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The Uses of Community in Modern American Rhetoric

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by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
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DEDICATION

For my sisters

Katherine, Alisha, and Autumn

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the functions of the term "community" in American social and political rhetoric. I contend that community serves as a god-term, or expression of value and order, which rhetors use to motivate actions, endorse values, include/exclude persons, and compensate for modern losses. Informed by the philosophy of Kenneth Burke, I explore the general features of "rhetorics of community," including community's ambiguity and status as an automatic good, the relationship between community and modernity, the myth of communal loss, and the uses of community as a site of political unity and contest. I analyze the writings of John Humphrey Noyes, Jane Addams, and the Southern Agrarians as paradigm cases of utopian, progressive, and traditionalist rhetorics respectively, and I discuss how community is constructed in order to navigate the tension between self and society, correct for the failures of modern individualism, and propose competing visions of the social order.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

It is commonplace to lament the loss of community in modern life. Regardless of political commitments, there seems to be a shared sense that something has been lost in the age of technology and mass society that is best captured by the word "community." Everywhere citizens are met with calls to get involved in the community and to extend the sense of community. Alarming pronouncements are made about the loss or decline of community, and optimists exhort us with hope that the internet can provide a new medium for it. It could be said that the "quest for community" is a persistent clamoring of the modern age: everyone wants it, no one seems to have it, and most think we have lost it.

As Raymond Williams observed, with its "warmly persuasive" tone, the word community "seems never to be spoken of unfavourably" (*A Vocabulary* 66). As an idea, "community" is automatically accepted as an inherent good, something at once universally lauded and ever-elusive. Against the backdrop of modern alienation and bureaucratic rationality, community's connotations elicit mythic visions of a lost era of intimacy and coherence. And as a term that served as a rallying cry against the dehumanizing effects of industrialism, community is infused with nostalgic dreams of an age of innocence (Nancy, *Inoperative*; Lee). Accordingly, to invoke community is to prompt political motivation to recover it.

Of course, in attempting to pin down precisely what this thing "community" is, the critic is confronted with a frustrating inconsistency: national communities, the Christian community,

local communities, internet communities, quilting communities, fan communities, discourse communities, the sense of community—it seems the only thing that can match the ubiquity of the word is its endless ambiguity. No one can say what community is with confidence, and those who attempt to restrict its definition inevitably fail to stay within the confines they construct. George Hillery surveyed ninety-four definitions of the term community in sociological literature and he concluded the only thing they shared was a common concern with people ("Definitions")!

Community's indefinability, mixed with its happy-homely undertones, makes it one of society's most intriguing rhetorical terms. Because of the its ambiguity, the term can unite individuals around a common cause without the burden of specificity, concealing disagreement about its own substance. In day to day interactions, community serves as a legitimizing rhetorical modifier, the bestower of an airy illusion of consensus, a mask over dissent, a plea for more moral and intimate social relations, and perhaps above all, a resource for symbolic transformation. An internet forum is called an online "community" to legitimize it as a site of social interaction. We speak of an "identity community" so that we can gloss over the vehement disagreement of its disparate members to form an imagined solidarity and present a unified front. All parties agree, it seems, that community is good and we should work toward it—but if persons of various political stripes endorse community as a civic-human ideal, this is largely because the term is vague enough to hide the contradictory political desires of citizens.[1] Conservatives and communists agree that we need more community, but they surely do not mean the same thing.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this dissertation is to investigate what kind of work gets done with the idea "community" as it is invoked in our general American social and political discourse. In the

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[1] Kenneth Burke defines ideology as "an aggregate of beliefs sufficiently at odds with one another to justify opposite kinds of conduct" (*Counter-Statement*, 163).

argot of Communication studies, we might say there is a "rhetoric of community," although it is almost surely more accurate to say that there are many "rhetorics" or rhetorical uses of community in our contemporary discourse, and that is both semiotically interesting and historically significant to observe. Since we are engulfed in rhetorics of community everywhere from college campus to presidential speeches, press releases to cereal boxes, political marches to research projects, church sermons to judicial punishments, it is in our best interest to understand what is occurring when "community" is invoked either as the implicit or explicit basis of an appeal. That is to say a rhetorical approach to the discursive phenomenon of the term "community" asks how this term works to motivate or sanction actions, evoke or endorse certain values, and/or include or exclude certain people and their interests as conjoined with ours.

This project begins with the conviction that community is primarily a *moral*, rather than a *descriptive* term. In other words, approaching community rhetorically suggests we not think of it as an actual entity, but observe its symbolic and rhetorical functions in the contexts where it occurs. We should ask, what does community *(as term) do*? What kind of work does it accomplish? What motives does it weave? What conflicts does is mask? In this dissertation, I strive to answer these questions through a series of critical analyses of historically-based community rhetorics in the American context.

There is no doubt that "community" as a value and moral good is deeply embedded in American ideology, and has its roots in the western tradition more generally. "Community" is obviously ideological in that basic Althusserrian sense, in that it "calls" people into service of the "ideological state apparatus" ("Ideological"). One of the most curious aspects of community is that is an unquestioned value for both progressivist and conservative causes, and for both it implies an organic collective identity that falls outside of the "state apparatus." For these reasons,

with "community" I argue, we are in the presence of what both liberal Kenneth Burke and conservative Richard Weaver call a "god-term," one whose value and power are beyond question, possessing the quality of approbation and centrality whenever it is invoked (Burke, *Grammar; Rhetoric of Religion*; Weaver, *Ethics*).

It is customary in contemporary ideological analysis to focus on debunking or censoring the tools of ideology and hegemonic culture. From my perspective, however, there is a great deal of good that has been done in the name of community, and there is surely a great deal of harm that is enabled in the name of communal identity. And while I have my own biases, my purposes in this rhetorical exploration flow from a curiosity about this rhetorical phenomenon. As Kenneth Burke remarks, criticism need not be naïve to be appreciative, and should begin with "linguistic skepticism," which, "in being quizzical, supplies the surest ground for the discernment and appreciation of linguistic resources" (*Grammar* 343).

My aim in this study is to come to an informed understanding that is at once critical *and* appreciative of the discursive role "community" plays in negotiating what it means to be modern. By articulating the resources of community, clarifying its ambiguity, tracing its symbolic linkages, observing the conflicts its masks and the bridges it builds, in sum, in witnessing its potential for rhetorical transformation, we may come to such an understanding. A critical perspective might be used to improve the rhetorical usefulness of community or to censor its misuses—but in either case those are arguments that need to be made about the case at hand, and are not conclusions to be drawn simply because we have identified that community is a rhetorical term deeply and curiously located in our contemporary ideology. Community is a concept critical to civic life and democratic theory, therefore my hope is that investigating the character and resources of community rhetorics might help us to understand not only language but self-social

relations and the historical moment in which we live. At the very least, we can be informed not only of how we organize language, but of how language organizes us.

A Modern History of 'Community'

'Tis all in peeces, all cohaerence gone;
All just supply, and all Relation:
Prince, Subject, Father, Sonne, are things forgot,
For every man alone thinkes that he hath got
To be a Phoenix, and that then can bee
None of that kinde, of which he is but hee
               (Donne, 1611)

A book-length study of community and its rhetorical uses should begin with a contextualization of the term's history, themes, and rise to god-term status. The origin of the word "community" can be traced to the Latin word *communitas,* defined roughly as "public spirit," or "sense of fellowship." It takes its root from the older term *communis*, meaning "things held in common" ("Communis"). *Communis* combines two words—*munus*, meaning service, duty, or obligation, and -*com,* meaning association or togetherness. Taken in sum, the ancient *communitas* might be defined as the collective sharing of a common duty or service. In this classical conception, *communitas* evokes an image of public life constituted by a mutual obligation or debt which strengthens the unity and prosperity of human association.

The resonance of the ancient *communitas* endures to the present, where it continues to inspire a number of contemporary writers to rethink associated life by returning to community's pure and primitive form (Esposito, *Communitas;* Nancy, *Inoperative*; Turner, *Ritual*). Victor Turner understood *communitas* as an intense state of liminality, categorized by extreme equality and shared experiences of "anti-structure" wherein a segment of the population suffers in order to sustain society (*Ritual*). Roberto Esposito, meanwhile, emphasized the obligatory aspect of *communitas*, arguing community derives from a shared lack— "the totality of persons united not

by a 'property' but precisely by an obligation or a debt" (*Communitas* 6). *Communitas* for

Esposito consists of a common obligation, given out of an overwhelming sense of gratitude.

It is clear that in its classical root, *civic obligation* is at the very heart of the concept.

Obligation is the underpinning of all subsequent uses and transformations of community, present

even when the obligatory sense is hidden from plain view. But while etymological work

demarcates community's general realm in shared civic ventures and identifies obligation as its

fundamental root, it is only in the writings of the moderns where community gains its current

connotations and status as god-term. In the industrial era, "community" underwent a

transformation of meaning across the Western World, reflecting the changing mores and

lifestyles brought on by the restructuring of society. Since the term has a cognate in nearly every

Western language, community's modern transformation was international in scope. Its evolving

history can be seen in the political philosophies of key enlightenment thinkers and the vernacular

rhetoric of common citizens. We can better situate contemporary community discourse by

recounting the key moments of this history, keeping an eye on the major themes which emerge in

its modern construction.

Hobbes and Rousseau

In his influential treatise, *The Inoperative Community*, French Philosopher Jean-Luc

Nancy attributes the modern consciousness of community to Jean-Jacques Rousseau because

Rousseau was the first significant author to infer a fundamental longing for a lost communitarian

intimacy at the heart of modern discontent (9). Italian Philosopher Roberto Esposito similarly

suggests that Rousseau was "the first modern thinker of community as well as the first to have

constructed a myth of community" (Esposito 54). The writings of Rousseau are then an

appropriate place to begin. But since Rousseau came to his pivotal conclusions in part as a

reaction to Thomas Hobbes' philosophy of the state, we can start with what Rousseau's conception of community intended to contest.

Thomas Hobbes has been called the "tireless adversary of community" for his defense of a Leviathan state which usurps affective loyalty from all other sources of affiliation (Esposito 27). Because he understood nature as characterized by war and anarchy, Hobbes thought that individuals had a natural incentive to seek protection from their shared fear of death by forming social pacts. The modern state was created through a kind of social contract, wherein citizens willing gave up their natural freedoms in trade for the order and stability of political society. Human association in this view is formed out of fear, not natural harmony or shared visions of the good: "the origin of all great and lasting societies consisted not in the mutual goodwill men had towards each other, but in the mutual fear they had of each other" (Hobbes, *Man and Citizen* 113). It follows that the partial affiliations which compete with the state for allegiance are enemies of society because they deflect loyalty from the central authority. For this reason, Hobbes argued that older forms of association needed to be eliminated whenever possible. The supreme community was to be the political community formed through the social contract. Hobbes concludes that in order for the sovereign state to be optimally successful at eradicating natural human hazards, it must reign as the uppermost authority and source of allegiance—and that means smaller associations and divided loyalties must be stomped out.

The political community was the only legitimate community because Hobbes was convinced that communities could not be formed around shared visions of good; they are only created through the shared fear of death, and it is this fear which makes the political community of the nation-state possible. If this state is to be optimally successful, then it must be the sole source of affection and loyalty. Otherwise, citizens would be divided and civil war would

inescapably ensue. It is for this reason Esposito writes of Hobbes that "the state is the desocialization of the communitarian bond," because he would replace the bond of individuals with the supremacy of the state (28). In dissolving citizens of all their other obligations, Hobbes leaves society an aggregate of individuals without intermediate associations (Nisbet, *Quest* 130).

Hobbes' vision of an overarching national community rests upon a pessimistic view of human nature which doubted human potential to form associations out of mutual goodwill. No such community ever existed or could exist. The only legitimate community was that created through the social contract which conceded supreme power to the sovereign in order to escape from the brutal anarchy and disharmony of nature.

Rousseau disagreed with Hobbes on nearly every account, forming a view of community that was a near perfect antithesis (with the significant exception that he too would propose a totalizing community). Harmonious human association founded upon the shared pursuit of common goods was not only possible, it was the natural state of things—but, he laments, it had been lost to the corrupting forces of society. Modern society for Rousseau was characterized by increasing isolation from the natural intimacy and union of human community because of artificial traditions and contrivances which put the interest of individuals at odds with those of the whole. Jean-Luc Nancy explains:

> Rousseau…was the first to experience the question of society as an uneasiness directed toward the community, and as the consciousness of a (perhaps irreparable) rupture in this community…This consciousness of this ordeal belongs to Rousseau, who figured a society that experienced or acknowledged the loss or degradation of a communitarian (and communicative) intimacy—a society producing, of necessity, the solitary figure, but one whose desire and intention was to produce citizen of a free sovereign community (*Inoperative* 9)

Unlike Hobbes who viewed nature as the war of all against all, Rousseau saw it as a site of peace, freedom and harmony. It was only the institutions and conventions of society that

corrupted natural human community. Modern society pits persons against each other by encouraging them to seek their own commercial interest at the expense of the general interest. And the problem was only made worse by inadequate forms of political authority that permitted the powerful to dominate citizens through the apparatuses of government.

