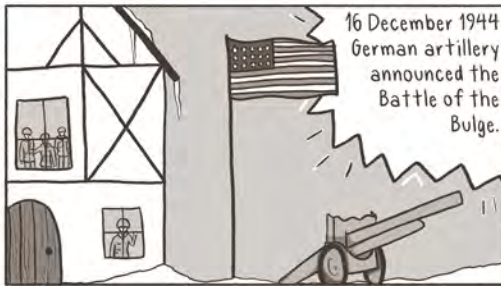


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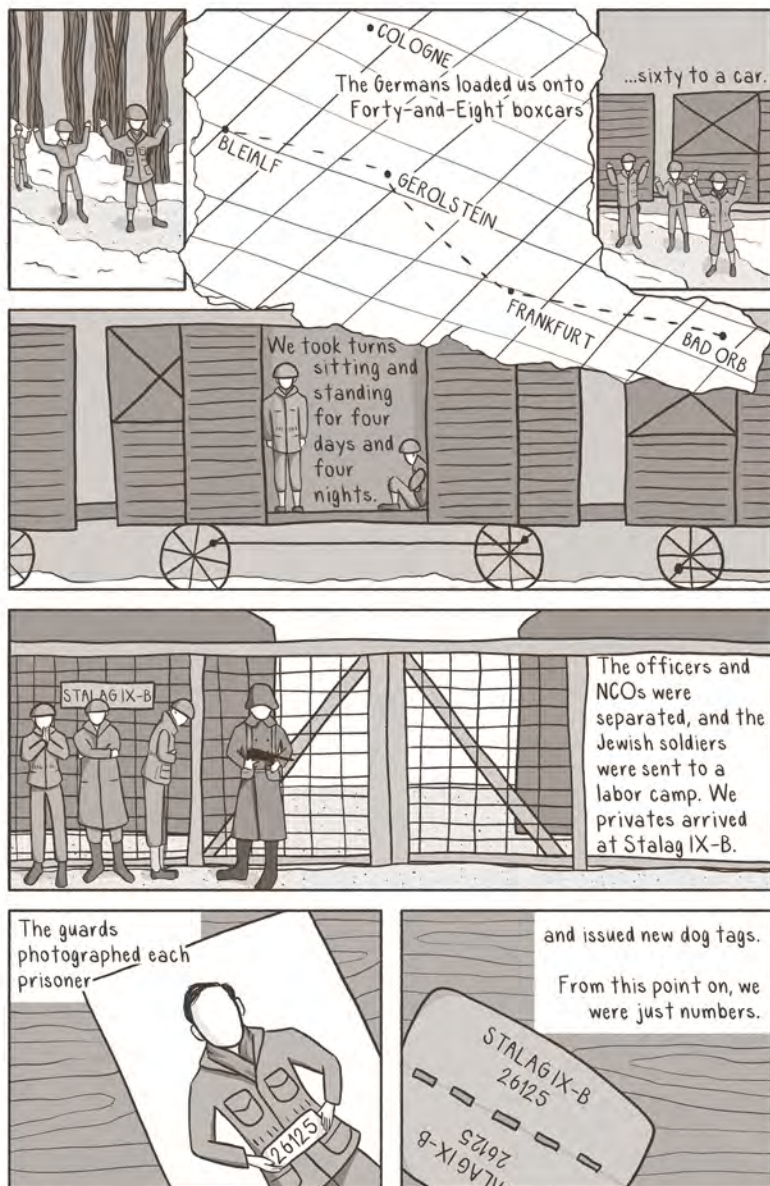
# POW Graphic Novels

## Vol. 2: Richard Lockhart



Melina Testin

Vol. 2: Richard Lockhart



Melina Testin

# POW Graphic Novels

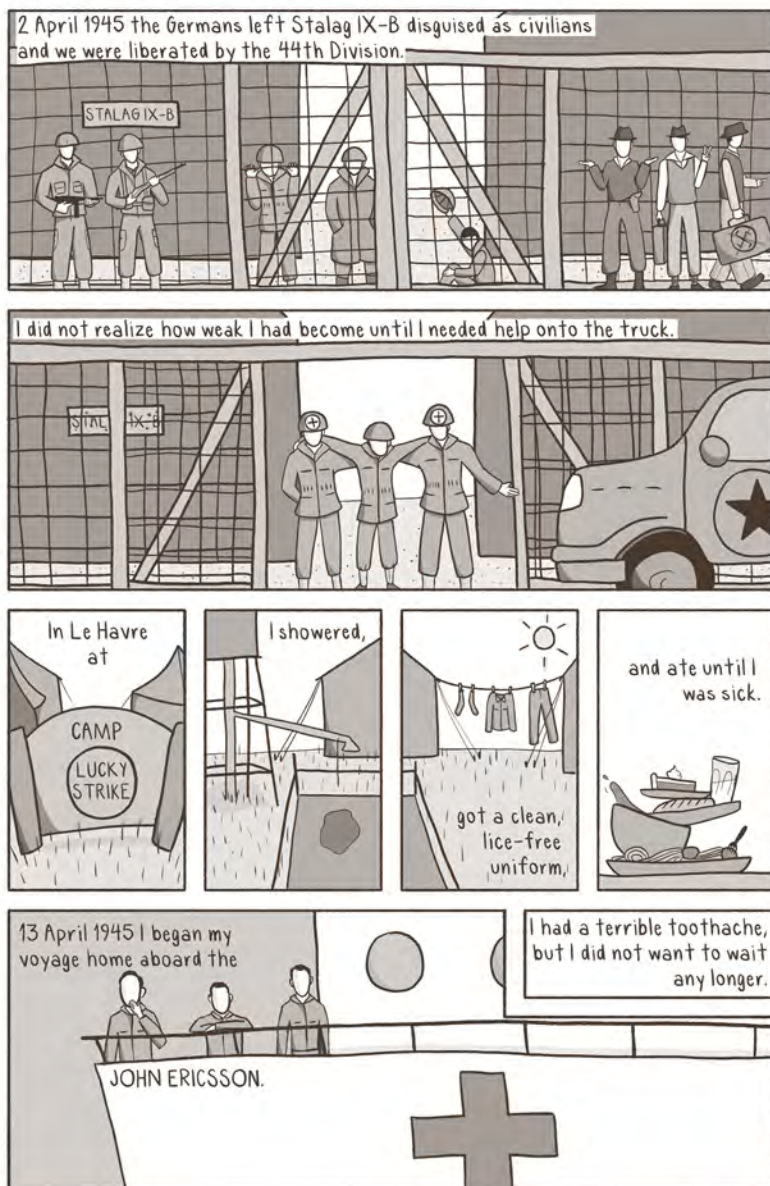
## Vol. 2: Richard Lockhart



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Vol. 2: Richard Lockhart



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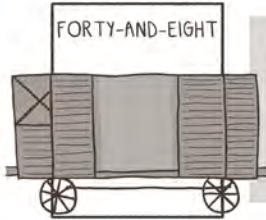
Vol. 2: Richard Lockhart



Melina Testin

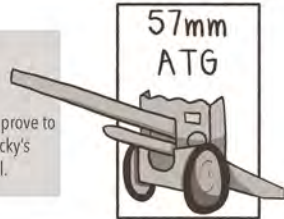


## Vol. 2: Richard Lockhart



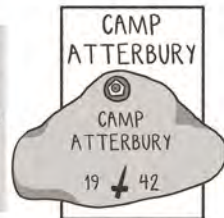
A **Forty-and-Eight** (Quarante et huit) was a French boxcar common across Europe during WWII. At first made popular for their ability to transport large loads of personnel and materiel—the name comes from the boxcar's capacity for forty people or eight horses—Nazi Germany found more sinister uses for the boxcars. Lucky remembered at least sixty prisoners crammed into the 40/8 on the way to Stalag IX-B. 40/8s soon became synonymous with the transportation of prisoners.

The **57mm Anti-Tank Gun (ATG)** was modeled after the British Quick-Firing 6-pounder. Approximately 5000, 57mm ATGs were delivered to British and Soviet troops through the lend-lease program of American war aid. Unfortunately, the 57mm ATG did not prove to be effective against heavily armored German tanks. In the case of Lucky's ATG, blown up early in the battle, it did not prove to be effective at all.



The **106th Golden Lions Division** was formed as an expansion of the 80th Division during WWII. In the first days of the Battle of the Bulge (16-19 December 1944), two of the three regiments became surrounded by the Germans. More than 6,000 soldiers, including Lucky, were forced to surrender, and were taken prisoner.

**Camp Atterbury** is a military training facility in Edinburgh, IN. Lucky and the 106th, along with the 30th, 83d, and 92d Divisions, trained at the camp 1942-1944, and the Indiana National Guard still uses the facility today. Camp Atterbury held 15,000 Italian and German prisoners during WWII. The carved rock and a chapel on the grounds were both constructed by POWs whose experiences differed greatly from the suffering of their American counterparts in Axis-controlled prison camps.



The **Battle of the Bulge** was a German offensive in the Ardennes Forest 16 December 1944 - 25 January 1945. It was the last German offensive of WWII.