Rousseau's hope in this context was to recover the essential freedom of community from the chains of modern society. His romanticized past of human communion, captured in the famous dictum "man is born free but is everywhere in chains" was a myth of community. Esposito explains that Rousseau articulates a "myth of community that is transparent to itself, in which everyone communicates with the other's own communitarian essence, without mediation, filter or sign to interrupt the reciprocal fusion of consciousness" (Esposito 53). In Rousseau's portrayal, the communal intimacy of loyalty and reciprocity found in close affiliation had been replaced with modern alienation from self, nature and others. Yet he believed that community could be recovered through in an ultimate sharing of selves in communion through the creation of the General Will—the consensual sharing of identity in a political community concerned with the collective interest. In the General Will, all individual interests are *sacrificed* to the public good. The General Will, as political community, could guarantee individual freedom and social harmony because it is founded upon an intense *sharing of common identity* and overcomes the artificial constraints placed on human unity. The political community becomes a total community that excludes factions and has the rightful power to coerce those who do not concede it authority. The one community should absorb the smaller loyalties which man distract and undermine the universal ideal and upset the common interest. Rousseau, according to Nisbet, is adamant that "there is to be no bond of loyalty, no social affiliation, no interdependence save what is symbolized by the General Will. Society is to be an aggregate of atoms held rigidly

together by the sovereign will of the State alone" (Nisbet, *Quest* 130; 136). The result is the replacement of local and partial communities of obligation with an obligation and communion of all with all.

Despite their severe philosophical differences, Hobbes and Rousseau come to at least one similar conclusion: they privilege a totalistic, dominant community at the expense of smaller, partial associations. Yet they diverge precisely in what creates this total community. Hobbes thought primitive life was characterized by anarchy, whereas Rousseau believed it was altruistic and harmonious. In Rousseau we see the first modern "myth" of community and an attempt at its recovery through the shared pursuit of collective interest. This was just the kind of community which Hobbes thought impossible, for he believed a political community could only be founded upon fear, not natural comradery. Nevertheless, their similarities in prompting a vision of a totalizing association obfuscates their rivaling understandings of community's character. What makes Rousseau notable as "the first modern thinker of community" is his view of the *natural harmony* of all persons in the pre-modern era and the belief that *genuine community had been corrupted by modern institutions*. That community was a natural good in need of recovery came to be reflect the standard assumptions of the modern mind. In his nostalgic lament for the lost intimacy of human relations, Rousseau pit community and society as antitheses.

Industrial Adjustments

Rousseau's popularity in the age of revolutions helped to solidify his communal presuppositions into political theory. There were other, less "academic" sources for the myth's spread as well. The loss of community narrative gained traction in the social experiences of citizens enduring the rapid urban transformation of familiar social landscapes. Craig Calhoun explains that it "was in reflection on the dramatic changes wrought in the later eighteenth and

nineteenth centuries that the concept of community took the shape in which we receive it today.

It bears, as a result, a number of connotations specific to its historical context (Calhoun,

"Toward" 105). That historical context was the industrial revolution, where advances in

technology, transportation, communication, and commerce radically restructured traditional

forms of social organization. In the anxiety and dislocation which ensued, "community" served

as a rallying cry against the perceived negative consequences of these transformations on the

quality of human relationships. As a source of critique, community was used by "conservative

minded" political actors who feared the moral meanings of traditional relationships were giving

way to alienation and isolation (Calhoun, "Toward"). Raymond Plant observes:

> In this time the notion of community has been used almost universally by social and
> political philosophers to point up some drawbacks and baneful characteristics of urban
> industrial society and to point the way toward new and more humane forms of social
> relations (Plant "Community" 81)

The obliteration of traditional forms of association was matched with expanding urban

populations and removal of political power from locales to centralized authorities. Combined

with uncertainty over new waves of immigration, the expansion of markets, radical

individualism, and shifting social moralities, community came to inherit all the connotations of

stability, coherence, and amity it holds today. In pointing toward an ideal of "more humane

forms of social relations," community was a term of hope. Against urban sprawl, community

became associated with simple agrarian farms and autonomous local townships, implying an

opposition between the "city and the country" (Williams, *The Country*). Community was

increasingly tied to land, small townships, and *locales*.

Community as a critique of industrialism fused irretrievably with community as a

mechanism for coping with it. Romanticized dreams of a communal past before industrialism

could preserve otherwise threatened identities through symbolic images of stability, even as

citizens inevitably adjusted to the new social circumstances. These nostalgic portrayals made it possible to tether past and future, providing a sense of permanence in an era of change. Community became a Janus-faced term, looking toward the past for inspiration, while aiming for a reformed future. The political reactions against modern expansion in the name of community helped to cement the mythic consciousness of Rousseau.

Secularization of the Religious Impulse

Darwinism too is a part of the story. Perhaps the key carrier of the communal ideal in the intervening period between Ancient Rome and the Industrial era was Christianity. Nearly every contemporaneous text which deals with community finds it necessary to comment upon the religious sources of the term. And while Nancy attributes the modern understanding of community to Rousseau, he writes that "the true consciousness of the loss of community is Christian" (Nancy, *Inoperative* 10). Nancy argues that Hegel, Marx, and the majority of Moderns were looking for something like *communion*, the immersion into pure immanence, the mystical body of Christ: "community might well be the altogether modern thought of humanity's partaking of divine life: the thought of a human being penetrating into pure immanence" (Nancy, *Inoperative* 10).

The term community is "Christian" in at least two regards. The first can be represented by the practice of "communion," the ontological sharing of all believers in Christ's body. Communion, like community, is a term of perfection. It posits entry into a state of pure immanence and ultimate union through the sharing of a common source. In the Christian mind, natural communion (in God) has been "lost" through original sin and can be recovered only through atonement by partaking in Christ's suffering and joining the community of believers. This touches upon the second sense in which community is Christian—the Christian Faith

stresses the inherent equality and unity of all persons, as manifest in the Christian ethic of brotherhood and unconditional love: "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). In teaching the common citizenship and reciprocal obligation of all believers, the Christian ethic extended the mandate of agape love as crystallized in the golden rule to the citizens of all nations. It was among the earliest and most influential doctrines to propose a mandate of universal community. Christianity *imagined a solidarity* between all persons of the earth, extending the sense of fraternity and obligation to its highest limits.

While Christianity's version of community was prevalent in the West for two thousand years, in the modern era, where traditional forms of association where being torn apart, the Christian faith began to be associated with a more land-based traditional relational ethic. In addition to asserting a seminal ideal of universal community, Christianity's system of common beliefs and values was seen by observers as enabling a narrative coherence and relational intimacy which was rapidly fragmenting in other spheres. The march towards modernity was not only driven by industrialism and other economics forces, but by an onslaught of new ideas in the enlightenment tradition of secular rationality. This included advances in technology and science, and most menacing to traditional Christianity, Darwinian evolution. The theory of evolution called into question the truths of orthodox religious doctrine and its privileged position over social thought. With the radical individualism of market morality further loosening ideological constraints, the Church suffered from a crisis of authority.

One response was to adhere more vehemently to the truth of pre-modern orthodoxy (fundamentalism exemplifies this approach), while another was to try and reconcile the truth of scripture with the findings of secular rationality (the path taken by liberal Protestantism). As it

became more common to discard the pieties of the Church, there was an effort among philosophers and other intellectuals to save the moral "substance" of Christianity without the doctrinal apparatus which appeared increasingly less plausible. This "essence" of Christianity was "community." Ralph Waldo Emerson, William James, John Dewey, and Josiah Royce presented influential American examples of efforts to preserve the religio-communal impulse. James' response was to salvage religious experience by privatizing it into the psychology of the individual and justifying it in terms of its social-bond benefits (*Pragmatism; Varieties*); Dewey made a distinction between religion and the religious, and then isolated community as the "true" element of the religious that was to be rescued from the "narrow" confines of religion's doctrinal apparatus (*A Common Faith; The Public*); Royce "pantheized" God into a spiritual ethic of human loyalty wherein "universal community" became the primary moral call for a renewed faith (*The Philosophy of Loyalty;* "Idea of Universal Community"). What these responses shared was a common desire to preserve the community consciousness of Christianity for a new era of human relationships. Community henceforth took a place as a kind of "secular" or civil religion, a *civic-spiritual ideal* that might preserve the meaningful human relationships and universal-egalitarian morality needed for democratic government to succeed.

Sociological Standardization

The loss of community narrative found in Rousseau, Industrial opposition, and Christian doctrine was solidified in the burgeoning field of sociology. Success in the natural sciences as well as rapid market expansion, rationalism, and perceived secularization, motivated the brightest academic minds of the nineteenth century to develop theories of society which could account for these unprecedented developments (Habermas, *Philosophical Discourse*). Auguste Comte, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, Herbert Spencer, and Max Weber are but a few of the

foundational theorists who wrote against this historic backdrop in developing the "sciences of society."[2] The idea of *Society* in its contemporary formulation has no equivalent in classical civilizations; it is a thoroughly modern concept (Arendt, *Human*). Any "science of the social," which sociology purported to be, therefore, had to depend upon an antithesis, an inverse, or opposite, to give it meaning. That antithesis was found in community.

While such an opposition is noticeable in the writings of other theorists, there is no more remarkable statement of the contrast between community and society then that of Ferdinand Tönnies in *Gemeinscahft und Gesellschaft*. As a cornerstone text in the discipline of sociology, the foundation of the modern social sciences is in large part guided by Tönnies' distinction.

For Tönnies there are two basic forms of social organization: community (*gemeinscahft*) and society (*gesellschaft*). Community is the older form of association based in organic private relationships, especially those of the family. The intimate relationships of *gemeinscahft* develop in close relation to the land and are sustained by locality, kinship, and friendships. Towns, as communities, are self-sufficient unities not unlike an extended family. What allows *gemeinscahft* to flourish is "reciprocal binding sentiment," a sense of loyalty and shared vision of the good that flows from the mutual recognition between members that they belong to a singular unit (52). In this natural harmony, feelings of tenderness and reverence glue the community together so that it may endure in relative peace. (42)

For Tönnies (like Rousseau), the organic human comradery found in *gemeinscahft* was the natural condition, the one which has characterized human relationships since the beginning. But in the superseding modern era, this creature *gesellschaft* (society) had overtaken

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[2] See: August Comte, *The Course on Positive Philosophy*; *System of Positive Polity, or Treatise on Sociology, Instituting the Religion of Humanity*; Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy; Capital*; Emile Durkheim, *Division of Labour;* Herbert Spencer, *The Principles of Sociology;* Max Weber, *Nature of Social Action; Economy and Society*.

gemeinscahft as the dominant mode, displacing community into a fragmented existence. The new

society was capitalist, rationalist, contractual, and massive:

> Gesellschaft, an aggregate by convention and law of nature, is to be understood as a multitude of natural and artificial individuals, the wills, and spheres of whom are in many relations with and to one another, and remain nevertheless independent of one another and devoid of familiar relationships (Tönnies 77)

In contrast to the organic harmony of communal understanding, society was imaginary, mechanical, transitory, superficial, and strange. In community humans were essentially united; in society they are essentially isolated (65). Citizens of society are bound only by contract, the rational abstraction which gives order to an artificial aggregate of human actors seeking their own individual interests (71). Intimacy is replaced by the "politeness" of entrepreneurs. Altruism is replaced with competition; understanding with contract; tradition with convention; unity with division. What remains is the individualistic pursuit of profit.

Tönnies considered *gesellschaft* to be the capitalist ideal which could only be approximated, never fully realized. Nevertheless, in opposing community and society as theoretical and historical contrasts, Tönnies identified the obliteration of community by society as the underlying fact of modern life. The natural state of human relationships which gave purpose and coherence to life was lost to the mechanical alienation of the industrial era. Three general themes crystallize in Tönnies: the image of community as a *locale*, or a place-based site of human interaction with close relationships to the land, to tradition, and to kin; the idea of an *imagined solidarity* between individuals who identify within a singular unity; and a developing *moral obligation* toward those fellow citizens believed to belong to one's community.

It is hard to underestimate the influence of Tönnies formulation. He was not the first to propose a theory of history along these lines—his understanding of community is thoroughly Rousseauian, and his conception of society owes a great debt to Hobbes' *Leviathan*. What makes

Tönnies' *gemeinscahft und gesellschaft* significant is that he standardizes the "myth" of community into the very blood of academic and philosophical discourse. He solidified modern self-understanding as the crushing of communal accord by the impersonal forces of society, and in the practice, bestowed the dichotomy with all the prestige of a "science." Moving forward, such a dichotomy was taken as common sense.

As sociology sought an identity which could ground itself as a discipline, Tönnies gave urgency to the task by providing a definition of the object of inquiry and a history of the modern condition. It also did not hurt that the sense of peril felt toward industrialism could be alleviated by an account which left open the possibility for communal coherence. Thus Tönnies' articulation found a welcome reception in intellectual quarters, with his ideas weaving into the very fabric of sociological assumptions. Max Weber and Emile Durkheim, who along with Marx are generally designated as the founding fathers of Sociology, directly responded to Tönnies work and largely assimilated his dichotomy into their seminal writings (Durkheim, *Division;* Weber, *Economy*). In *Economy and Society*, Weber operationalizes Tönnies' distinction between community and society to explicate his theory of modern social stratification, although he frames the dichotomy as less determinate and more fluid then Tönnies. For Weber, community was instituted on subjective feeling and tradition while society was constituted by rational contract (*Economy*). Meanwhile Emile Durkheim, who was somewhat less charitable in his reading of Tönnies, nonetheless incorporated the basic distinction between organic and mechanical relationships into his understanding of social order (*Division*).

Given its prominence among the founding figures of Sociology and its continual reoccurrence as a topic of inquiry, there is reason for suspecting that the discipline has largely internalized the rhetoric of community. A brief survey of volumes published on the topic

demonstrates the critical role "community" plays in its disciplinary identity.[3] Certainly Sociology

was the key academic force in standardizing and sustaining the myth of community into the

present era. A discipline revolving around an abstraction as massive and undefinable as

"society," could only hope to define its object of inquiry against an abstraction that was equally

as elusive. It was Rousseau's lost community solidified in Tönnies *gemeinscahft* which made

such a study possible. The sociological conception of community was transmuted all those

features which, by definition, were absent from modernity. Community was a *negative image*,

created not to describe an entity as much as to give meaning to its opposite. In this way,

community enabled the study of society by providing a theory of history, an explanation of the

vast social changes transforming Western society, and a definition of the prime object of inquiry.

For this reason, sociology was founded in and constituted by the rhetoric of community.

American Antecedents

I have argued that sociology was most responsible for solidifying community's place as

the forerunner to society into the modern understanding of community, that Rousseau's longing

for lost human harmony saturates through it, and that the Christian consciousness was adapted

into a kind of secularized civic morality. Community was understood variously as a *civic*

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[3] A partial etymology of community's sociological history can demonstrate the connection: Lynd, *Middletown*, 1922; Janowitz, *Community Press in an Urban Setting*, 1952; Nisbet, *The Social Philosophers*, 1953; Hillery, *Defintions of Community: Areas of Agreement*, 1955; Arensberg, *Family ad Community in Ireland*, 1941; Frankenberg, *Communities in Britain*, 1969; Stacey, *The Myth of Community Studies* 1969; Scherer, *Contemporary Community: Sociological Illusion or Reality*, 1972; Bernard, *The Sociology of Community*, 1973; Gusfield, *Community: A Critical Response,* 1975; Plant. "Community: Concept, Conception, and Ideology," 1978; Calhoun "Community: Toward a Variable Conceptualization for Comparative Research, 1980; Bulmer, *The Rejuvenation of Community Studies?: Neighbors, Networks and Policy*, 1985; Cohen, *The Social Construction of Community*, 1985; Kingdom, *No Such Thing as Society: Individualism and Community*, 1987; Etzioni, *Spirit of Community*, 1993; Crow and Allen, *Community Life: An Introduction to Local Social Relations*, 1994; Bellah et. al, *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life, 1985*; Calhoun, "Community without Propinquity Revisited," 1998; Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, 2000; Wuthnow, *Small-town America: Finding of Community, Shaping the Future*, 2013.

obligation, a *locale*, and an *imagined solidarity*, all with mythic and spiritual overtones. Since the interest of this dissertation is with distinctively American discourses of community, I turn to the features specific to the American tradition.

Although it shares a common heritage with other Western perspectives on community, the American mind put its own stamp on the concept due to its unique history. Rather than feudalist Europe, when American's envision the hey-day of communal autonomy they are more likely to picture Puritan New England villages, Southern agrarian homesteads, small towns in Middle-America, Cowboy Westerns, and perhaps even Eisenhower-era suburban neighborhoods. Three early sources of American communal inspiration stand above the rest: The Biblical, Jeffersonian, and Tocquevillian traditions.

The first fountain of America's distinctive communal consciousness comes from the Puritan ancestors. The religio-communal traditions were (and remain) stronger in America then the rest of the West, beginning with John Winthrop's communitarian message in the "Model of Christian Charity":

> for this end, wee must be knitt together in this worke as one man, wee must entertaine each other in brotherly Affeccion, wee must be willing to abridge our selves of our superfluities, for the supply of others necessities, wee must uphold a familiar Commerce together in all meekenes, gentlenes, patience and liberallity, wee must delight in eache other, make others Condicions our owne rejoyce together, mourne together, labour, and suffer together, allwayes haveing before our eyes our Commission and Community in the worke, our Community as members of the same body, soe shall wee keepe the unitie of the spirit in the bond of peace, the Lord will be our God and delight to dwell among us, as his owne people and will commaund a blessing upon us in all our wayes,
> (www.digitalhistory.uh.edu)

The sermon is an important barometer of America's self-consciousness as a nation set apart from the old world, knit together its unique spirituality and communal charity. Judging by the reoccurrence of the "City on a Hill" trope until present day, there is good reason for suspecting this image remains engraved on the American mind. The Puritans and Pioneers, no doubt

individualists, nevertheless emphasized the shared destiny of the all members of the community, purporting to look out for every person as an equal and integral member of the whole body.

I have already noted the Christian inspiration on the modern construction of community. With the strong religious tradition in America from its time in the wilderness to its established state today, the Christian ethic of brotherly love resonates throughout the American mind, even amid a primarily liberal-individualist culture. Historically the thriving civic cultures of New England villages were intertwined with the religious institutions and the larger Christian ethic, especially in the era predating the American Revolution where there was little distinction between church authority and political authority. As they are imagined in America public memory, those close-knit towns were autonomous "communities" with common identities and reciprocal obligations founded in the Christian faith.

 The Christian practices of the South and the Frontier diverged considerably from those of New England, in part because of their denominational inheritance and their social-economic needs. But the fact remains that the Christian consciousness of community prevailed as an important moral frame of reference, even as the religious impulse became "secularized" in the wake of Darwin, and liberal theorists endeavored to salvage the communal legacy. Community served increasingly not only as a spiritual ideal, but as a *civic-spiritual ideal*—an ultimate end until itself, a mystical unity and ultimate purpose that could transcend the partiality of individual interests. It was a spiritual ideal upon which harmonizing human organization could be built.

Matching the Biblical tradition as a source of American communal consciousness is Thomas Jefferson's dream of an agrarian civilization. Jefferson, ever weary of strong national government, hoped America might become a nation of independent farmers tending to their own land while doubling as citizens engaged in local matters of common concern (*Notes*). Though

founded on individuals seeking their own economic self-interest, Jefferson assumed that such an arrangement would be naturally harmonious because of the pure morality of people of the land (as opposed to the licentiousness of urban folk, especially bankers). Repeated physical contact with other townspeople would naturally lead to the identification of common interests and the formation of a public will which could reconcile local disputes painlessly. Since the chief arena of politics was local, the primary duty of representatives to the national government (who would be known personally by their constituents) would be to defend those communal interests to the government assemblies. In Jefferson's portrayal, the easy accommodation of interests would foster adequate sentiments of reciprocity so that autonomous communities would endure harmoniously without interference of a national authority. Individuals in their communities could then dedicate their life to meaningful labors and intimate friendships.

Jefferson's America was never realized, but his rhetoric has been unparalleled in its capturing of the American imagination. For a young democratic people, he provided a captivating image of natural fellowship found in the simplicity of small local communities. In *locales,* citizens could tend to their individual pursuits uninhibited by outside interference while also relishing in communal traditions and close familial relationships.

The final strain of early America's communal consciousness was best documented by Alexis de Tocqueville in *Democracy in America*. As a French Aristocrat, Tocqueville's outsider status gave credibility to the lavish praise he heaped upon America's community life. As much as the Christian and Jeffersonian antecedents, de Tocqueville's representation of American democracy persists as a definitive statement of America's communal identity. Writing in the mid-nineteenth century, Tocqueville was particularly enamored with how America's synthesis of three communal motifs established a lively culture of democratic engagement. These interrelated

motifs include social organization into locales and townships, the *volunteeristic* formation of *civil associations*, and a spirit of religion. Organization into small townships established long-lasting relationships that prompted a sense of identification between townspeople. In their frequent interaction and relative dependency, issues which effected the entire locale could be handled by the citizens themselves rather than by an external body. The raising of a common consciousness and the clear relevance of these local matters to all parties encouraged all members to be involved in their community's civic life. Rather than the formal structures of the state, most citizens were united in informal webs of relation through the joining of various *voluntary associations*. These associations, de Tocqueville argued, provided the backbone of American community life because they increased social interdependence, and thereby elicited a sense of solidarity and reciprocity stirring citizens to pursue projects in common. The informal web of relationships created through *voluntary associations* could supplant the formal top-down authorities of the state by permitting citizens to resolve local matters on their own. The thriving civic life in the most minute of local activities was the surest grounding for a more expanded democratic practice: "The more the number of these small common affairs increases, the more men acquire, without their even being aware of it, the capability of pursuing great affairs in common" (de Tocqueville, 215).

America's democratic magic resided in the civic spirit spawned from involvement in common local activities. Tocqueville thought smaller civil associations were the secret to a successful public life because they established a point of entry into the deliberative process. The frequent voluntary gatherings of the local townspeople enabled the discovery of shared interests and invigorated citizens with a "municipal spirit" of political participation (52). Within these

voluntary associations, not only could citizens contribute to a better nation, but they could find meaning and purpose for their own lives.

In line with the previous account, de Tocqueville saw America's "Spirit of Religion" as both the stimulant and the safeguard of its thriving community life: "The Americans combine the notions of Christianity and of liberty so intimately in their minds, that it is impossible to make them conceive the one without the other" (*Democracy* 185). The Christian element brought about a respect for the equality and worth of all men and an acute sense of their ultimate responsibility for their fellow citizens (of course, this principle was not always extended universally or followed consistently). Although de Tocqueville demarcated the separate spheres of religion and politics in America, he contended that Christianity provided the essential mores that political debate and civic association needed to flourish. Religion itself, he thought, gained greater adherence because it was non-coercive and depended on the voluntary membership of citizens. In this more legitimate position, Christianity could wield its greatest taming influence upon the selfish passions by admonishing citizens to pursue projects in common and find their ultimate fulfillment in their *human associations*.

In sum, de Tocqueville concluded that local community involvement stimulated citizens toward broader public engagement by instilling sentiments of loyalty and identification toward fellow townspeople. The informal webs of voluntary associations were the greatest guarantor of liberty and democratic engagement. The various forms of joining conferred moral worth to human relationships and, assisted by the spirit of religion, extended the sense of mutual responsibility and shared destiny without trampling on the freedoms of the individual.

Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* is generally considered the authoritative statement of American community. Harvard political philosopher Harvey Mansfield enshrined it as "at

once the best book ever written on democracy and the best book ever written on America."

Tocqueville's description of the vitality of association-based civic life, assisted by the elegance

of his prose, has been a source of collective inspiration ever since, especially in the field of

Sociology where the health of contemporary civic life is continually compared to the standard he

puts forth (Bellah et al; Putnam; Nisbet, *Quest*; Wuthnow). Tocqueville might be taken as a

summative figure of the American tradition up until the twentieth century. He synthesizes the

Biblical, Republican and Jeffersonian traditions into a coherent whole while adding his own

imprint—that of voluntary association. Together these frames provide the mythic backdrop of

contemporary America's understanding of and nostalgia for community.

Through the historical sketch, we can see how community accumulated its

overwhelmingly positive connotations in the industrial era by invoking nostalgic visions of a

simpler, more intimate time that was quickly fading into oblivion and offering hope that human

relations might again be made humane. This past provides clues as to why community must

necessarily remain a vague and mysterious concept. No one has ever truly experienced

community because it was crafted "negatively"—community assumed the attributes that were by

definition non-modern, as that which was opposite to society and had gone missing. Community

was a creature created to challenge and make sense of modern industrialism. It is no surprise

then that contemporary discourse is characterized by succeeding laments over its decline, so

much so that "the loss of community" narrative composes its own in genre. Loss is itself

constitutive of the idea of community.

We can further identify a number of reoccurring themes in the modern transformation of

community that help decipher its vague and seemingly contradictory uses in popular discourse.

Perhaps the most prominent theme to emerge is the opposition of the modern and the pre-

modern, represented by the notions of society and community respectively. The substantial efforts to explain and cope with the effects of industrialism did much to cement the dichotomy. Closely related to this theme is the mythic nature of community in modern thought, associated as it is with organic unities and intimate social ties. That a blissful community has been lost and is in need of recovery is an unquestioned premise of modern thought. Finally, my account has brought the spiritual resources of community into view, as it pertains to both the Christian tradition and the secular "essentializing" of its doctrine. Community's spiritual overtones encourage citizens to transcend their interest, even those of their particular collective, to point toward an ultimate purpose in mystical unity.

I have shown that a conception of "community" has been in steady evolution in modern, industrial Western society. Community draws upon several discursive threads found in religion, philosophy, sociology, and politics to gain its meaning and persuasive force. This history is offered as evidence for my thesis that "community" has become a key rhetorical device for navigating the travails of modern life, providing both compensations and consolations for losses that seem apparent with the advent of mass society; directing us toward reparative actions we may adopt to promote individual and collective values, as well as spiritual goods that might be best achieved if accomplished under the sign of "community" participation.

Moving forward, I propose something of a "rhetorical history" of the term community, identifying key discourses wherein community becomes a central value—or "god term"—in rhetorical practices that accomplish this negotiation or management of self and society in the modern era of American society. I am particularly curious about the ability of "community" as a concept to sponsor two seemingly opposing rhetorical efforts: those who harken back to a lost sense of what is an essentially local and tribal sense of community lost in the modern age; and

those who see community as a transcendent value that can help forge meaningful political relationships empowering social change. These general hypotheses will form the basis of the criticism I will accomplish in this thesis.

There is, in sum, considerable warrant for a rhetorical criticism that looks at historical moments in American community rhetoric. I aim to examine discourses that embody aspects of different traditions and rhetorical maneuvers in respect to the god-term "community." My concern is not entirely historical, as community continues to function in our contemporary discourse with a mixture of these connotations—something I explore in Chapter Two. However, I believe community's rhetorical uses can be best elucidated by looking at them at work in specific discursive and historical moments, and I therefore devote a critical chapter each to what I see as three distinct—albeit interacting—rhetorical uses: community as a utopian ideal; community as a conservative lament; and community as a progressive agency. I here explain in more detail the organization of my study's subsequent chapters.