**Cigarette Camps** like **Camp Lucky Strike** were staging areas on the French coast for Americans waiting to return to the United States on ships after WWII.

**Stalag** is an abbreviation of the German word for Prisoner of War Camp. Lucky and others at Stalag IX-B were later recognized as victims of prisoner abuse.

The **M1 Garand** was the standard semi-automatic rifle issued to American infantry troops in WWII. Over 5 million Garands were produced during the war.

Melina Testin



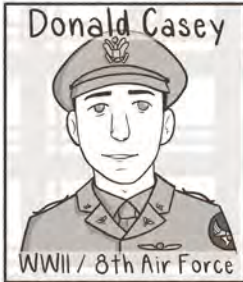
FLY THROUGH A  
GERMAN PRISONER  
OF WAR CAMP  
WITH A B-17  
NAVIGATOR!

# NOT DON FIGHTING YET

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY MELINA TESTIN

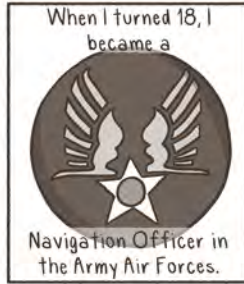
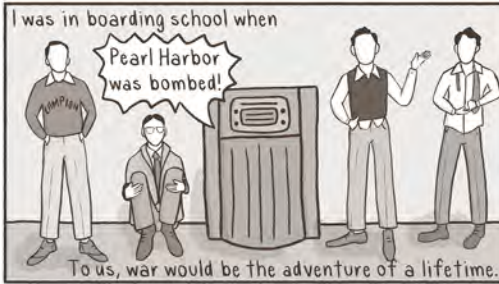
STORY PROVIDED BY DONALD CASEY VIA THE HOLT ORAL  
HISTORY PROGRAM, LISTEN AT [PRITZKERMILITARY.ORG](http://PRITZKERMILITARY.ORG)

Vol. 3: Donald Casey



Born 6 November 1924 in River Forest, IL, Don served in the Army Air Forces 1942-1945. After the war, Don worked in Chicago as a lawyer for 54 years with degrees from Dartmouth and Loyola Chicago. Don married twice and had four sons. He passed away in 2016.

My experience in war felt like that of the soldiers from books: "We were 18 and had begun to love life and the world; and we had to shoot it to pieces."  
- *All Quiet on the Western Front*



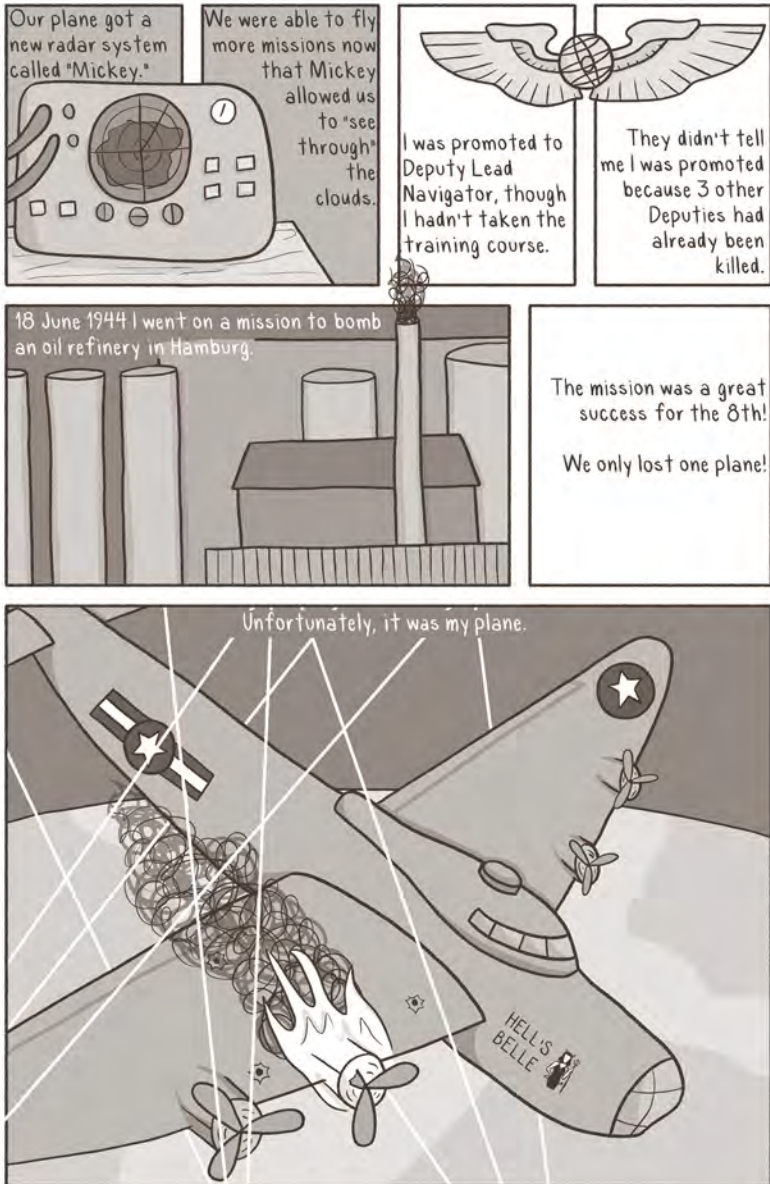
Early 1944 was a war of air forces in Europe. Before I arrived, three of every four planes in each mission were shot down in the 8th Air Force. From the Navigator's window, it wasn't hard to see why.



Melina Testin

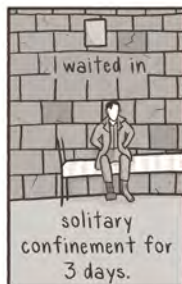
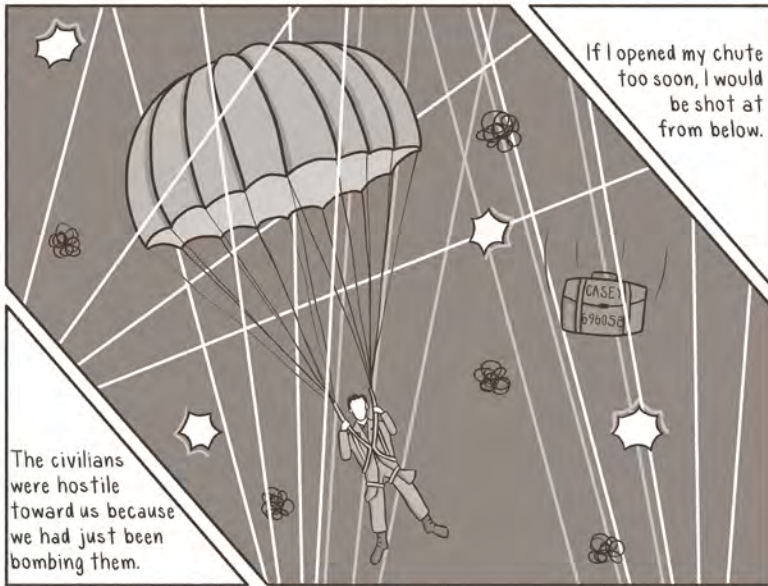