Chapter Two: A Rhetorical Approach to Community

This section functions as a methodology chapter and a literature review, examining the work already done by rhetorical scholars, and identifying how a rhetorical approach based on Kenneth Burke's theories can help to identify (and reconcile) the uses of community. I mediate on community as a god-term and moral vocabulary, and offer a taxonomy of the five rhetorical "senses" that "community" has come to represent and evoke in discursive practice. I conclude this chapter with seven theses on the nature of community rhetoric.

Chapter Three: John Humphrey Noyes and the Oneida Community

In Chapter Three I analyze John Humphrey Noyes' and the Oneida Community as an example of a "communist" or "communalist" rhetoric of community. The nineteenth century was

home to a number of attempts to create "utopian communities" distanced from the vices of industrial society. These utopias aimed to salvage the virtues of communal relations from an increasingly complex and mechanized model of society. Noyes' Oneida Community was among the most significant of these communal experiments, and provides an unabashed attempt to remake society upon the basis of the communal ideal. I treat the Oneida experiment as a non-Marxist "communalist" rhetoric which constructs "community" as a set of perfect spiritual principles to be rationally applied to the social order in order to attain a state of social utopia. Noyes invokes community to transcend the division between faith and science, challenge the orientation of economic individualism, and correct the maladies of industrial life by communizing the social order.

Chapter Four: Jane Addams and the Cosmopolitan Community

Chapter Four will take up Jane Addams "progressive" rhetoric of community of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Addams was a leading figure of the Progressive Era, where she labored for years to make society a more humanistic place. She focused especially on voluntary organizations and charity work to improve the lives of citizens and ameliorate industrial conditions. I consider Addams' effort as a "progressive" rhetoric which conceives of community as a corrective to the excesses of individualism and a vehicle for democratic change. Addams adopts a cosmopolitan perspective that seeks to attain a single community of all citizens, where every member shares an identity and acts upon the joint-obligation to improve the welfare of the common lot.

Chapter Five: The Southern Agrarians and the Provincial Community

In looking toward a traditionalist rhetoric of community, Chapter Five centers upon the Southern Agrarians and their manifesto *I'll Take My Stand*. The Southern Agrarians were a

group of twelve men, many of them poets associated with Vanderbilt University, who came together to write against the horrors of industrial society and defend a social order founded on independent farmers and agrarian communities. I analyze the Agrarians as a traditionalist rhetoric that depicts community as an inherited tradition and way of life in need of preservation. The Agrarians' vision of community is provincial, in that it emphasizes particularity, boundaries and the protection of identity—namely white Southern identity, the failures of which the Agrarians attempt to transcend and redeem by way of appeal to the region's communal virtues.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

The concluding chapter will serve as a review of the major findings of the case studies and a discussion of the dissertation's implications. I deliberate on my seven theses, and consider parallels between the specific historical illustrations and the state of contemporary community discourse, drawing lessons from the refined vocabulary of motives and heighted critical sensibility granted by this project. Finally, I mediate on community's place in our general socio-political discourse as a device that negotiates the meaning of modern citizenship by striving for better relationship between self and society.

CHAPTER TWO

THE RHETORICAL USES OF COMMUNITY

The chapter outlines the basis of my rhetorical-critical approach to the concept of community, examines previous research on the topic in Rhetorical Studies, and identifies five basic "senses" of the term "community." In seeking to ground my study in a rhetorical perspective, I first review the significant research on community in the discipline, arguing that it insufficiently accounts for the term's rhetorical functions. Using the critical theories of Kenneth Burke, I offer an appropriate methodological approach for this dissertation project. I then discuss the implications of framing community as a god-term, meditating on its special persuasive place in the American vocabulary. Finally, I elaborate on the general "senses" of community to account for the wide-variety and inconsistent uses of the term in academic and vernacular discourse. After clarifying the general uses, designations, and patterns of community rhetoric, it will then be possible to engage in a grounded inquiry of particular community rhetorics.

Communication and Rhetorical Approaches to Community

In this dissertation, I will analyze several of these specific rhetorical cases while situating them in the larger American discourse of community. To begin such a project, however, it is necessary to (a) comment upon the major approaches to the study of community in the Communication discipline and (b) provide a theoretical and methodological approach compatible with the research questions guiding my study. I will begin, then, by reviewing the prominent perspectives within the domains of communication and rhetoric research, arguing ultimately for

their inability to explain community's rhetorical function in social discourse. I will then construct an alternative approach informed by the dramatistic framework of Kenneth Burke to better permit a rhetorical inquiry into the subject.

There is a surprisingly small body of work on rhetorics of community in the discipline of Communication, but there are a number of attempts to employ community as an analytical tool. These descriptive concepts can be useful for theorizing specific problems within particular scholarly domains, however, they are ultimately inadequate for a large-scale analysis of the social patterns of community rhetoric. In fact, as I hope to show, these "neutral" analytical uses of community, by sterilizing the moral impulse, furtively reify community's god-term status in order to bestow legitimacy upon their scholarly endeavors. There are at least four identifiable approaches to community in rhetoric and communication theory: as shared discourse, as common identity, as online forum, and as communication ethic. I will treat each in turn.

Shared Discursive Frames

The most common rhetorical conception of community is as a site of shared symbolic practice. Within the cousin-disciplines of rhetoric, technical and professional writing, hermeneutics, and literature, the turn toward social-constructivist philosophies impelled researchers to make sense of identificatory practices through the symbols which bound individuals together. "Community" started appearing in academic literature as a useful tool for demarcating patterns of discursive practice—the concepts of interpretive communities, speech communities, and discourse communities all emerged from this movement. In philosophy and literary studies, an "Interpretive community," refers to a loosely connected network of people who share similar "habits of mind" and practices of sense making (Fish; Kuhn). A "speech community," as it is understood in sociology and linguistics, departs from interpretive

communities only in that it refers to a group of people with common patterns of speech that are *physical located*. Finally, a "discourse community," as it conceived in the study of rhetoric, refers roughly to a series common references, languages, codes, and other discursive activities which create relatively coherent collective orientations (Bizzel; Porter; Harris, 14). Although each of these concepts designate unique referents, they share a common theoretical conviction that different discursive practices create different communities (Harris 19).

What counts as a discursive activity capable of creating community can vary with the specific author—the sharing of metaphors, narratives, genres, values, communal sensitives, moral codes, and collective memories have all been submitted as possible candidates (Campbell; Condit and Greer; Hart; Hogan; Miller, "Rhetoric"; Medhurst; Osborn). Research in this tradition attempts to identify and interpret these collective patterns in order to understand the "community's" sense-making practices.

While scholars in this tradition believe community to be constituted by discourse, it does not follow that they view it as unreal or merely constructed. Rather, community is treated as an identifiable entity suitable for examination. Consider for example Carolyn Miller's explication of "rhetorical community:"

> A rhetorical community…is just such a virtual entity, a discursive projection, a rhetorical construct. It is the community as invoked, represented, presupposed, or developed in rhetorical discourse. It is constituted by attributions of characteristic joint rhetorical actions, genres of interaction, ways of getting things done, including reproducing itself…rhetorical communities 'exist' in human memories and in their specific instantiations in words (Miller, "The Cultural Basis of Genre" 73)

To treat community as an "entity," is to create a useful scheme for conceptualizing collective patterns of membership through shared languages and interpretive orientations. Conceived as such, there is a hermeneutic mandate to illuminate the inner workings of these

various discursive frames so that there might be greater recognition and collaboration between communities.

This first rhetorical approach has an undeniable appeal, for it operationalizes recent work in social construction and, by foregrounding rhetorical practice, mobilizes disciplinary resources. To frame community as constituted by rhetoric is to put the integral social activity of forming unities squarely within the domain of disciplinary research. However, it must be admitted by even the most enthusiastic partisan of this tradition that to a certain extent it is the researcher's very identifying of commonalities that itself creates the community being studied. These discursive communities are not objects out there to simply be discovered; they are called forth by the scholars (in their role as rhetors) from the fragments of discourse for the strategic purpose of academic explanation.

Without diminishing the independent merit of this growing tradition of scholarship, viewing community as shared discursive practice does little to shed light on the term's ascent to god-term status, nor to explain the rhetorical function of the word in everyday discourse, nor to illuminate the moral sense-making practices of communitarian vocabularies. Its utility is restricted to matters of interpretation as it pertains to different discursive patterns. Community as shared discourse is a rhetorical theory of what community is (or could be), not a rhetorical criticism of what community does. In fact, from our perspective, we are able to see the academic employment of community as a purely descriptive concept in such literature as a way of sneaking in the charisma of the term and its role as a legitimizer while concealing that very. As Joseph Harris points out, the word community invokes what it describes, so to speak of an academic writing community is to plea for one to exist without admitting one is doing the pleading (13). Far from explaining rhetorics of community, this scholarly tradition partakes in

them with all their resonance and ambiguity. Discursive community is a useful concept as far as it goes, but we must look elsewhere for a perspective sufficient to tackling the term's ubiquitous, moral, and contested character.

Identity

A second, and in some ways similar, manner rhetoricians have approached community is through categories of identity. Rhetorical community as shared identity foregrounds questions of collective solidarity as formed through the common possession of an attribute, experience, or value. It differs from discursive frames, however, in the tendency of the critic to "impose" community on persons who share a "sociological" characteristic. From this perspective, it is the sharing of a value or experience rather than a discursive pattern that creates community.

For example, the book *Rhetoric and Community: Studies in Unity and Fragmentation*, frequently puts forth a view of community as shared identity. The work is broken down into sections on "race and gender" communities, "war" communities, and "artistic and scientific" communities. While we might think of a community of persons based off their shared experience as a disadvantaged identity, it is not a community in the sense of having a shared discourse or a kind of relationship at all with other members. The person is "born" into the community and may not even consider themselves a part of it. It is for this reason it is a "taxonomical" view of community, because it defines community through a schema for the purposes of study, whether or not the individuals adhere to the name of that community, or know they are participating in it.

An identity-based community does not rely upon interaction with the fellow community, and is not simply "imagined" in the same sense that Benedict Anderson had in mind when he spoke of a "deep horizontal comradeship" with others of similar traditions (7). Instead, the identity-community can be imagined either by the author writing about them or by the public

vocabulary which has made it commonplace to speak of that particular collective as a community, a practice especially common for referring to historically disadvantaged identities. The scholarly advantage of this tradition is that it aligns with important identity markers and practices of sense making in society writ large, and helps to understand the shared experiences and legitimate solidarities formed through these identities.

Yet while it makes a connection between vernacular and academic uses of community, the shared identity perspective cannot do much to explain community's overall social function. It seems that in its social usage, this is not really a description but a rhetorical maneuver, a way of putting a certain grouping of persons in a positive light. The identity community draws upon the cultural capital of "community" as an ultimate term to eulogize a particular identity marker—taking a mass of people who share a common attribute and fostering a sense of solidarity which masks the wide variety of incompatible individual commitments within that human aggregate. It is probably for this reason that we often hear of the Christian community or Black community, but no one would ever think to speak of a "White supremacist community." The contrast between that which we disdain (white supremacy) and that which we cherish (community) creates an incongruity which is uncomfortable, if telling. This hints that the application of "community" to an identity marker entails either a positive view of that collective, or an acknowledgment of their history of shared suffering. Community eulogizes or praises its object.

In its academic application, the identity-based community invoked is not one which necessarily "exists," but is a taxonomical creation of the researcher for the purpose of analysis (See, Harre, "Philosophy"). This is not to disqualify merits of identity communities, but to show it leaves something to be desired for analyzing social rhetorics of community, especially since to speak of an identity community is to call one into existence with the endorsement of the term's

prestige. We are hitting upon the rhetoric of community in practice in the invitation to form collective identifications, but we need to keep looking for our critical perspective.

Online Forum

There are also those rhetoricians and communication scholars, who could make a third category of internet enthusiasts, that put forth "online communities" as an analytical concept (Harris; Lyon; Rheingold, *Virtual Community*; Selfe and Selfe; Zappen, Gurak & Doheny-Farina). The nucleus of this perspective is that, unlike those who think of community as shared values or shared rhetorical practice, a community really is best understood as a public forum (Zappen et. al). As such, there is little need for considerations of physical proximity or shared discursive frames because the true essence of community exists in the common meeting places where sustained social interaction occurs. With this criterion in mind, some scholars assert that the internet nurtures "online communities," which can complement (or replace) other forms of community. Because community is believed to be about mutual engagement not agreement, researchers in this tradition dedicate their scholarly attention to analyzing the site of online emergence and the practices which constitute community in it.

The internet community perspective intentionally competes with the shared discursive practice model. A number of critics have vehemently disputed the net-enthusiasts eagerness to label their object a community, making the validity of this application something of a contested terrain. (Calhoun "Without Propinquity"; Harris). Craig Calhoun in particular, motivated by his Marxists commitments, has voiced skepticism over of these claims to community, preferring to dub such forums "online networks," because they lack essential considerations of social structure, place, face-to-face interaction, and reciprocal obligation ("Without Propinquity"). Joseph Harris takes an even more antithetical position, commenting dismissively "a forum is not

a community" (15). Whether net-enthusiasts have a legitimate claim to the label is not the point; what is more important is the question of *why* both sides of this debate so strongly desire to take command of the term *community* and apply it to their cause. Our thesis would be that it is contested terrain because community, with its social eminence, brings legitimacy to their areas of study. I am therefore fully on the side of those critics who see the label "internet-communities" as an attempt to validate research into a new technology. Like both the shared discourse and shared identity perspectives, online community scholarship does not simply investigate rhetorics of community, it participates in them.

Communication Ethic

In the final tradition of communication ethics, community is understood as a moral ideal to be striven for in human relations. A state of community is achieved when relationships are characterized by a sense mutual obligation, interdependence, acceptance, equality and respect (Arnett; Buber; Butchart). Community becomes the ethical standard through which social behavior is to be evaluated and remade. It is beginning, end and means; one is in a community and attempts interact with others in concordance with ethical demands of community to achieve an ultimate state of community. In this way, community is constantly negotiated, sustained and remade. Against the other views, community is not a place, nor a forum, nor shared discursive patterns, but a relational quality. Rhetorics which make the threshold of "community" must meet these standards of reciprocity and respect, and are sometimes also referred to as invitation, love, and friendship (Foss and Griffin; Radwan; Brockriede; Corder; Jasinski).

This view of community as ethic carries over to rhetorical theory, where the term is similarly seen as an act of union, merger, and identification (Burke, *Rhetoric of Motives;* Graff and Winn; McKerrow; Perelman and Olbrehcts-Tyteca; VanderHaagen). In Chaïm Perelman and

Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca's *The New Rhetoric*, "communion" refers to the argumentative act of building solidarity through communal adherence to shared values (*New Rhetoric*). Richard Graff and Wendy Winn affirm that "communion is the source of fore-agreements that bind a community; it is the reservoir of those shared values from which are derived the norms of reasonableness" (65). Sara VanderHaagen similarly stresses ethical community as the negotiation of collective identity within a stable tradition. Even Kenneth Burke's chief rhetorical concept "identification" implies an idea of community in the merging of identities into a state of "communion" (*Rhetoric of Motives*).[4]

More than any other tradition, community as human ethic makes clear the moral loading of the term. Nonetheless, like the other scholarly frames, it does not directly have much to say about rhetorics of community. In fact, it is the clearest participant in that tradition, to be commended for making plain the moral genius of the term. Yet community ethics, like the other three perspectives, enacts the rhetoric of community without a thorough critical examination of the larger social rhetoric giving the traditions their force.

The four approaches to community in rhetoric and communication differ in numerous ways which may be incompatible. Nonetheless, what they do share is a romanticized view of people in some form of union. While each tradition accomplishes commendable work within their disciplinary domains, they fall short in reflecting upon their own positon within the larger American social discourse and connect it to their scholarly practice. By trying to operationalize community as a descriptive concept, they treat it as a thing created by discourse, and not as *a social discourse itself*. But community is both, and the focus in this dissertation is with the latter, the idea of community as it permeates our public language and everyday talk.

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[4] Burke writes presciently: "I never think of 'communication' without thinking of its ultimate perfection, named in such words as 'community' and 'communion" ("Definition of Man").

Unfortunately, there is little rhetorical work to be found addressing this macro-discourse, with the notable exception of Ronald Lee, who's essay examines the competition between small-town myths of local community and urban myths of the national community in American political rhetoric. Lacking a precedent in communication research from which to embark on an inquiry into American rhetorics of community, my study must proceed through an alternative framework able to account for the larger public discourse and its transformation in each historical incident. Such a methodology would conceptualize community's position as a god-term and a moral vocabulary, while providing the mechanisms of critique for a book length analysis of the social functions of community rhetoric. I believe such a theoretical apparatus can be found in the work of Kenneth Burke, whose conceptual framework I turn to now.

A Burkean Approach

Writing from the early to mid-twentieth century, language theorist Kenneth Burke was a thinker of remarkably broad scope. His thought does not abide by disciplinary boundaries, as it broaches matters of rhetoric, philosophy, psychology, anthropology, aesthetics, sociology, and literary criticism. What holds Burke's wide-ranging body of work together is his conception of man as the symbol-using animal ("Definition of Man"). For Burke, the essential human attribute is the ability to wield symbols to form perceptions of the world and cooperate with other humans. Since language is the chief source of the symbolic in human life, it received the bulk of his scholarly attention. Burke thought that language, as "symbolic action," accomplished real work, both psychological and material, so that any attempt to explain human action must take into account the role of language in directing human understanding.

In working out his philosophy of dramatism to account for this symbolic nature, Burke developed several theoretical instruments and conceptual tools for the analysis of language as it

occurred in social discourse which can help situate "community's" special place in the American lexicon. The central insight I take from Kenneth Burke is that the symbolic process of "naming" determines our understanding of the world and the way we act in relation to it. The available vocabulary, the public grammar, provides the available resources for interpreting human experience. "Community," in our case, indicates one way of *naming* which *weights* the world in a particular way and calls forth a specific set of responses consistent with the genius of the term; it is a god-term, or expression of order and value beyond question, from which all else is to be judged and organized. As a god-term, community is a terminological naming that is eulogistic, ambiguous, question-begging, and moral—every naming "smuggles in" an ethical evaluation which calls for particular actions associated with the naming (Burke, *Religion*). But community indicates more than a god-term—it is the best representative term for important *vocabularies of motive* within the larger American Orientation. Community is a god-term which indicates immersion into "communitarian" languages and practices of sense-making.

I have employed several Burkean resources in the prior paragraph to explain my position, but they require more careful definition. The broadest, most encompassing schematic term is *orientation*. An orientation is a "general view of reality," or accumulation of bundled judgments gained from past experience which form expectancies as to how things were, are and ought to be (Burke, *Permanence* 4; 14). A developed orientation is a serviceable concoction of prejudices and terminological attributions which one uses to make sense of the world. They are experimental networks of "mutually sustained values and judgements" that provide the resources for naming and acting (*Permanence* 23). When Burke speaks of an orientation, he has in mind the most general worldview of an individual, however, in my framing, I understand orientation in a more outward, extended sense of a collective orientation. Burke gestures to this extended sense

when he speaks of a "public grammar" and "public orientation" (*Attitudes* 341).[5] It is reasonable

to speak of a larger modern "American Orientation," composed of numerous competing

vocabularies which slice up reality according to different prejudices.

Within the encompassing orientation, there are several subdivisions or strains of

attribution which Burke calls *motives* (*Permanence* 19*; Grammar*). Motives, for Burke, are

verbal constructs put forth to conceptualize, reduce, and make sense of the world through the

process of naming. By attributing motives, a situation is framed in a "loaded" or "weighted" way

that implicitly embodies a theory of the world, a program of action, and a moral evaluation. The

verbalization of motive serves as a shorthand way to identify and reduce human situations into

accepted schemas. To put it slightly differently, a motive is a shorthand term which charts human

behavior by "drawing the lines of battle" for what a person should be for and against (*Attitudes*

172; 20; 4). A motive is a name which is already embedded with an implied response, a program

of action for how to respond to the situation. It is helpful to think of motives as more or less

coherent vocabularies available for making sense of the world. A different motive (naming)

would call forth a different response. And for Burke, every attribution of motive is "a

fragmentary part of this larger orientation," so that there can be competing motives within the

same orientation (*Permanence* 25). For example, the innocuous citizen contemplating civic

affairs, or the devious statesperson hoping to bamboozle the masses, can choose between a

"vocabulary of virtue" or a "vocabulary of realism." Virtue and realism are two different

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[5] The idea of a collective orientation is not opposed to Burke's focus on individual orientation because there is an obvious interplay between the public grammar and the individual grammar: "Any given situation derives is character from the entire framework of interpretation by which we judge it…We discern situational patterns by means of the particular vocabulary of the cultural group into which we are born" (*Permanence* 35); "the mind, being formed by language, is formed by a *public grammar*" (*Attitudes* 341).

motives, two ways of naming the situation with different implications for the adoption of attitudes and programs of action.

We might think of community as a motive in so far as it names the situation, and through the naming, calls forth a particular inclination to the world. But it would be more true to say that there are innumerable community motives which are spun out by specific rhetors in specific circumstances. As a macro-discourse, community has a moral weighting and common set of symbolic linkages that are recognizable (these are *pieties*), however, particular motives are crafted from this terminological reservoir in order to meet the needs of rhetors in their specific historic circumstances. For this reason, it might be better to speak of community as a *motivational vocabulary*. I earlier referenced *Habits of the Heart* by Bellah et al. to help frame the position of community based motives. The authors of *Habits* argue that there are two languages of Americans: the primary language of *individualism*, and the secondary, somewhat subordinated vocabulary of *collectivism* (ix). Seen through Burkean equipment, we might say that these constitute two competing vocabularies within the larger American orientation, and each encourage the crafting of motives through those competing vocabularies. What Bellah et. al call the subordinated language of collectivism may overlap substantially with community motives, though they should not be taken as synonymous. In this case, community, as a god-term would sum up the orientational subdivision, the realm of community motives.

The resources of community motives can be traced by following the symbolic linkages or clusters typically associated with the term. These are the *pieties* of community. Burke defines piety as "the sense of what properly goes with what" (*Permanence* 74). Every human, qua human, has a need for order and internal coherence. Piety is related to order in the sense that common symbolic linkages fit our experiences into a unified whole so that we know what

belongs together—hence Burke calls piety a "system builder" which sustains and transforms orientations (*Permanence* 74; see also, *Rhetoric of Motives*). To use another metaphor, pieties are the "social recipes" that prescribe what is to be done in accordance with the selected name or motive; one feels a need to enact the various pious associations of the particular vocabulary (*PC* 74). We are pious in our talk about community in the sense that there is an established set of tropes and terms that "naturally" arise when we discuss the topic. We know from our experience that to talk of community is also to talk of loss and liberation, loyalty and solidarity, family and friendship, obligation and civic duty, neighborhoods, New England Villages and Midwestern Towns, etc… In forming moral vocabularies, the pieties serve as public grammars which orient us to the world. Inspecting these grammars can go far in revealing the function and power of "community" over the modern mind. At the least, it can allow us to flesh out the term's general character. By paying attention to "what goes with what" within community languages, (that is, identifying the common linkages and social recipes it constructs), we may begin to understand the rhetorical functions and social implications of community in American life.

It may also be useful to think of community as a piety of "identification," a rhetorical guide to unification that brings persons together and points them in a common valuative direction (Burke, *Rhetoric of Motives*). Community, as a call for identification, suggests the binding of a "common identity" that makes citizens viable and functional as a group. What is contested about community is the basis and meaning of this identification itself, including how and through what "we" are to be identified, and how that enables "us" to act upon or redress society.

To summarize, the Burkean concepts of orientation, motive, god-term and piety help to situate community in contemporary discourse and open a space of inquiry into its rhetorical function. Within the American Orientation, community is a god-term which presents a special

opportunity for the spinning of motives with a pious vocabulary in competition with more individualist and economic ways of framing. Community, as a god-term or ideal through which we are impelled to remake the world, provides fodder for the weaving motives; but is also a site of contest about the nature of how persons are grouped and identified. By tracking the common linkages of community language, we can begin understanding the rhetorical implications of this public vocabulary.

So, what exactly does this framework allow the critic to do? A Burkean perspective highlights the interplay between the macro-American discourse and the particular instances of community rhetorics by connecting the general tropes with case-specific motives. If there are common "pious" ways of speaking about community, every specific instance simultaneously draws upon and alters the social formula for the particular purposes at hand. That is, community is a terminological device employed for purposes of *rhetorical transformation*.

By naming the situation, community also *renames* the situation, calling forth a corresponding new perspective toward the object of discussion. Community, as rhetorical device, transforms an orientation by establishing a new set of attitudes and moral loadings. When there is a perceived failure in the moral and social order, "community" is submitted as the terminological fix. Community becomes both compensator and corrective to the perceived failures of the modern world.

This is why no blanket praise or condemnation of community rhetorics can be offered from the onset. Community provides a privileged set of linguistic resources for rhetorical action, but any definitive judgement of its utility or moral worth must rest upon the in-depth examination of specific cases. With a Burkean perspective, we can only say that community is an available god-term and motivational vocabulary with certain weightings and tropes that are

deployed for purposes of social correction and rhetorical transformation. The specific ends to which community is put, and the evaluation of its merits, will depend on the case being observed.

Research Questions

With Burkean theoretical tools we gain a point of entry for an extended investigation into the rhetorical functions of community by examining representative manifestations of community rhetorics. Since every conceptual framework has its limitations in the form of the questions it can and cannot ask, it is worth briefly commenting on what kinds of question these particular tools allow me to pursue. At the most general level, I desire to understand what is happening in appeals to community and what such appeals might reveal about how Americans make sense of modern life. Burke's critical framework balances the macro-micro tension inherent in such an inquiry by directing equal attention to the clusters, webs of words, and thematic patterns constituting the macro discourse of community, while also looking to the peculiarities and symbolic transformations of each particular enactment. There are common ways of talking about community, but every instance is unique because rhetors creatively manipulate the discursive inheritance to meet their specific historical exigencies. Every mention of community is localized but transcends that context by partaking in the larger discourse; and by partaking in that larger discourse, it transforms it. To put it another way, every instance of community rhetoric draws upon the pieties of the term while fitting them to suit the particular purposes of the rhetor in action. By borrowing from the general, they transcend their particularity.

Community provides a rich resource for the crafting of motives, so much can be learned about the discourse of community by observing concrete manifestation of these rhetorics in their historical locations. Therefore, I will look intently at case studies and theorize abductively

toward the larger social implications of community. In these case studies, with Burke's conceptual framework in mind, I will be guided by the following research questions: What does community (as term) do? Discursively, what kind of work does it accomplish? What kind of motives does community weave? What kind of conflicts does it mask? How do the most influential rhetorics of community navigate the tension between self and society, and in so doing, give order and meaning to modern life? In what ways does community serve as a site of contest and unification between rivaling worldviews? What does community reveal about the ways Americans discursively situate the present to develop their outlooks toward the world? In sum, what does the public grammar of community reveal about the modern orientation and its potential for rhetorical transformation?