Vol. 3: Donald Casey



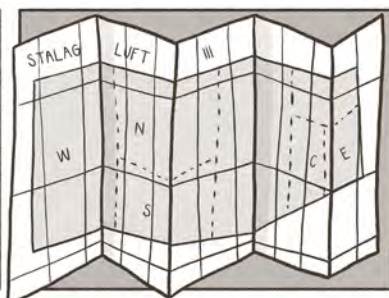
Melina Testin

Vol. 3: Donald Casey



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Vol. 3: Donald Casey



The Stalag had a small library,



musical instruments,

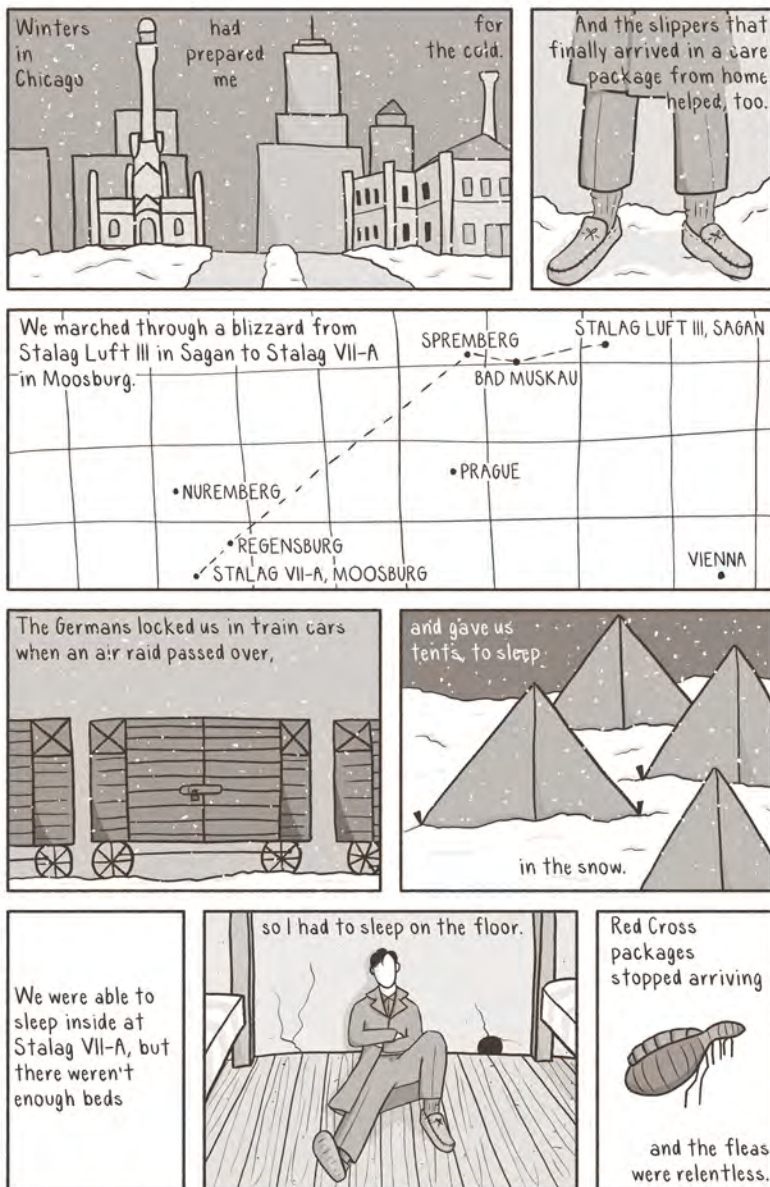
and time for leisure.



Melina Testin

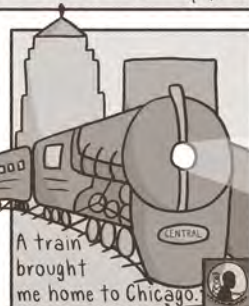
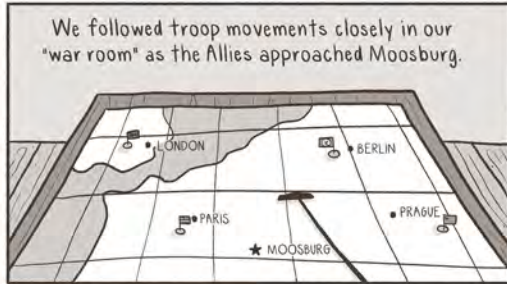


Vol. 3: Donald Casey



Melina Testin

Vol. 3: Donald Casey





## Vol. 3: Donald Casey



Like aircraft themselves, **radar** was a tool that gained prominence through its military applications during WWII. Radar allowed crews to see through the clouds and continue operations safely even in unfavorable weather. The radar system installed on B-17s, the H2X "Mickey," was introduced in late 1943. The system included a pair of domes that sat on the outside of the plane, under the nose, and used micro-waves to return feedback images of the ground below to a display at the navigation desk inside. The dual dome design looked, to some, like Mickey Mouse ears.

The **US Army Air Forces (USAAF)** was active 1941-1947 as a replacement for the US Army Air Corps and a precursor to the United States Air Force. As the use of aircraft became an important part of both combat and logistics during WWII, it became clear that the US needed a more independent sector of the military dedicated to flight operations. In 1944, when Don was flying most of his missions, the USAAF included over 2 million servicemen and 80,000 aircraft.



**Parachutes** were invented long before airplanes, but WWII presented the first major demand with increased opportunities for flight. Parachutes could be worn on the back, chest, or bottom to be deployed via ripcord for those like Don who wore a parachute as an emergency safety measure. Parachutes could also be deployed automatically via static line for new groups like the Paratroops who jumped out of planes on purpose.

The **Great Escape** took place at Stalag Luft III in March 1944, just months before Don arrived. The Great Escape, which was popularized by the 1963 movie of the same name, was an escape mission planned by American, British, and Canadian POWs. 76 prisoners made it outside the camp through a series of tunnels, but only 3 made it to safety. As a consequence of the escape, life at the camp became more strict, and no further attempts at escape were possible by the time Don was a prisoner.



**Forty-and-Eights** were boxcars designed to hold either forty men or eight horses. During WWII, they were most notably used to transport prisoners across Europe.

**George S. Patton** was an American general during WWII. The 14th Armored Division was under Patton's command when it liberated Don and others at Stalag VII-A.

**Stalag** is an abbreviation of the German word for Prisoner of War Camp. 'Luft' meaning 'air,' Stalag Luft III was made specifically for members of the Air Corps like Don.

When questioned by their captors, prisoners were taught to only provide their **name, rank, and serial number**. Additional information might end up helping the enemy.

Melina Testin



POW GRAPHIC NOVEL SERIES, VOL 4 ★ 1944

# CARVING UP NORMANDY

FOLLOW THIS TOUGH 'OMBRE'S  
JOURNEY FROM UTAH BEACH  
INTO THE BATTLE OF  
NORMANDY!



WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY MELINA TESTIN

STORY PROVIDED BY CARVER MCGRUFF VIA THE HOLT ORAL  
HISTORY PROGRAM, LISTEN AT [PRITZKERMILITARY.ORG](http://PRITZKERMILITARY.ORG)

Vol. 4: Carver McGriff



Born 5 September 1924 in Indianapolis, IN, Carver McGriff grew up hearing WWI stories from his veteran father, and anxiously awaited his turn to join the Army. After the war, Dr. McGriff served as a Methodist Pastor in Indiana, where he still lives with his wife, Marianne. The couple has led several tours of Normandy together.

My little brother joined the Navy as a minesweeper in the Pacific, but I wanted to be in the infantry.

The Army seemed more dangerous and exciting than the Navy.

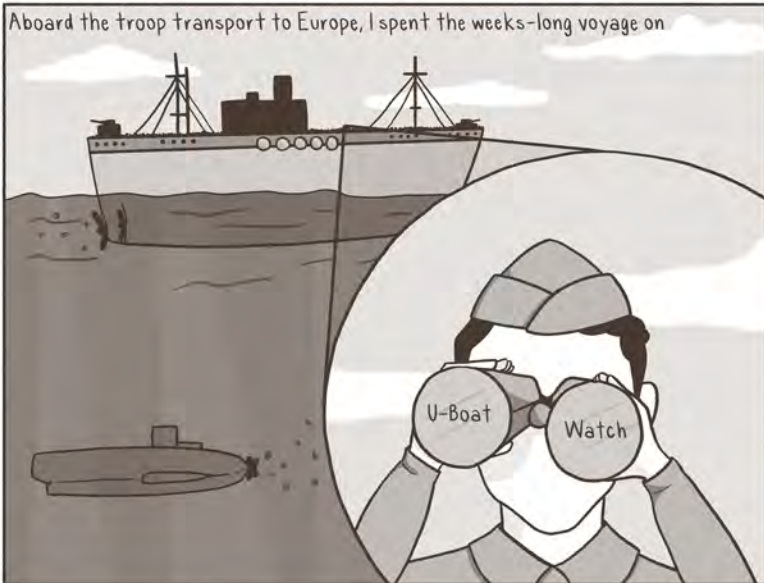


I was assigned to the 90th Division,



the "Tough 'Ombres."

Aboard the troop transport to Europe, I spent the weeks-long voyage on



Melina Testin



Vol. 4: Carver McGriff

The group of 200 men I joined were reinforcements for the 6 June 1944 D-Day invasion, the bloodiest day in American military history.

I waded ashore



Utah Beach.



Dead bodies and crashed gliders littered the shores of Normandy.



We took cover in slit trenches that felt more like graves.

The people back home watching newsreels probably

had a better picture of what an artillery barrage was like than we did, hiding in our foxholes.

Melina Testin

Vol. 4: Carver McGriff



I thought about a Bill Mauldin cartoon I had seen in the Stars and Stripes:



I fought with 130 men in a drainage ditch for two days until we ran out of ammunition.

We had to surrender.



Melina Testin

Vol. 4: Carver McGriff



Melina Testin



## Vol. 4: Carver McGriff



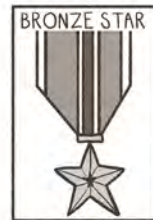
**Dazzle Camouflage** was a pattern of camouflage popular in both world wars for naval vessels. Though ineffective in concealing ships, it was meant to complicate the enemy's ability to determine the ship's course or class. During WWII, the use of radar made any attempt at ship camouflage rather futile, and all efforts at dazzle camouflage were given up in 1945. Pictured here is the USS *Iowa* in dazzle camouflage. Battleship *Iowa* notably transferred President Roosevelt to the Tehran/Eureka Conference in 1943 at which the plan for Operation Overlord (D-Day) was decided.

The 90th "Tough 'Ombres" Division began as the Texas-Oklahoma Division. The 90th served as a reserve division on D-Day, landing at Utah Beach on 6 June 1944. After Carver's unit was captured at Hill 122 (Mont Caste) on 11 July, the division laid siege to Metz in the fall and served along the Saar River and Siegfried Line/Westwall during the winter Battle of the Bulge.



**Bill Mauldin** was a soldier and cartoonist during WWII. As a T-5 in the 45th "Thunderbird" Division, Mauldin designed his first war comics featuring iconic characters Willie and Joe. In 1944, Mauldin began to draw comics exclusively for the *Stars and Stripes* magazine. Distribution in the *Stars and Stripes* made fans of soldiers in every division, including Carver.

The **Bronze Star** is a medal awarded for "heroic or meritorious achievement or service." It was introduced during WWII, and continues to be awarded in the Armed Forces today. Carver earned the Bronze Star for his service in capturing Hill 122 (Mont Caste) in Normandy. He also won the Purple Heart for the shrapnel wounds he sustained as a prisoner of war.



**AU-Boat** was a German submarine. In both World Wars, U-boats threatened Allied ships in the Atlantic. Carver luckily never spotted any U-boats during his time on the troop ship.

**A Slit Trench** is a wide foxhole meant to offer cover for multiple soldiers. Ideally 6-7' in depth, trenches were time consuming to build and soldiers often had to lie down for cover.

**Hedgerows** are series of closely planted shrubbery that bordered fields in Normandy. Difficult to see and pass through, they slowed Allied foot soldiers' assault of Normandy.

**Shrapnel**, the fragments kicked up by explosives, produced wounds ranging from superficial cuts to the loss of limbs. The shrapnel in Carver's legs was removed by surgery.

Melina Testin

**Illustrating to Illuminate the Past:  
A Note from Melina Testin**

“For every horror story, there was always a worse one around. For this reason, we did not spend a lot of time crying in our tea about where we were and how we got there. Each one of us had been through it. We cried together but separately. The good news was that we were still alive,”<sup>1</sup> recalled World War II prisoner of war veteran Don Casey of his time in Stalag Luft III. While an audience of fellow Kriegies<sup>2</sup> may have grown weary of stories of capture, students of history have much to learn from POW stories unduly overlooked in traditional WWII remembrance. Personal accounts are the most poignant source of POW history for they confront suffering and pain, and recognize the distinctive experiences of each victim. As important as it is to memorialize the suffering of these men, it is crucial to also acknowledge their courage to overcome oppression and create beautiful and rich lives for themselves in the country they helped defend in WWII, despite feeling that the country was not always defending them. The difficult duality of emotions associated with the personal POW experience can be jarring for audiences not fully immersed in the nuances of Stalag life. My graphic novelization of POW memories sets the battlefield for snubbed personal stories to war against dehumanizing statistical abstractions of suffering in the creative guises of comic book heroes. As an historian and an artist, I sketch a recreation of the world in which these men struggled and triumphed. POW stories sometimes fail to fulfill audience expectations of war stories—violence overshadowed by chivalry; horror forgotten in victory. This dissonance has separated Stalag survivors from their generation in the years immediately following their repatriation and have further isolated them from modern students of history. My graphic novel depictions of the narrative emotions present in veterans’ oral history interviews, memoirs, personal letters, and photographs, in addition to direct correspondence with veterans and surviving family members, reconstruct the persistent layers of trauma from physical and psychological abuse. Breaking down barriers of hours long oral history recordings, technical academic and martial vocabulary, and intense images of gore, my combination of youthful comic book-style graphics and factual research allows students, casual historians, veterans, and scholars alike to participate in stories that provide pertinent commentary on the scars of fear, abuse, shame, and truth.



Fear dominated POW veteran Mac Ekstrand's recollection of his time in captivity. As depicted in my graphic novel, "Nazis Give Me the Willys," Mac was taken prisoner in the spring of 1945, but 71 years later the story of his encounter with a pair of SS officers outside a small prison in Bavaria was still upsetting for him to recount. Mac had heard all the rumors and ghost stories from his comrades and, "figured we were really in trouble now, because we had heard that the German SS soldiers had killed so many American prisoners."<sup>3</sup> The permeating fears of German savagery, however embellished individual tales might have been, were validated by a week spent as a Nazi prisoner. Fear consumed Mac as he sweated out the two bullet wounds from his capture in the company of rough German convicts. Not daring to squabble with his captors over dietary or medicinal allowances, Mac prayed for relief and concocted a principle that would guide his behavior beyond captivity, "I had the idea that if I ever got out of there, I'm going to always carry a small bottle of Aspirin in my pocket because I don't want any more pain the rest of my life."<sup>4</sup> This fear of pain did not disappear even when Mac was liberated, as the traumatic events of this week were permanent.

Physical abuse further plagued prisoners like Lucky Lockhart, unfortunate enough to fall victim to the merciless hands of their Nazi guards. For half a century, the abuse depicted in my graphic novel, "Un-Bleialf-ably Lucky," was nothing more to Lucky than "the next part of the Lockhart saga in the camp."<sup>5</sup> Lucky justified that the guards had bad days like anyone else and needed an outlet for their anger; he rationalized, as beating was ubiquitous at Stalag IX-B, that abuse was a standard feature of the POW experience. Lucky found a file in the National Archives 53 years post-liberation that identified him as the victim of prisoner abuse at the hands of his German captors. This report gave Lucky the vocabulary to identify the abuse he suffered as more than a product of wartime tensions. His abuse was an officially recognized war crime and understandable source of trauma. In violent climates, it is easy for atrocity to become normalized; Lucky's story suggests that some injustices are universally evil in peace and war.

Decades of shame festered into decades of silent embarrassment for Don Casey. In my graphic novel "Not Don Fighting Yet," Don was ashamed to admit, even decades later, that three days of solitary confinement broke him to the point of revealing details about his mission and person. Additionally, as a freshly promoted Deputy Lead Navigator and "young punk second lieutenant," Don failed to prevent his navigation briefcase from falling into Nazi

hands.<sup>6</sup> His oversight to secure the contents of his briefcase in the panic of the crash instilled the new panic of treason, though his files were of little interest and his personal details resulted only in expediting home the news of his capture. By the 1929 Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, and sergeant-screamed maxims of the military, POWs were not to specify information other than name, rank, and serial number to their captors. Beyond the embarrassment of loose lips, Don viewed imprisonment as a waste of his training and service. Like many others in his position, Don fixated on choice words spoken by General Patton: "My men don't surrender. I don't want to hear of any soldier under my command being captured unless he is hit. Even if you are hit, you can still fight."<sup>7</sup> Consequently, Don was bitter when Old Blood and Guts arrived to help liberate Stalag VII-A in April 1945, and seven decades of spite compelled Don to write, "He [Patton] could have smiled or laughed or shaken hands with just a few of us."<sup>8</sup> Misconstrued ideas of the desperate motives for surrender shaped a world unreceptive to stories from men who many believed lost their part of the war, disregarding survival in the Stalag as a battle of its own.

Carver McGriff, the subject of my graphic novel "Carving Up Normandy," lamented, "What can you say to somebody who's never had anything like that happen to them? So, we just decided not to talk about it."<sup>9</sup> The stigma of having spent most of the war in captivity rather than on the frontlines was a black eye for POWs making sense of their suffering upon return to the States. Oral history is often criticized for its lack of veracity and reliance on memory, as the storytellers are years removed from the events they describe. Therefore, identification of personal experiences from oral histories within the broader context of WWII, combined with my research-backed knowledge of military history, allows for a seamless transition into graphic novels. My work overcomes the difficulty faced by veterans who try to neatly place their personal experiences on the complicated timeline of history. The type of truth in a personal account of a Stalag differs greatly from the type of truth in a battle date or casualty figure; the truth of an individual story is not about facts and figures in a given war, but the truth as it haunted and impacted a veteran's life. The purpose of an individual story is to reveal the emotional content, not to provide a play-by-play of each battle. Carver captured the spirit of memory when he announced at the end of his oral history, "When you talk to me, if I made up some of it, why you don't know...it just happens that I didn't."<sup>10</sup> Readers of my graphic novels are detached

from this unhelpful conundrum of defining absolute truth. My historically accurate graphic novels break into the typically fictional genre of comic books, and allow audiences to experience the memories of real POW veterans in a familiar and accessible format.

Stories of American prisoners in Nazi Germany have scarce been taken seriously in popular culture. Content dealing with the POW experience—the TV show *Hogan's Heroes* (1965-1971) and movies *Stalag 17* (1953) and *The Great Escape* (1963)—tends to present Stalag life as a farce. The German guards in each depiction are goons, easily outsmarted by American ingenuity, wit, and, occasionally, daring motorcycle stunts. There is little suffering in these camps, and even less show of the anxiety of friends and family back home. The inherent embarrassment associated with the telling of a war story void of traditional valiance is to blame. Thus, the Stalags of Hollywood are holding areas for American soldiers to plot escapes that will bring renown to themselves and their country. While it is important to see POWs represented in media, these depictions, when considered the most exposure modern Americans have to Stalag stories, falsely give the impression that the POW experience was one of comedy. The last lines of Don's memoir read, "It wasn't 'Hogan's Heroes,' for sure. It never was."<sup>11</sup> My graphic novels strive to mimic the zero-entry point of movies and TV shows, while considering the impact of their tone on a modern audience. In future media it is essential to present the stories in ways that are entertaining and accessible, but that also remain faithful to experiences as POWs remember them.