To begin answering these questions it is first necessary to inquire into community's function as both a god-term and moral vocabulary, with the aim of discerning the general characteristics of community rhetorics in relation to modern sense-making. After understanding community's rhetorical patterns and inclinations, we can identify the socio-political work it accomplishes as well as its most important points of contention within the American lexicon. Then it will be possible to engage in case studies of particular cases that capture the different philosophies and rhetorical moves of community rhetorics.

Community as God-term

With its ubiquity, ambiguity, and status as an unequivocal good, there is warrant for asserting that community has become a *god-term*, or a terminological expression which provides order, value and universality to human relations (Burke, *Religion*). God-terms are names which express a culture's highest aspirations; they are the ultimate links in the hierarchy of value which spur citizens to action (Weaver, *Ethics*). As a god-term, we are inclined to accept efforts to be

part of, work on behalf of, sacrifice for, or advance the existence of community as an automatically positive ethical act. God-terms present an image of what we value and who we want to be, and so we work to remake the world in its image.

Yet while community is among society's most celebrated conceptions, it is simultaneously in competition with the general values of modernity. Liberalism, or the philosophy of self-interested individuals, has traditionally been framed in popular and academic inquiry as anemic to community. Unlike freedom or equality, community has been an outlier in liberal thought—an idea peripherally present, but in a marginal and vague way; something assumed to occur naturally, even in its subordination to individual priority. How could community be said to be a god-term in an age which defines itself against it?

Community bears two key dissimilarities with other contemporary god-terms: first, unlike expressions such as freedom, equality, diversity and progress, community masquerades as a descriptive concept rather than (or in addition to) a moral ideal. Both sociological and rhetorical scholars often try to operationalize community into an analytical tool, and political actors likewise view community as an actually existing entity, whether as a neighborhood or identity group (Calhoun; Hart; Plant, "Toward"). Second, unlike these other god-terms, community does not mesh as naturally with the individualist paradigm. Whether through the mythic narrative of the loss of community, or the Western tendency to dichotomize community in opposition to individualist society, community's relationship with liberalism is at best tortured. Community, as god-term, may be an unequivocal good in the modern lexicon, but it nonetheless seems to present a challenge to modern prejudices.

We might understand community's rhetorical potency by again looking to its history. Community as it is used today, we have seen, is a remnant from the advent of the industrial era,

where it was employed as a rallying cry against the advances of industrialism (Calhoun, "Community Without"; Plant). While community bears a Latin etymology and can trace its root to the classical societies of Greece and Rome, in its particularly modern conception, community was crafted to bear connotations of simple agrarian societies of close intimacy to challenge the dominant modern view which equated industrial development with progress. The contemporary American lament for community, then, is part of the larger Western-tradition which posits a rudimentary longing for communal intimacy at the heart of the modern psyche (Nancy, *Inoperative*). To be modern, so we have learned, is to be bereft of community. In the modernist transformation—that is, in the rapid expansion of industrialism, urbanization, capitalism, secular rationality, liberalism and radical individualism—something integral to human comradery was said to be left behind; that simple association and fraternity found in the family, friendship, and close neighborly ties was replaced by the anxiety and alienation of the modern state and the persona of the cold-calculating individual. This is the myth of community, foundational to modern thought and peddled by Rousseau and Tönnies, which has infused the West with a tropic vision of a lost communal past to be recovered. The loss of community is a key rhetorical device and philosophical assumption for making sense of the world that has embedded itself in the modern terminological DNA.

The prevalent myth of organic community and its consequent loss obfuscates the fact that community could never actually manifest because it is a term of perfection. Community is a utopia, a literal no-where (Nancy, *Being*). Our contemporary language testifies to this fact in our felt need to preface community with the qualifier "sense of," such as when someone says "this communication department has a sense of community," or "we no longer have a sense of community around here." Why preface with "sense"? Why not just say community? The answer

is revealing: to say "sense of" is to indicate an inherent lack—if we have a "sense" of something, that means we do not actually have that thing. We are indicating rather that we have something like community or what we expect it to be, but it is still in a deficient, bastardized form. "Sense of" bespeaks an abstract value or ideal that we work for, not actualize. I suggest the reason we speak of community as a sense is because it is a spiritual phenomenon, a myth, an impossibility, a non-manifestable image of perfection that implicitly recognizes we "do things in the name of" community, including sacrifice for it—and there is no better definition of a god-term than a word which people are willing to die.[6] Therefore, every enactment of community must be something less than community; we want community but do not believe we could ever have it. Community may in fact be nothing other than a sense.

As Giogorio Agamben writes, "Every lament is always a lament for language, just as all praise is principally praise of the *name*" (Agamben 59). We do not cry for community but the word community itself, with all its connections, linkages and emotional resonance. When we lament the loss of community, we are not bewailing the loss of a *Gemeinscahft* to *Gesellschaft* in the transformation of the West, but making sense of our condition through the terminological equipment available. The myth of the lost golden age of community—the integral backdrop of all of modern thought—is a constitutive fiction which reveals the ongoing negotiation of what it means to be modern. In this way, community (and not communism) is the "specter" haunting modern society—something longed for and remembered, always absent yet always present.

That community is perfection and therefore unattainable does not mean that the lament over its absence is irrelevant or merely reactionary; rather these myths are revelations, ruptures of the modern mind, with implications for how we make sense of our existence. Myths are

[6] In the language of Kenneth Burke, community is an imagination, a utopic ideal, that inspires us but immediately loses its ethereal flavor once it is "bureaucratized" (*Attitudes,* 225).

always caricatures, but they are telling caricatures—what they tell us is that visions of community, far from being an actually achieved past, are fictitious backdrops, based on real human occurrences, designed to give meaning to the present liberal age. In this case, the myth of community was crafted as a counter-image to modern industrialism.

Yet while it is common for contemporary discourse to portray community as lost, it should be said that there is not one uncontested universal myth of community loss, or better, that the myth is framed in disparate ways to accent diverging value orientations and understandings of modernity. Simply put, there are different ways of telling this narrative, with different moral evaluations inherent in each tale. There are at least two poles on the mythic continuum: at times the communal past is portrayed as an era of warm and intimate social relations characterized by purpose and unity, and at times it is portrayed as a crude and repressive era from which society was liberated so individuals could pursue their own course. These two ways of constructing the communal myth might be labeled "traditionalist" and "progressive" respectively (See Lee). There may well be two different "teloi" or timelines for this—progressives proceeding from self-enclosed to greater community, conservatives falling from a grace toward atomism. Yet these labels imply a more oppositional character than is wanted; rather than flatly antagonistic frames, the narratives of the liberation from and loss of community are both always present. This is not contradiction. The warm and neighborly conservative image of loss and the provincial image of progressive liberation constitute two ends of the modern discursive dialectic. They are interchangeable myths which shadow all invocations of community, and rhetors oscillate between the two poles as needed to suit their particular purposes. To put it another way, both *loss* and *liberation* are constitutive of the idea of community—citizens simultaneously rely upon both because both are enmeshed in the modern grammar.

Nevertheless, the emphasis on one mythic pole has considerable influence on the historical, philosophical, political and moral standpoints one assumes. The adoption of a particular mythic frame will inculcate a language reflecting that assumed historical backdrop. Vocabularies associated with the narrative of liberation from a repressive past will tend toward a celebration of individual freedom, autonomy, mobility and self-determination (Lee, *Sources*; Taylor). This is the language of liberalism: enlightened self-interest, individualism, progress, diversity and tolerance. This narrative does not denounce community and throw it to the wind, but neither does it advocate a simple return to primitive communities. Instead, such a rhetoric will tend to assume the natural harmony of interests while calling for "new forms of community," to assist in rounding out the more essential life of the individual whom nonetheless needs some form of communal attachment to live a meaningful life (Bellah et al; Dewey, *Public*; Putnam). At the other mythic pole, vocabularies associated with the narrative of the loss of community will tend toward a denunciation of those very modern values as atomistic, alienating or destructive and seek to recover the more primitive sources of unity (Nisbet, *Social*; Ransom; Weaver, *Ideas*). Although not necessarily put in a frame of decadence, such a vocabulary will reflect terms of loss and nostalgia, and include programs for communal recovery.

The difference between these two is a matter of degree, and again, both will be present in any appeal to community. Each of the privileged mythic backdrops spin out certain webs of words or pious vocabularies in accordance with the particular mythic frame. A mythic backdrop of the liberation from community as progress probably constitutes the dominant discursive frame, and the pieties spun out by such an assumption create the familiar vocabulary of American liberalism. The framework of Robert Bellah et al. in *Habits of the Hearts* is useful for identifying these pious vocabularies. In their study of American civic life, Bellah et. al argue that

there are two languages of Americans: the primary language of *individualism*, and the secondary, somewhat subordinated vocabulary of *collectivism*. The first language, that of individualism, foregrounds matters of utility and self-expression, individual rights and enlightened self-interest, individual freedom and self-reliance. The familiar therapeutic, expressive, and managerial vocabularies take place within this frame (Macintyre; Taylor, *Modern*). Competing with this first language of Americans is the subordinated language of collectivity which draws upon the Biblical and Civic Republican traditions. The Biblical tradition stresses the intrinsic value of all persons and their obligation to respect and care for the neighbor, while the Civic Republican tradition foregrounds matters of common cause, moral purpose, consensus and concern for the welfare of others (Bellah et al, X). These two critical vocabularies align with the two ends of mythical backdrop of community; in stressing liberation from repression and ignorance, the "progressive" myth churns out the language of individualism. In stressing the loss of close meaningful human ties, the "traditionalist" myth weaves the language of community. These two are in dialectical relation, voicing the tension between modern individualist society and the ideal of community—although we are unsure of what exactly constitutes this relation. Is community a competitor, a complement or a corrective to modernity? Is it merely the therapeutic plea of a lonely people or a happy-feel-good verbal cover for the brutal ambition of bourgeois individualism?

While there are no easy answers, it is clear that rhetorics of community are inherently normative discourses concerned with discovering the ideal ordering of the modern organism. In general, the god-term of community has historically helped various groups negotiate or realign three basic tensions brought on by modern life—self and society, spiritual and material, past and future—and in rhetorical usage, "community" may be said to have accumulated the legacy of

these "motives" or "pieties" (Payne). While community does have certain linkages or common

ways of being spoken about, what Kenneth Burke calls pieties, its specific composition will

depend on the historical location and persuasive designs of the rhetoricians drawing upon

community as a resource. Only a more thorough investigation into specific grounded illustrations

of "communitarian" rhetoric can bring to light the dialectical constitution of community in the

modern imagination. To advance our understanding of community's rhetorical function, then it is

necessary to identify both its universal themes and its variants in specific domains of rhetorical

practice. I attempt to do that in the following section through a taxonomy of the primary

designations to which community refers.

The Senses of Community

In addition to serving as a god-term, community consists of a moral vocabulary and set of

"pious" connections that are employed in social and political discourse. Community, because it

is so ambiguous, has not one but several referents, and they constitute the specific resources

available to rhetors to use for their specific purposes. To illuminate this vocabulary, I draw upon

community's modern history and my wide reading of contemporary literature to flesh out

community's general or "macro" character in American discourse by identifying its key features

through a taxonomic schematization. In my earlier review of the term's history, I demonstrated

how the American understanding of community is shaded by the peculiarities of its history as it

is portrayed in our Christian, Jeffersonian, and de Tocquevillian past. The contemporary

discursive resources of community reflect the moral call of Christianity, the imagery of

Jefferson's agrarian locales, and enthusiasm of Tocqueville's voluntary associations, as well as

the larger trends of the West stemming from industrialism. With these themes in mind, we can

with some confidence submit a preliminary taxonomy of community's essential "senses." By

sense, I mean the most common and fundamental ways community is understood and employed in modern social discourse. These "essential senses" can clear up the most significant symbolic resources of the term, pointing to the pieties available within the public grammar which we might use to identify and analyze concrete rhetorical practices of community rhetorics.

In identifying the key resources available to contemporary rhetors, it is possible to analyze how specific rhetorics of community draw upon and transform the term for their strategic purposes. Of course, much has changed since the time of de Tocqueville, and so too has our understanding of community. Economic depression, wars of unprecedented scale, vast advancements in transportation and communication technologies, the fury of nationalisms, the rise and fall of communism, the spread of identity politics and shifting social moralities have all forced the continual reconceptualization of community. But the rhetors facing these circumstances had to draw upon community's terminological prestige as found in the "five essential senses" in order to advance their specific programs of action. They are the symbolic resources within the American orientation which rhetor's employ to spin motives in concordance with the specific problems arising in their era.

Although each sense of community is related, and ultimately collapses into the others, separating them for the purpose of analysis can shed light on the internal associations of community and permit the selection of situated rhetorical events which illuminate how those pieties function in American discourse. The five essential senses are: community as *obligation*, as *locale*, as *voluntary association*, as *imagined solidarity*, and as *civic spiritual ideal*. Each of these senses are mutually reinforcing and benefit from the charismatic capital of the term. I will explain each in more detail, then show its relevance and implications for analyzing specific historically situated cases.