The brave decisions to record oral histories and publish memoirs freed these men of the lonely burdens of their traumatic memories in captivity. By consequence, they sacrificed heroic memorialization in accepting for themselves the indelible label 'Prisoner of War.' Students of history will forever characterize Mac, Lucky, Don, and Carver for the worst weeks and months of their lives, and picture their stories in my art style. POW veterans were liberated from their captivity, but their legacies are stained with inescapable imprisonment. My graphic novels paint over POWs' feelings of shame and embarrassment and sketch new narratives of resilience, courage, and validation. Enlightened respect for POW veterans, passion for military history, and courage to color outside the lines of traditional modes of education are my contributions to the field of Public History as I illustrate to illuminate the past.

## POW Graphic Novels

1. Donald Casey, *To Fight for My Country, Sir!* (Chicago: Sterling Cooper Publishing, 2009): 186.
2. 'Kriegie' is a German nickname for prisoners of war, shortened from the full German term for prisoner of war, 'Kriegsgefangener'
3. Malcolm Ekstrand, interview by Andrew Kallgren, 17 August 2016, Holt Oral History Program, Pritzker Military Museum & Library.
4. Ekstrand.
5. Richard Lockhart, interview by Sherri Kiefner, 24 March 2012, Holt Oral History Program, Pritzker Military Museum & Library.
6. Casey, 155.
7. George S. Patton, "Speech to the Third Army," 1944.
8. Casey, 245.
9. Carver McGriff, interview by Leah Cohen, 24 July 2019, Holt Oral History Program, Pritzker Military Museum & Library.
10. McGriff.
11. Casey, 267.

ARCHIVE

# Reflections of the Cold War

Understanding the Russo-Ukrainian conflict through  
*ARCHIVE's* Twenty-Five Year History

*Kayla Parker and Samantha Sharpe*



Image: *Cemetery constructed on Bascom Hill for the class of 1968.* Courtesy of UW- Madison Archives S00892.



As *ARCHIVE* reflects on the twentieth century through this edition's featured articles and graphic novels, the editorial board has decided to reflect on our own twenty-five year history as a student-produced journal of student research. *ARCHIVE*, in publication since 1998, does not exist detached from the concurrent, ever-changing geopolitical milieu. This contextualization has shaped the work of past contributing writers and editors, and thus shapes this edition as well. While the past undoubtedly influences the present, one must consider how the present affects the perception, reception, and depiction of the past. In 2022, the world bears witness to the Russo-Ukrainian war. This conflict did not spontaneously manifest, but is instead rooted in complex circumstances of the twentieth century. Such circumstances have implications in the present that inform the responses and reactions of onlookers and participants alike.

To assist our understanding of the historical course of this war, *ARCHIVE* revisits past published articles discussing the antecedents to the conflict. From these past articles, *ARCHIVE* hopes to shed light on the outbreak of the war and analyze the ways in which the present conflict is a continuation of centuries long conflict. Using excerpted material and interviews with past authors, we wish to illustrate the importance of viewing the historical past of the Cold War as not a series of completed bygones, but alive and in active conversation with the present. First, we will take a look at how the Cold War affected Russo-Ukrainian relations through Jacob Loskin's 2016 essay "The Starvation of a Nation: The Ukrainian Famine of 1932-33 as a Soviet Engineered Genocide" and Shauna Fitzmahan's 2005 essay "Shestidesiatnyky: The Generation of the Sixties." Then, we will turn to see how the Cold War has extended beyond Ukraine and eastern Europe in Ryan Panzer's 2011 essay "Karl Barth: The 'Silent' Voice of Reason Between East and West," Kazu Matsushima's 2010 essay "The Secret War in Laos: A Revolutionary Way of War," and Arthur Zarate's 2010 essay "Waging a Propaganda War Against Iran: The American Effort to Oust Mohammad Mosaddeq." All of these historical studies illuminate how we study the Russo-Ukrainian conflict today and are essential to our understanding of a post-Cold War world.

### Part I: Russia and Ukraine's Tumultuous Relationship

Russia has long claimed that Ukraine is their heartland, intertwined with Russia, previously the Soviet Union, via history, language, and land.<sup>1</sup> However, a twenty-first century interpretation of the relationship between Ukraine and Russia would hardly characterize it as familial. Ukraine is instead refracted through the prism of Russian imperialism that dates back to the Soviet Union's existence in the twentieth century. When the paternalist grasp of Russia slips now, Ukraine feels the wrath of the familiar Soviet-baked neo-authoritarianism.<sup>2</sup> The current authoritarianism of Russia and the modern state of Ukraine is hotly debated, discussed, and analyzed in the present; one must refer to the past to provide an appropriate critique. To more fully understand the war from a Russia v. Ukraine lens, *ARCHIVE* revisits two articles. The first is the aforementioned 2016 article "The Starvation of a Nation: The Ukrainian Famine of 1932-33 as a Soviet Engineered Genocide," delves into the history of an oppressive Soviet presence in Ukraine by examining older attempts to starve Ukraine, which succeeded in killing an estimated seven to ten million people. This wide-scale starvation attempt is now recalled as the *Holodomor*, a Soviet-induced famine in the 1930s directed at the Ukrainian people. Lokshin defines the *Holodomor*, now a stifled memory in the present era, as a genocide against Ukrainians. Loshkin attributes the famine to Joseph Stalin, the architect of Soviet totalitarianism, and details the devastation the famine induced upon Ukraine's economy, land, and people. Stalin's rapid collectivization initiatives replaced individual peasant farms with collective farming centers; as the territory of Ukraine was and remains an agricultural powerhouse, the Ukrainian people were particularly targeted.<sup>3</sup> This economic revision coupled with Stalin's hatred of Ukrainian Kulaks, who largely comprised the Ukrainian peasant class, formed the basis of an inherently, though not legally resorted, genocidal Soviet policy:

The rapid push towards collectivism combined with rabid paranoia and persecution of perceived 'alien and enemy elements' in attempts to exterminate the Kulaks, sharply disrupted agricultural production. Instead of a 50% rise, agricultural production dropped by 20% – exactly counter to projections used to calculate grain quotas – while livestock production dropped by nearly 60% as farmers desperately killed off livestock largely to prevent being perceived as kulaks or having their livestock confiscated. [...] As

Ukraine's grain shortage relative to relentlessly expanding grain procurement targets deepened, policy became only harsher, even as it loosened on other regions. [...] Within months the people of Ukraine began dying by the hundreds of thousands. [...] By the end of 1933, estimates from Soviet censuses themselves place deaths from the famine at 3.1 million, although a first group of census collectors did not 'find enough people' and were shot before the second – evidently more satisfactory – census was taken and archived. A UN report in 1990 estimated around 7.5 million dead as a result of the famine.”

The Kulaks were not targeted without basis. The Kulaks were the heart of the Ukrainian national movement, and as such, were considered a direct threat to Soviet influence in the region. Not only did Stalin induce famine to eliminate the numbers of the national movement, he also attacked Ukrainian cultural institutions and thinkers that prioritized Ukrainian nationalism over a collective Soviet identity. According to Loshkin:

“By 1933, [Stalin] declared Ukrainian intellectuals, political leaders and religious leaders ‘alien and enemy elements,’ proceeding to imprison them in gulags or execute them. [...] He concurrently ordered local Party committees to ‘immediately discontinue ukrainization in [their] regions, print all ukrainized newspapers, printed materials and publications in the Russian language and, by autumn 1933, prepare the introduction of Russian language school instruction.’ This was in an effort to not only subdue their political power, but to eradicate their culture – forcibly replacing it with Russian culture. [...] His reasoning for this was implicit in his own remark: ‘the peasantry constitutes the main army of the national movement...there is no powerful national movement without the peasant army’ and the *Holodomor* certainly helped deplete that army.”

Here, Loshkin demonstrates that Stalin was both aware and encouraging of the mass death he had orchestrated in Ukraine. Both the Soviet Union and present-day Russia, however, deny *Holodomor*. Loshkin writes of Russian denial in recent years, himself excerpting from a Russian state spokesperson:

“The Russian news giant, Russia Today, continues to print reports by Russian sympathizers such as impeached Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovich who told press in 2010 ‘the attempt to present...the famine of 1932-33– as having been an act directed by Russians against Ukrainians is historical nonsense, and it’s dangerous nonsense.’ [...] In 2006, Vice-Speaker of the State Duma Lyubov Sliska voiced the stance of the Russian government – minimizing acknowledgment of the famine and framing Russia as a nation besieged:

*“Why always insist that Russia apologize for everything? The people whose policies brought suffering not only to Ukraine, but to Russia, Belarus, peoples of the Caucasus, and Crimean Tatars, remain only in history textbooks, secret documents and minutes of meetings.”*

This denial is not just a vain attempt at historical revisionism to maintain a sanitized Russian image. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia has been unable to exert that same amount of power and influence over Ukraine, especially in a post-Cold War western context. A diminished lack of tangible power, though, has not prevented the Russian state from continuing to intervene in eastern European geopolitics.

For example the recent Ukrainian attempt to join the North Atlantic Trade Organization (NATO) and distance itself from its communist past has reignited simmering post-Cold War tensions. As Russia perceives a loss of power, it has moved to remind Ukraine of its Cold War chains. Lokshin further comments on the post-Soviet Union relationship between Ukraine and Russia in an interview with *ARCHIVE* conducted this spring:

*“There is an obvious connection that is somewhat defiant of the notion that Russia has some deep paternal connection to Ukraine and Russian leadership had this brother-like caring connection to the people of Ukraine which is part of the propaganda. When in reality they are comfortable letting them die and didn’t care, whatever grand notion putin has come to in the past few years, that is not the historical record, they did not have this close relationship in a true caring way; Ukraine has a long history of getting the short end of the stick of Russian imperial ambitions.”*

Though the Russian regime has evolved in name and presentation from its Soviet era, its modern geopolitical relationships, conduct and conflict are undeniably ingrained in Soviet history. Both the Soviet and Russian governments have attempted to influence perceptions of truth. Amidst the undeniable horrors of the *Holodomor*, Stalin never addressed the morality of his actions. Even now, Russian leaders continue to deny responsibility. The administration of Vladimir Putin, the current Russian president, has carefully controlled the representation of the Ukraine conflict to the Russian people, continuing the Soviet practice of institutional information control. In a world where access to truth determines power, Putin's repression of information to the Russian population regarding Russian action in Ukraine demonstrates the state's dependence on intellectual oppression.

Illuminated through the *Holodomor* case and seen again in the current Russo-Ukrainian conflict, we must realize that developing the ability to recognize truth directly impacts the amount of power that one holds. Such a skill is a critical result of studying the historical discipline. Loshkin discusses how his own study of history assisted him in this way:

“As we enter into this information environment where it is so deluded with all sorts of information flows, we are drowning in information. In the default state of historical research, you are developing skills to parse through and find the truth. This behavior is currently relevant because we are constantly surrounded by so much information. Now, caring to find the truth is an important skill set and history is a way to learn how to do that.”

Here, Loshkin argues that, in an era where information is consumed instantly and access to a wealth of information - true or false - is at our fingertips, adherence to the pursuit of the truth is more important than ever. Loshkin's piece and interview is a showcase that the study of history can provide us with the necessary skills to root out the deceptions of the past.

However, this devotion to the facts of a situation is not a new phenomenon. While historical discipline gives us the tools to comb through an abundance of data and materials from the past, it should not be forgotten that people have always been correcting history to fit a favorable narrative for them when the situation demands it. The Ukraine-Russo history points us to examples such as the *Holodomor* famine where the issue of recognition has



always been of concern. We next revisit Shauna Fitzmahan's 2005 article "Shestydesiatnyky: The Generation of the Sixties," further emphasizing the power of knowledge as she examines the beginnings of a human rights movement in Ukraine following Stalin's passing in 1953.

Fitzmahan's description of the Ukrainian struggle for freedom of information provides an inspiring story from which modernity can observe the origins of current Ukrainian passion. Her article follows the rise of young Ukrainian intellectuals in the 1960s who became the foundation of the Ukrainian human rights movements. Fitzmahan describes the phenomenon of "the thaw," after Stalin died, people began to learn about the realities of the Soviet Union:

"When Stalin died in March 1953, fear began to subside in a period known as 'the thaw.' In order to escape the legacy of his predecessor, Khrushchev denounced Stalin in 1956 at a secret session of the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party. Khrushchev announced to the astonished Party members, Stalin acted not through persuasion, explanation, and patient cooperation with people, but by imposing his concepts and demanding absolute submission to his opinion... Stalin showed in a whole series of cases his intolerance, his brutality, and his abuse of power. Instead of proving his political correctness and mobilizing the masses, he often chose the path of repression and physical annihilation, not only against actual enemies, but also against individuals who had not committed any crimes against the party and the Soviet government. The speech did not stay secret for long, and the people of the Soviet Union began to whisper about the extent of Stalin's crimes. As the news of the speech spread, more and more people woke up from their long slumber."

The thaw had important implications for the future of Ukrainian culture and nationality as it inspired the Ukrainian people to voice dissent against the Soviet Union's reign. Fitzmahan describes a method of dissent called *Smazidat*, referring to the literary and artistic works published by the Ukrainian underground press and revived by Ukraine's youth:

"*Samizdat* became the voice of dissent in Ukraine. [...] According to the Russian dissident and scholar, Ludmilla Alexeyeva, 'It was only by virtue of *Samizdat* that the

human rights movement itself was able to rise and spread.’  
[...] These poems awakened people to begin fighting for  
human rights.”

*Samizdat* also involved the commentary of legal scholars regarding discrepancies and corruption within Soviet law and practices. These contributions would become the foundational critiques the human rights movement would rally upon. With no previous examples and little support, Ukrainians rallied for their rights with only their passion and national spirit.

For the Ukrainian people, modernity echoes history. With the same rights-seeking passion issued by Ukrainians in the 1960s in their fight for truth, modern Ukrainians fight for their sovereignty in 2022. Fitzmahon points out these parallels in her interview with *ARCHIVE*, commenting on the critical value of information. She states that “there is still an underground way of communication. Recognizing the propaganda and censorship campaign from Russia with social media and biological warfare threats [is crucial]... information is power.” Clearly, the civilian ability to determine truth in war-time is essential to garnering military power, evidenced in the passion of the Ukrainian military. The valor with which the Ukrainian people fight for their sovereignty inspires much of the world, particularly in the West, where the Ukrainian flag has been hung in solidarity across the American landscape. From fundraising marches, professional sporting events, and even illuminating buildings in its simple blue and yellow design, the Ukrainian flag has transcended the localized conflict of eastern Europe. However, more than just the strength of the Ukrainian people is learned from 1960s Ukraine. The struggle of young intellectuals to showcase the truth and create open lines of communication so that Ukraine might liberate itself from intense Soviet propaganda. Information, as it is now, was the crux of power—something worth fighting for.

Therefore, it will only be through the advocacy of truth—as seen in Ukraine’s constant interaction with the Collective West, comprising the United States and Western Europe—that Ukraine will prevail in the face of Russian oppression once again. The history of the Russo-Ukrainian relationship makes evident the integral role truth plays in conflict. Remembering and intentionally engaging with history allows the world to see how far it has progressed, and to continue forward. Fitzmahon builds on this concept of historical evolution in an *ARCHIVE* interview:

“Human nature does repeat the same mistakes. History can become a powerful tool to learn from the past so we can stop making the same mistakes and we can begin to look at themes in human nature and politics of power. [We need to] learn what came before us so we can improve as a society; ...if we can learn about changemakers and what they have done in the past, then we can build off their [achievements]. [We can] look at what has created effective lasting change and use history to see what works and [learn] about what that is and apply it to the next thing you are passionate about changing.”

The relationship between Russia and Ukraine has often left Ukraine in peril, that much is clear through the *Holodomor* and ‘the thaw.’ Even the *Samizdat* is not a success story. But even though these examples present extreme suffering, they also showcase Ukrainian strength, that it is possible to resist Russian suppression through freedom of information. In truth, the nature and outcome of the war in 2022 remains unsure. However, as Fitzmahan claims, if we can build from the world’s history, the path towards peace becomes clearer. By examining history, one can better understand these events catalyzed the Russo-Ukrainian war, and therefore, it will not be so foreign. Now that Russia is once again attacking Ukrainian freedoms again, the *Samizdat* and *Holodomor* become valuable items that provide unique perspectives about how the world might navigate its current situation.

Together, both Fitzmahan’s and Loshkin’s work demonstrates a tendency to limit the scale of Russo-Ukrainian conflicts to only those two countries. This is clear through the fact that the two authors only mention the effects that the *Holodomor* and *Samizdat* had on the Soviet Union and Ukraine. This is not necessarily consistent across scholarship in the region. We must recognize the modern convention of such references. As marginal it may seem to call attention to this specificity, there are definitional implications behind the words we choose to delineate historical events. Though Fitzmahan and Loshkin only reference the Soviet Union and Ukraine, we will soon see other authors expand the conflict to understand it as an ideological dispute between the East, often represented by the economic systems and beliefs of the Soviet Union and its satellite states, versus the West, which the United States and Western Europe exemplify.<sup>4</sup> This East v. West model is another framing device used by past authors—just as relevant, and just as impactful.

## **Part II: Re-considering the East v. West Ideological Battle**

In order to expand the analysis of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict into an East v. West model, *ARCHIVE* returns to three articles that examine the broader international community outside of Russian and Ukraine. In 2011, *ARCHIVE* featured “Karl Barth: The ‘Silent’ Voice of Reason Between East and West” by Ryan Panzer. He discusses the Cold War through the lens of Karl Barth, one of the most prominent theologians of the twentieth century. Barth maintained his neutral religious position based on his own moral compass, rather than allow the bitter ideological divide between the USSR’s East and the United States’ West determine his decision on whose side was morally justified. Barth saw both the capitalist West and the communist East as deeply flawed. Even as Barth’s contemporaries took sides against communism due to the ideology being inherently atheist, Barth saw a place for Christianity within communism, arguing instead that it was the Catholic Church’s duty to see past division of the Iron Curtain and form a third way for peace and prosperity.