Community as Obligation

In our review of the ancient understanding of the term, we saw that an obligation to one's fellow citizens lay at the heart of community. In his etymology, Esposito defined community as "the totality of persons united not by a 'property' but precisely by an obligation or a debt" (*Communitas* 6). The Christian tradition also emphasized the individual's duty to their fellow humans. And in the industrial era, community's moral nature reflected not only nostalgia for a simpler era of small-town living, but a concern with the anti-social implications of self-seeking individualism (Calhoun, "Community Without"; Lee; Nisbet, *Quest*). Obligation is probably the most frequently invoked sense of community and it has to be taken as the concept's core, present in every invocation whether or not it is the explicit base of appeal. Craig Calhoun is right when he observes, "Moral obligations are essentially the stuff of community" ("Toward" 112).

We can see this sense of community proliferate throughout contemporary discourse. In *Habits of the Heart*, Robert Bellah and his associates plead for citizens to heed the moral call of community in political action by acknowledging their obligation to others and pursuing projects which accent their shared destiny. Similarly, for Amitai Etzioni and his brand of political communitarians, the principle of community counters the self-seeking obsession with rights by drawing attention to our civic responsibilities (*Spirit; New Communitarian; Rights*). In the domain of Philosophy, the communitarian philosophers critique the individualistic assumptions of Rawlsian liberalism through this sense of community as virtuous obligation, such as when Alasdair Macintyre calls for civic-friendships based upon "shared conception[s] of the community's good," or Charles Taylor cautions against the deleterious effects of instrumental reason on "any strong commitment to community…with its sense of duty and allegiance." (Macintyre 232; Taylor, *Ethics* 34).

There is a strong precedent for this understanding of community in the domain of Roman (and American) civic republicanism, with the concept of virtue privileging an ethic of common concern, shared destiny and mutual respect (Hariman).When we speak of community as obligation we are bringing to the forefront our inherently connected nature and our shared destiny in order to plead for a sacrificial program of action; we inherently owe something to the community and therefore ought to sacrifice our time and interests to the greater good. Obligation is the most obviously "moral" of all the "senses."

Community as Locale

A second common way of understanding community is as a locale or sub-set of the social. This meaning is often revealed when someone speaks of a neighborhood or municipal as a community. Community in this sense generally expresses a culturally defined way of life within a relatively autonomous social unit. It is the place-based sense of community. Most frequently, appeals to locale will reference communal traditions, family relationships, and local politics with nostalgic overtones alluding to agrarian homesteads, Midwestern towns, and New England Villages. In contemporary discourse, we might also hear an appeal to the Tampa community or the campus community. Neither of these quite fits the bill for being closely-knit neighborhoods of domestic residence (Tampa would certainly be much larger than some of the other local type communities that are invoked), but they would still qualify as "locales" because they pin community as place-based phenomenon where people continuously interact and "do life together."

While community as locale is employed by all political parties, it has a special resonance amongst traditionalist conservatives and those of similar philosophies who express an deferential attitude toward the past. Edmund Burke perhaps expresses this sentiment best when he dictates,

"To be attached to the subdivision, to love the little platoon we belong to in society, is the first principle (the germ as it were) of public affections. It is the first link in the series by which we proceed towards a love to our country and to mankind" (E. Burke, 135). Close attachment to one's place of belonging—their local community—enables the continuity of tradition, a connection with ancestors and family, and a stable sense of identity. Locale also bears a connotation of people who are in tune with the seasons of nature and have meaningful relationship with their land. In the American imagination, Jeffersonian agrarianism and the rural South more generally, provide the strongest image of land-based locales.

The conservative minded also have an affinity toward community as locale because the perceived organic association of smaller-units provides an ordered and autonomous alternative to overbearing government centralization. Although not intrinsically a part the states-rights/small government argument, locale can certainly be used this way. But lest we grant conservatism the domain too exclusively, we also hear an awful lot from the political left on empowering local communities as part of their democratic platitudes about the common people and the preservation of regional distinctiveness. Like all sense of community, locale transcends partisan affiliation.

Community as Voluntary Association

The idea of community as voluntary association is a distinctive American one, traceable to Alexis de Tocqueville's portrayal of our civic genius. Tocqueville argued that extensive participation of citizens spurred by a spirit of volunteerism provides American's with its greatest source of social solidarity and political training. In the contemporary sociological tradition, voluntary association is the dominant mode for understanding American community. Yet the idea of associative joinigs as the substance of community has not always been considered

legitimate. For example, in his distinction between *gemeinscahft* and *gesellschaft*, Ferdinand Tönnies juxtaposed the natural relationships of the community against the voluntary associations that characterized society (*Community*). Making a similar point, Max Weber claimed that community was based off "feeling" while association on rationality (*Economy*). In more contemporary work, Craig Calhoun argued that voluntary associations dilute community because volunteerism undermines the autonomy of communal authority. Nonetheless, understanding community as voluntary association plays an essential role in the American tradition and cannot be written off so simply.

Alexis de Tocqueville famously called Americans the "great joiners" and argued that these associations protected America's civic culture. Drawing upon Tocqueville for inspiration, Robert Bellah and his associates demonstrate the close correlation between organizational affiliation, individual happiness, and civic collaboration (*Habits*). In the same way, Robert Putnam in *Bowling Alone*, and Robert Wuthnow in *Small Town America*, make the case that the community as constituted through the voluntary joining of various associations provide the backbone of modern American democracy.

Community as voluntary association and locale need not be seen as mutually exclusively. Instead, it is better to frame them as different emphases (or references) within the idea of community with integrated implications. Even if community and association are contradictory in some uses, that only demonstrates the powerful ambiguity of community as a rhetorical term, and its malleability to serve different purposes. When speakers invoke the voluntary association sense of community, they are emphasizing *forms of joining*, such churches, PTAs, internet communities, self-help groups, and the like to celebrate public participation. This sense of community is integral to a certain kind of liberalism which, in fearing bureaucratic rationality

and rule by elites, believes that the voluntary engagement of citizens can develop the political consciousness to sustain democratic deliberation. This sense might be taken as the category *par excellence* of liberal volunteerism.

Community as Imagined Solidarity

Community as imagined solidarity takes up the matter of identification and unity. Do we as citizens feel as though we belong to the same community? Do we identify with others or do we consider them outsiders and strangers? By imagined solidarity, I mean community as it is used to plea for inclusion, affiliation, and unity. It foregrounds the idea that we share a common identity and are bound in responsibility and destiny. It is plays upon the inkling that ultimately we are all of the same kind. When we speak of an American community or Christian community, we have this imagined solidarity in mind. It is community as an invitation to identification.

It is important to note that community as imagined solidarity does not depend upon any interpersonal interactions or mutual familiarity. When it is used this way, community is meant only to indicate the symbolic sense that we belong to the same group and are therefore somehow united. We might say that they share a sense of community and solidarity even though they have no idea who their fellow members are. It does not matter because they are believed to belong to the same community. They *imagine* this solidarity.

This fourth sense accomplishes significant boundary work—who "we are" as a community and who "we are not" (Cohen). If you are imagined to be in the community, then you are given some leeway to dissent or wander without leaving the fold because you are still "one of us." At the end, if you are one of us, you are still owed decency and respect. There is no purer statement of imagined solidarity then the humble phrase: "my people."

I take my inspiration for the label *imagined solidarity* from Benedict Anderson's influential book on nationalism, *Imagined Communities*, where he argues that common vernacular languages, cultural traditions, and other collective symbols created a common identity and "deep horizontal comradeship" which served as the basis for emerging national consciousness (7). People who never met nonetheless considered themselves part of the same national community and therefore bound to each other in a significant way. For better or for worse, they were one people, and they took pride in that communion. We are interested most, however, in rhetorical appeals to community which try to create this sense of imagined solidarity by strategically invoking the term. From a rhetorical perspective, all communities are imagined, created by language to construct people as in either a division or unity. These imaginings can be contested and controversial. Nationalism is but one example, albeit a powerful one. The political left tends to decry *imagined solidarity* as 'provincial' if the imagining is too narrow or "fascist" if the imagining is exclusively national. Yet the left is often the greatest promoter of *imagined solidarity*, such as when someone pleads for a "World Community" or "community of nations," or when Martin Luther King called for "community over chaos" to guide race relations (King Jr., *Where*). It is in this manner Richard Rorty admonishes his readers to "extend the sense of community" to its absolute largest limits (*Philosophy*).

There is clearly some cross-over between community as *obligation* and as *imagined solidarity*, in so far as those who are deemed to be "one of us" are entitled to certain accommodations and privileges that those outside are not. Community as imagined solidarity therefore is distinctly moral in that it pleads for loyalty, inclusion and identification. If a rhetor can convince you to include certain persons in your community, then you are bound to them for better and for worst, impelled by allegiance to look out for their welfare. Rhetorically, to label

something a community is to call that community into existence. Whether it is the Black community, or an academic discourse community, the very naming is designed to constitute a solitary unit, bringing forth those sentiments of belonging, loyalty and obligation. The imagined solidarity resources of community, in dealing with the raising of common consciousness and the mutual pledging of lives, takes on a mystic tinge. This comes, at least in part, from the Christian inspiration of universal community, both in the form of obligation and ontological imminence. We take these communities to be unequivocally good, not just for their utility, but on their own terms. Community is an end unto itself, and this bring us to our final and least tangible category.

Community as Civic-Spiritual Ideal

Concealed behind every other "sense" of community is the term's spiritual resonance. It does not matter whether we are speaking of a neighborhood or a voluntary association; every appeal to community is tinged by spiritual overtones. This touches deeper than community's status as a "god-term," although that certainly is a part of it. Likewise, the Christian inspiration behind community, and the intentional efforts to salvage the unity principle out of it through a secularization of the religious impulse, does something to explain the spiritual reverberation. But its mystical tenor also comes from the foundational role that community plays in the American political consciousness as both the site and the substance of democracy. Community is a spiritual ideal and it is a democratic ideal, and these two thigs are not quite separable. It is impossible then to apply this sense of community as *civic-spiritual* in any "scientific" way, because this category is the charismatic aspect of the term. Community as a spiritual-democratic ideal seems to imply an equality of persons, a common vision of the good, an ever-growing sense of loyalty and inclusion, an entire set of motives counter to an excessive individualism. It points the way to a better possible future of human relations. In its *civic-spiritual* manifestation, it takes its spirit

from John Dewey's claim that "regarded as an idea, democracy is not an alternative to other principles of associated life. It is the idea of community life itself" (*Public* 148). Community is the 'stuff' of democracy that can never be attained but which continually calls forth a more harmonizing, fraternal and hopeful attitude. It challenges us to appreciate our differences while acknowledging our mutual dependence, our shared destiny, our compassion, and our obligation to look out for our brothers and sisters. Community as democratic, and even human ideal, foregrounds our inherent togetherness. It is a source of renewal and spring of hope for a better world.

Perhaps "community as *civic-spiritual ideal*" shares too much with the "*obligation,*" and "*imagined solidarity*" categories, so it would be better to label this elusive nature of community a religious or mystic ideal. But I call it *civic-spiritual* to echo Robert Bellah's idea of Civil Religion, a concept which blurs the line between a country's religious discourse and political orientation. Civil religion is a kind of nationalistic non-denominational social faith where religious discourse infuses political rhetoric and vice verses. In this role as secular moral ethic, community grants justification, hope, meaning, and unity to democratic politics.

There is the 'non-political' emphasis of this equation too (the spiritual side of the civic-spiritual). To be spiritual, it must necessarily transcend circumstantial political concerns. The distinctive feature of this category it that community is considered as an *end*—not merely a material end, but a spiritual one. Communion is humans finding final fulfillment in the unity of all beings, for which reason we might say that even in its Western Monotheistic roots, community has a strong "pantheistic" impulse. It is pantheistic in that it stresses the ultimate singularity of every life, the final resting union of all with all in peace and union. Community in this sense is pure purpose and utopia.

The Impurity of the Senses of Community

I have suggested five common ways community is employed in modern discourse: as *civic obligation*, as *locale*, as *voluntary association*, as *imagined solidarity*, and as *civic-spiritual ideal*. This schematization helps to clarify the distinct references and rhetorical resources of community, but we must admit that almost any employment of the term "community" will invoke several of these meanings at the same time. Each category is *impure*, in that it bleeds over and ultimately collapses into the other categories. For example, the phrase "community service" simultaneously draws upon the idea of *locale* (one's particular community) and one's obligation to the fellow inhabitants (the act of service). In this usage, community stands in as a sacrificial and purifying motive, where individuals can purge their guilt by fulfilling their duty to the community. To take another example, in their research on citizen participation, sociologists assume that the most meaningful and enduring forms of association will occur in *locales* and be assisted by a civic spirit. This would primarily be the *voluntary association* category, but it would imply both the *locale* and *civic-spiritual* categories as well. Or in a final example, an appeal to the spirit of community in civil rights rhetoric might refer primarily to the *imagined solidarity* sense of community. But in so far as this was played out through participation in organizations, and in so far as the rhetor portrayed these solidarities as ultimate spiritual unions, she would also be drawing upon the *voluntary association* and *civic-spiritual* categories.

It must be concluded that no absolute line can be drawn between the various senses of community. Nevertheless, the categorical impurity does not undermine the taxonomy's utility. The blending of referents is a defining feature of community's ambiguity and god-term allure. The most successful rhetorics will play upon each of community's resources simultaneously. The

interplay of the senses creates the potential for rhetorical transformation; in the slippages and inconsistencies, there the magic happens.

Although the five senses of community cannot be ascribed to as mutually exclusive categories, they nevertheless afford a strong sense of what is happening in discourses about community. Together, obligation, locale, voluntary association, imagined solidarity, and civic-spiritual ideal clarify community's discursive resources and provide a critical tool and reference through which to identify the processes whereby community is symbolically transformed. As the most general and readily available tropes of community, the five categories enable rhetors to weave specific motives for their particular purposes.