Our *ARCHIVE* board considers this article important in our examination of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict because it displays how the conflict between the two major world powers suffocated any perspective outside of their world systems. When Barth claimed neutrality in the Cold War and stood with the third world outside of the United States and the USSR, he was condemned and silenced by both sides. American Christians demonized Barth as a communist, while the USSR criticized his work because Barth exposed communist regimes for their crimes against human rights. His controversial image perfectly characterizes the broader scope of the East vs. West conflict typified by the Cold War. Not only did the West and the East battle each other, but also those who did not, or could not, choose a side. Today, the international community is once again caught between two monolithic ideological sides: East and West. In twentieth century historiography, ‘Eastern’ values were presented as communist and atheistic. Meanwhile, the ‘West’ has been viewed as capitalists and Christian. Of course, these sides have shifted since the 1960s, but the structure of a global world order remains - and Russia wishes to maintain their position as the leader of the ‘East.’ Now, just like the Karl Barth situation, the world must witness the destruction of a third party yet again due to unending conflict between the United States’ Western beliefs and Russia’s Eastern beliefs.

However, sides do not always need to be chosen. If current nations were to channel Barth's philosophy, perhaps the world would be in a better state for it. An examination of Barth's philosophy through Cold War tensions reveals the clarity in resisting the temptation of choosing sides. Panzer outlines this idea:

"Nevertheless, Barth's neutrality in the Cold War was always guided by the Gospel-based revelation, not ideological principles, and his opinions were derived from an extensive corpus of theological and social thought. [...] Perhaps the question that should be asked is not whether Barth's neutrality made sense in regards to his past, but whether Barth's voice of neutrality and reason, and his vision of a conflict-transcending church, truly resonated among his followers. Perhaps, the legacy of Karl Barth is a legacy that can save us all from hostilities, bitterness, and divisions that may lie ahead."

As discussed by Panzer, seeing beyond the divide provided by the East v. West conflict is both illuminating, and most importantly: possible. Varied perspectives of conflict can be revealed through a historical study. Such an idea transcends Cold War politics; Panzer explains how, in general, history has helped him develop better perspectives:

"[I] never move on from studying history. [I] continue to [use] history to take a critical look at circumstance and utilize sources in multiple perspectives to make sense of the chaos of the world. It is fast moving and there is a lot of information; things move so quickly and you can't pause to evaluate sources, which is what history trains you to do and why it is so valuable to study."

The student's most common folly is to consider history only as multiple choice exams, studying history, as Panzer relates, has implications beyond good grades. Perspectives on people, places, and events are expanded, implicit and explicit biases are challenged, and status quos are questioned.

One such status quo dichotomy surrounding the Russo-Ukrainian War is the classification of the conflict as the beginning of a new Cold War.<sup>5</sup> The sides appear to be the same—the familiar East v. West conflict that all hoped had been left behind. However,



simplifying the crisis down to fit onto the old ideological bones would neglect the many differences between the conflicts and the failures of the past. The Cold War was not the defiant and heroic west against the corrupt and hated east. Instead, the United States of America, the main portion of the West in the Cold War, subjected its own citizens to deceitful propaganda and waged secret international wars to prevent the spread of communism. *ARCHIVE* published two articles in 2010 critiquing America's Cold War behavior: Kazu Matsushima's "The Secret War in Laos: A Revolutionary Way of War" and Arthur Zarate's "Waging a Propaganda War Against Iran: The American Effort to Oust Mohammad Mosaddeq."

Both Matsushima and Zarate focus on countries outside what is typically thought of as a Cold War battleground—Laos and Iran. However, each of these countries were subject to Soviet influence and had adopted their own communist ideologies. In an effort to destroy communism and Soviet influence, the American government indiscriminately bombed and carried out military operations within the newly communist states. To justify such violent action to the American people, the government smothered the United States' population with a constant stream of lies, manipulations, and cover-ups. Matsushima writes of America's secret war in Laos which made Laos "the most bombed nation on the planet."<sup>6</sup> The unjust casualties of the mission proved to be a disaster for democratic America when information regarding the war was finally breached. To make matters even worse, the United States failed to extinguish communism in Laos and instead strengthened the party by providing it with a mutual enemy which the people would unite against. The resulting destruction of Laos was horrific:

"...tens of thousands of Hmong became refugees. In several regions of Laos there were huge Hmong casualties and the surviving refugees could not all be flown out, so they had to endure forced marches with 10-30% dying along the way. [...] ...USAID estimated that 150,000 refugees, mostly Hmong, had relocated to the Ban Son area."

The decimation of Laos was kept quiet by America. The United States' attempt to further its agenda without the support or knowledge of the American people reflected a completely undemocratic view. In fact, the similarities to Russian secrecy, such

as those surrounding *Holodomor*, exposes a troubling parallel of the mighty regimes. The American population began to wonder how the United States could fight an ideological war while sacrificing its own ideology. Matzushima describes the secret war in Laos as an undemocratic operation:

“American interference in Laos was necessary in order to win the Vietnam War, but the Geneva Accords prohibited it. Kennedy’s efforts at peace ended up being a strategic error which only left the option to use massive air power and Hmong guerrilla fighters with a small group of CIA overseeing the operation. [...] When Congress finally found out about the Secret War in Laos in 1969, the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee called it unconstitutional. The White House kept the war in Laos a secret from the public, Congress, and the international community so it could maintain plausible deniability and not face harsh opposition.”

Further damaging America’s reputation was their great failure in the untold mission. Matzushima explains the situation many Laotians faced and its implications for the United States:

“Massive bombing gave villagers the choice to die hiding from a bomb or to die fighting against the people who drop the bombs. Many villagers understandably chose the latter. The air might have helped the Pathet Lao also because the American involvement meant that the North Vietnamese had a greater stake in the war in Laos. Escalation invites further escalation. In the very short term, the CIA managed to fight the Communists to a standstill and form a coalition government, ultimately considering it a success despite the fact that there was a coalition government in place before the agency became so deeply involved in Laos. Shortly after this success, the Communists took over and held on to power tightly instead of sharing it in a coalition government.”

The undemocratic and horrific events in Laos on America’s behalf was not the only time the U.S. sacrificed its ideology to fight the East’s. The United States embroiled itself in the Iranian conflict of the 1950s, during which American and British intelligence sparked an institutional coup in 1953. American news outlets, particularly the New York Times, worked with the American government to publish propaganda for Americans and Persians to

garner support for American operations in Iran. That propaganda, Zarate argues, led to unfounded American support to conduct a coup d'état in Iran. Such propaganda was similarly directed at the Iranian people themselves, heavily influencing the population to overthrow their own prime minister, Mohammad Mosaddeq. Zarate illustrates the use and substance of propaganda in the United States and Iran, claiming that in the United States, the propaganda focused on painting Iran to be a communist state and fear-mongered to support its ideological war. Zarate writes,

“In addition to attacking Mosaddeq’s character and warning of a looming communist coup, the New York Times depicted the nationalization of the Iranian oil industry as a hostile affront to the civilized world. Because a communist-free Iran was often described as integral to maintaining the ‘democratic world,’ editorialists characterized the nationalization as little more than a reckless action deriving from ‘an orgy nationalists feeling.’ [...] The overall American objective ‘should be to guide this process of political change...into channels that will effect the least compromise of Western interests and will offer the maximum promise of developing stable non-communist regimes.”

America promoted similar ideas in Iran by establishing a want for democracy and a fear of communism:

“The American effort to manipulate public opinion in Iran was designed to direct Iranians towards supporting American objectives for reasons they would perceive to be their own. [...] The telegram goes on to define the purpose of its propaganda campaign as maintaining of ‘economic and political stability in Iran,’ enhancing ‘the prestige of the U.S.’ and demonstrating ‘the weaknesses and fallacies of the communist system.”

The use of American propaganda to influence the opinions of Americans and Iranians was quite influential:

“...the Times helped ingrain a fear of an imminent Soviet takeover into the American public by continually repeating it in its daily coverage. As the Times was one of the three most influential publications in Iran, its coverage also shaped Iranian minds, making the atmosphere ripe for a coup.”

The effects of the propaganda were widespread and led to the removal and imprisonment of Mossadeq who was thought by US intelligence to be a puppet for communism. However, the fight against communism did not promote democracy and instead “suppressed [Iranian] democratic aspirations,” leading to the dictatorship of Mohammad Reza Shah - a dictator, who was an ally of the United States. Once again, the ideological war did not create positive change for the people through which the United States carried out their proxy operations. As Zarate states:

“The Islamic Revolution of 1979, however, shattered American illusions about the shah’s ‘stability.’ It also illustrated that the 1953 coup did not completely destroy Iran’s democratic experiment. Indeed, the revolution represented a continuation albeit a different Islamic form. The new regime brought to power by the revolution, however, was decidedly hostile to the US. Thus, while the coup against Mosaddeq offered short-term gains to American objectives, in the long run it was disastrous to them... One of the most significant factors shaping the Middle East today is ‘[t]he growth in power of an independent Iran completely outside the orbit of any state.’ This power...has been furthered by the American decimation of Iran’s two most formidable regional foes: Iraq and Afghanistan. Thus, Iran has been largely free to extend its influence throughout the region. Whether this extended influence is for the better or worse of the peoples of the Middle East is difficult to tell. Had the coup against Mosaddeq and the subsequent American support for the hated shah not occurred, tensions between the US and Iran today might not have been so extreme.”

In his concluding statements, Zarate leaves us with the important message that “Americans should learn from history and avoid the mistakes of the past.” In truth, neither the secret war in Laos or the coup d’etat in Iran was to the benefit of democracy nor the detriment of communism. Perhaps the more important issue to ask is: why was the ideological conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union considered a reasonable justification for war at all? This war of ideologies may have ended with a winner and loser, but their methods were destructive and unjustifiable. Perhaps a focus on humanity and human rights rather than a destructive battle of ideology would have produced a more

peaceful outcome in the twentieth century and reinforced peace in the present decade. However, let us not trap ourselves within the pitfalls of an analytical lens of ideological constraint. The current Russo-Ukrainian has echoes of the Cold War, certainly, but the method by which that conflict is approached need not be ideological. Matsushima furthers the discussion of this issue in their *ARCHIVE* interview:

“Sometimes grand ideological battles...can be overstated, and it’s important to think about whose interest such overstatements work towards. At the time there was a consensus that what was going on in Laos was of vital importance to the US because of this large sweep of communism, and looking back as communism was established in Laos, it wasn’t that damaging to the U.S. Sometimes we need to take a step back from these sweeping ideas of one versus the other...it can lead to dangerous places...Though Russia is clearly a force to be reckoned with, I would caution against making sweeping generalizations of East versus West or democracy versus autocracy.”

While the ideological battle of the Cold War may or may not repeat itself, it is not fated to. The world can look beyond ideology in the current conflict, and focus instead on furthering humanity as a whole. Twentieth century Cold War history reveals striking similarities between conflict then and now. Rather than replicate the mistakes once made in advocating for an ideological struggle, perhaps the world might choose a different, more reasonable path. Just as Matsushima mentioned, historians must be wary of making wide and sweeping generalizations of this ideological East and West. Historians do, however, need a model of which to study trends. This need for a model mandates a little bit of generalization. So while no model is perfect, we can cautiously utilize an ideological East v. West lens and expand the narrowed focus that a Russian v. Ukraine approach yields. Though the United States and the deemed ‘Western World’ are not the focus of this retrospective, it is nonetheless useful to apply analysis of the West in a Cold War context to conversations of eastern Europe. The Cold War is indelibly entrenched in Ukraine’s past, present, and future. Contextualized in this Cold War context, the Russo-Ukrainian War demonstrates mechanisms through which history is, albeit revisionarily so, repeated, and functions as a case study



for a meta-evaluation of historical studies. Our selection of prior scholarship excerpted in this twenty-fifth *ARCHIVE* anniversary remembrance piece allows us to consider such a meta-evaluation in tandem with the pertinence of Ukraine, reflecting on our past—as a publication, as students, as people—to guide our futures.

Now enlightened by *ARCHIVE*'s twenty five year history, the Russo-Ukrainian War is no longer such an alien concept. As demonstrated by previous contributing authors, recognizing the history of the conflict exposes the nuances instructing the happenings of the war. The power of information and the crutch of ideology guides humanity just as much now as it did in the twentieth century. The differences evident between the twentieth century conflicts and the war today, however, remind the world of the progress it has truly made. History is a powerful tool that allows all who learn it to absorb perspectives they might not otherwise consider; to develop nuanced and complex ways to approach present experiences. And when history is remembered, it provides an opportunity for further reflection—to recognize what has changed and continue that change.

1. Jacobus Delwaide, "Identity and Geopolitics: Ukraine's Grappling with Imperial Legacies," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 32/33 (Cambridge: 2011), 179-180.
2. Delwaide, 182-187.
3. Jacob Loshkin, "The Starvation of a Nation: The Ukrainian Famine of 1932-33 as a Soviet Engineered Genocide," *ARCHIVE: A Journal of Undergraduate History* Vol. 19, (Madison: 2016), 1-5.
4. James Smith, "Are We Entering Another Cold War? Probably Not—But it Could be Even Worse," *Harvard Kennedy School*, (Cambridge: 2022).
5. Smith, "Are We Entering Another Cold War? Probably Not—But it Could be Even Worse,"
6. Kazu Matsushima, "The Secret War in Laos: A Revolutionary Way of War," *ARCHIVE: A Journal of Undergraduate History* Vol. 13, (Madison: 2010), 19.

## Editors' Biographies

**Julia Derzay** is a graduating junior at UW-Madison; her majors are economics and history. Her main interests in history include: Colonization in Southeast Asia, and American politics in the interwar period. In fact, she wrote her year-long senior thesis this semester asking why the La Follette dynasty and their Wisconsin Progressive Party in the interwar period failed. Currently, Julia is working for the UW Archives as an assistant archivist while also employed for the Congressional Correspondence Research team in the Political Science Department, gathering qualitative data on legislators correspondence. In her free time, Julia loves to play tennis and read. Next fall, she will be attending UW-Madison's Law School and pursue a career in Constitutional Law.

**Haley Drost** is a senior at UW-Madison majoring in history and classical humanities. Her main historical interests include early Christianity in the Roman world. In her free time, Haley enjoys painting, reading, and walking. After graduation, she plans on pursuing a career in secondary education.

**Jack Halverson** is a senior studying history and political science with a certificate in public policy. He is currently one of the George L. Mosse Peer Advisors for the History Department. His primary research interests include the history of progressive politics in America. Jack has recently completed his senior thesis examining how Catholic institutions, specifically Catholic schools, in Chicago changed during the desegregation and white flight period of the 1960s and 1970s. Beyond academics, Jack's favorite hobbies include watching films, pub trivia, and running. Following graduation, Jack's plans on traveling abroad prior to applying to graduate school in history.

**Taylor Madl** is a senior at UW-Madison studying German and history. Her primary historical interests are global labor movements and urbanism in the twentieth century as well as art history and material culture of the Weimar Republic. She also enjoys

## Editors' Biographies

German literature, particularly that of post-war Berlin. Outside of academics, Taylor loves cooking, learning new languages and film. She plans to move to Germany after graduation to pursue a graduate degree in German studies.

**Maddy McGlone** is a junior studying history and environmental studies with a certificate in Folklore. She is the 2021 George L. Mosse Intern in European and Digital History and works in the UW-Madison Archives on various projects related to Wisconsin public history. This summer, she will begin research on her senior honors thesis, which will explore historical views on ecological restoration and ecosystem reconstruction at the University of Wisconsin Arboretum. She is also a tour guide for UW-Madison and enjoys exploring campus and eating at Madison restaurants in her free time.

**Brieanna Oremus** is a senior double majoring in history and communication arts, with a certificate in folklore. Her main interests include the intersection of history and communication, especially in regards to how propaganda and communication tactics have been used throughout different moments in history. After graduation, she will be getting a job in the communication field. In her free time, Brieanna enjoys exploring Madison, trying new foods, and crocheting.

**Kayla Parker** is a senior studying history and political science. She is currently a researcher and writer for UW Madison's Public History Project and UW Madison's Non Violence Project. Kayla is interested in United States and Caribbean history with a focus on slavery in these areas from its onset in the 1490s to its end in the 1880s. Kayla is currently researching the intellectual use of Nat Turner, leader of an 1831 slave insurrection, by abolitionists and proslavery advocates at the onset of the American Civil War for her senior history thesis. Following graduation Kayla will practice her hobbies of cooking and yoga and hopefully tune-up her Spanish before applying to graduate school for history.

**Charlie Pei** is a sophomore & international student majoring in history, with a specific interest on issues regarding modernity in East Asia. Currently, he is working on an oral history project about gangster activities and their relations with crony capitalism in post-reform China, focusing on Ma Anshan, a small city but a major place for state-run steel production in southern China. He will also be working as a librarian of the East Asian division in Memorial Library this semester. In his free time, Charlie likes to cook, read and watch films. He plans to go to graduate school and see how long he can survive academia.

**Samantha Sharpe** is a senior studying history and political science. She currently serves as a Phi Beta Kappa fellow for the University of Wisconsin's chapter. Sam has recently finished up researching and writing her honors senior thesis in history about the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, a Soviet Union sponsored organization to raise money for the Red Army and promote Jewish Unity during World War II. She is interested in the impact and legacy of the JAFC on the American Jewish Community throughout WWII and the Cold War. After graduating in May, Sam will travel for the summer before moving to Washington, D.C. where she will work as an analyst for a consulting firm. She hopes to pursue law school in the future. Sam enjoys skiing, traveling, and cooking in her free time.

**Jeff Wang** is a senior pursuing a major in history and a certificate in business. He is interested in the lived experiences of Chinese people under various legal systems throughout history; in his capstone project, he explored the legal treatment of Chinese immigrants living in the postbellum American south. Jeff is currently researching the impacts of 19th Century US extraterritoriality in China in his senior thesis. After he graduates, Jeff hopes to attend law school to pursue a career in public interest law. In his spare time, Jeff enjoys playing rugby, snowboarding, and cooking.







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