The Contested Nature of Community

We have made it our point this far to flesh out the general character of community discourse. Since the purpose of this dissertation is to come to an understanding of "community" that is at once critical and appreciative, it was first necessary to gain a comprehension of the general tendencies and potentialities of community as a discursive phenomenon before undertaking any effort to look at more grounded examples or generating conclusions about the implications of community on modern American life. Nonetheless, a comprehensive inquiry into rhetorics of community must involve two levels of investigation: the general or macro patterns of community discourse and the historically contingent, specific transformations of those patterns in every particular enactment. The five senses—obligation, locale, voluntary association, imagined solidarity, and civic-spiritual ideal—establish an outline of the motivational vocabulary or public grammar of community discourse and a history of its transformations at the macro level; however, any general understanding community discourse is inadequate on its own because it cannot take into account the full potentiality of the concept as is it confiscated for historically

located purposes. As a too exclusively macro discussion of community discourse inhibits a fuller understanding of the critical work the concept accomplishes in practice, a rounded view of the subject must be found by grounding analysis in particular cases of American "community rhetoric" that are especially influential and revealing.

I have argued that "community" accomplishes significant dialectical work in the modern lexicon, especially in navigating the tension between self and society. This dialectic, however, is not worked out in one universally consistent way by all parties. My discussion of the general discourse may unintentionally indicate that there exists a relatively coherent singular rhetoric of community, or that community is a largely uncontested concept. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Community is a universally lauded, question-begging god-term, but that does not diminish the degree to which community is appropriated for rivaling political programs with competing histories. Community is a masker of difference, and it is important to take these substantial divergences into account to appreciate the wide-ranging dialectical work it accomplishes.

The five senses, in addition to clarifying the different referents and patterns of community discourse, reveals how "community" conceals opposing philosophies, worldviews, and political programs under the same heading. It is an obvious observation, but when different people use community as the basis of appeal, the term do not mean the same thing. Community is essentially contested, and any adequate survey of community rhetorics must address this factitious nature.

The nexus of contestation with community centers upon the idea of "common identity" and "identification." If to label something a community is to bring it into existence, then such appeals invite common identification with a conception of who we are, how we unite, and what

obligations we inherit or actions we must take. Community concerns itself with what David

Payne has called the three topoi of identity—past-future, spiritual-material, self-society—

whereby rhetors position and anchor identity between competing or complementary polarities in

the elaboration of larger discursive worlds (*Coping*). "Identifications" help persons to bridge,

conjoin, or navigate these inherent tensions of identity; common symbols of value and power,

such as community, therefore supply transformative ideas which unifies past-future, spiritual-

material, and self-society. Rhetorics of community invite identification with composed and

enacted group identities that are seen as valuable, powerful, or resolving. As community is

invoked in ambiguous ways, what it posits are contested meanings and interpretations of group

identity with divergent moral, valuative, and normative implications.

There are at least three visions of community that stand paramount, which may be labeled

"communalist," "progressive," and "traditionalist" respectively. These are of course political

headings, but they are meant primarily to designate distinct ways of splicing and conceptualizing

community that is not necessarily restricted to political commitments. Any one person can and

likely does invoke each vision at different times for different purposes, and each

conceptualization comes with a corresponding set of rhetorical moves appropriate for the

elements of community it accents. For example, a "communist" vision of community might take

up community as a moral principle to be rationally applied to the social order, and the

corresponding rhetorical move would be one of *living up to the good of community*. For

progressives, community might be a means for attaining democratic change, emphasizing

participation and engagement through voluntary association and imagined solidarity. The

matching rhetorical maneuver would be one of making the world a better place by *getting*

involved and mobilizing for a positive change. Meanwhile a traditionalist vision may conceive of

community as a natural and ordered way of life, founded in locale or tradition, with a consequent rhetorical emphasis on *preserving identity and conserving an inherited good.*

I submit that these three visions of community correspond to integral ways that community is constructed, negotiated, and contested in American discourse. They represent not only seminal rhetorical tropes, but paradigms and political presumptions about the social order. Discourses of community are in the business of working out the ideal relation between self and society, and community functions as the rhetorical fix that sets the order right again. Therefore, by analyzing these contending discursive claims, something very practical might be revealed about the biases and prejudices underlying American society's most prevalent communal motifs. Such analyses of communalist, progressive, and traditionalist rhetorics of community might shine light on their areas of convergence and divergence, with suggestive implications on how modern attempt to navigate the relations between past and future, spiritual and material, self and society. They might also reveal the utility of "community" as a device for rhetorical transformation, one that possesses certain symbolic inclinations or rhetorical moves depending on the particular "linguistic recipe" used to construct community.

In the following three chapters, therefore, I conduct three historical-critical case studies of community rhetorics representing each of the contending political programs, analyzing the communalism of John Humphrey Noyes, the progressivism of Jane Addams, and the traditionalism of the Southern Agrarians. I pay special attention to how their competing constructions of community lead them to particular vocabularies and philosophies, and how they enact rhetorical transformations that purport to correct the social order.

I choose to go historical, rather than contemporary for a number of reasons. Both the history and research on community have identified its ascent into a god-term as a result of the

industrial era, where it was used by rhetoricians of various stripes to make sense of modern conditions and contest the economic, social, and political changes occurring throughout the world. The age of industrialism, therefore, offers perhaps the most fruitful instances where various actors attempted to work out what community meant and how it might be utilized to navigate modern identity. In turning historical, I do not aim to assert strict continuity or causality with contemporary rhetorics of community. Rather, these case studies can permit the critic to more thoroughly work out a vocabulary motives in order to refine our critical sensibilities.

Nevertheless, my interest in community rhetorics is not purely historical, and this project proceeds out of an acute awareness of the current state of American discourse and a curiosity over the role "community" plays in it. An inquiry and demonstration of the philosophies, vocabularies, and rhetorical moves of historical cases might aid in our critical capacity to evaluate modern day phenomenon, and it should not take much imagination to apply our lessons to the present. To put it another way, this dissertation aims to comment on community as a discourse of both historical interest and contemporary implication.

Burke tells us that symbolic acts are "strategies for encompassing a situation." The uses of community as god-term, I argue, are ways of encompassing situations or dislocations brought on by modern life: (1) tensions between self or self-interestedness and society or social-interest (2) tensions between spiritual and material values, or conflict of a multiplicity in spiritual values/goals (3) tensions between past and future, or the need for a shared platform of social change, with piety toward "community" offering identification and transcendent value sufficient, with spiritual/integrative rewards, to compel reformation (Payne). Admittedly, these functions are not entirely distinct, but they do identify the specific ways the "community" can intervene in the conduct of self/social relations and in ameliorating the vicissitudes of modern life.

Further, in the discourse of these select groups, one might see that the concepts and pieties of "community" is itself the site of conflict or struggle. While it may be insufficient to propose a historical evolution of the term community in and through these prominent reformist movements, one cat at least ponder the rough outlines of a "genealogy" of the idea of community in these rhetorical uses, as interesting in the divergences or variations and ambiguities the term helps to mask or bridge as the continuities which might otherwise appear somewhat coincidental. Either way, we can rest the analysis on observing the pragmatic use of the god-term community in rhetoric that addresses these ills—and possible solutions—in modern American society and rhetorics of its reform.

In the act of criticism, the critic cannot know what will be found until he or she is actually immersed in the texts. Yet, it is customary for the critic to offer hypotheses for their study based upon their observations in the research and general socio-political discourse. With this in mind, I submit the following seven preliminary theses about community rhetoric to be explored in the succeeding chapters:

1. Community serves as a god-term in American discourse, providing an ideal for ordering lives, evaluating actions, and justifying behavior. It is a term that transcends partisan divides, with a "spiritual" moral core of individual sacrifice for the collective good.

2. Community is compensatory to modernity. Long framed as antithetical to modernity, community is offered by rhetors as a lost ideal, a corrective, and a source of social improvement. In each case, community is meant to compensate for the deficiencies of modern life.

3. The central rhetorical work community accomplishes is in navigating the self-society dialectic. Community foregrounds concerns with the ideal ordering of society and the

proper relation of the individual with the collective. Rhetorics of community promise to rebalance, reorder, or realign the social order to fix the imbalance which as arose. Community in this regard is a stabilizing force.

4. Community weaves a historical vision of past and future to provide a sense of order that contextualizes the present. These histories and ideals are not necessarily the same across groups (as I will show in progressive and conservative uses), but in each case it presents a mythic background and a future goal which allows citizens to situate themselves in a meaningful historical moment.

5. Utopian community rhetorics will tend to take community as an abstraction, a set of ideals or moral principles to be rationally applied to the social order. It focuses on institutions as the purveyors of motives, believing justice and harmony to be the natural state of human affairs that has been lost to corrupt systems. It therefore seeks to remove unethical institutions and replace them with alternatives in rational accordance with community virtues. Such a conception of community seeks the purification of human motives as its end. It seeks to correct the individualistic and capitalist assumptions which encourage socially harmful behavior by replacing it with a morality that takes sacrifice and submission to the collective good as the ultimate aim. For the utopian communalist, community is the ideal to be strive for, a future-oriented program that takes the principles of the past and seeks to hold modern society accountable for fulfilling them.

6. Progressive rhetorics of community will tend to be "future" oriented and view community as a vehicle of democratic change. Rhetorics of community in this tradition most frequently compensate for the "excessive individualism" which they seek to counter. The emphasis is upon creating new forms of community that *adjust* and *reform*

society to make it better align with more ideal forms of human interaction. There is as strong hint of universality and "extension" of the sense of community to an ever-growing number of people. Progressives fluctuate between a myth of loss and liberation, and they display an especially strong predilection toward the categories of voluntary association, obligation, and imagined solidarity.

7. Traditionalist rhetorics of community will tend to be "past" oriented in that they seek to preserve the positive historic elements of social relationships. Rhetorics of community in this tradition most frequently advocate for community as the home of the individual, the place where citizens find their ultimate freedom *and* most enduring relationships. The emphasis is upon order, organic relations, autonomy, and tradition. They sometimes display tribalistic tendencies. There is a strong defense of partial associations, particularity and the provincial or parochial ideals of community. Traditionalists are more likely to emphasize a myth of communal loss, and they display an especially strong predilection toward the categories of locale, association, and obligation.

Three analytical chapters will help to determine the relative merit of these seven theses. If this project is successful in its aim, then it will arrive at a critical appreciation of community's rhetorical genius, an appreciation that possesses an enhanced terminology of motives and refined critical sensibility so that it will is possible to interpret, evaluate, and improve the reception and propagation of our symbolic resources today.

CHAPTER THREE

JOHN NOYES AND THE ONEIDA: COMMUNITY AS TRANSCENDENCE

In the introduction of this inquiry into the rhetorical uses of "community," I noted the automatic, positive, and nearly unquestioned value that the concept of community evokes in American culture. In a political culture where communism or socialism are widely discarded, "community" as a positive value and a worthy goal is embraced by traditionalist and progressive alike, as we will see in Chapters Five and Six. Whereas there are important differences in how these groups believe community is derived and can be achieved, the term itself operates as a spiritualized value, one worthy of preservation, pursuit, and sacrifice, and one capable of resolving conflicts, tempering self-interest, and even redeeming transgressions against others— as when we sentence people to "community service" to somehow compensate for their offenses.

Scholars of rhetoric have variously called such concepts "transcendent terms," "ultimate terms," or "god-terms." Such terms and their attendant associations, however vague and even contradictory, seem to evoke an unquestioned good, or priority—one seldom has to defend the value of such ideas, and they appear to generate consensus and motivation whenever invoked. In coining the idea of a god-term, Kenneth Burke observed that in such an expression we can "posit a world…seeing all as emanations, near and far, of its light" (*Grammar* 105). Richard Weaver adopted Burke's language, suggesting that the "capacity to demand sacrifice is the surest indicator" of the presence of a god-term (*Ethics* 214). Payne suggests that god-terms have the rhetorical capability of ascribing universality, order, and value to those things they are alleged to

sponsor in their "emanation" or "light" (*Coping* 137). In common and ordinary usage, community does seem to compel such connotations: work on its behalf has a salvational quality that needs no defense, it promises a moral orderliness and positive outcome to our efforts to transcend the limits of self-interest and strife.

Kenneth Burke writes that when we encounter such a reduction and "simplicity," we must "ask ourselves what complexities are subsumed beneath it." Such a "purity of motive," he writes, cannot "prevail" in "actuality," but only "in principle" (*Grammar* 105) Yet, rhetorically, we find the pragmatic necessity of finding such guiding principles, those that promise cooperation, agreement, and positive results, in our projects to reform and redeem society.

In Chapter Two, I sought to sketch in general ways the history of the term community: Clearly it has been a focal point of sociological studies—in many ways a god-term and core value for sociologists—and this suggests a usage and history more broad than Nineteenth century American culture. In part, the virtue of community does have to do with the sociology of developing America, as local, regional, ethnic, and religious social groupings were preserved in the relatively isolated small villages and towns of our settlement. To a great extent, the lament for the loss of community and desire for return is based on the autonomy and commonalities of these groups. I argue that part of the positive, spiritualized, connotation of community comes from religious history, keeping in mind many groups in developing America sought precisely this kind of autonomy and isolation to restrict and preserve religious practice—and many of these sectarian communities, specifically Amish and Mennonite, persist today.

I would contend that the rhetorical legacy of the god-term "community" is coterminous with American history and spiritual thought, and we find it in Emerson and the New England Transcendentalist movement, as well as explicitly in pragmatist Josiah Royce at the end of the

nineteenth century, and implicitly traces of it in Deweyan notions of democracy. In addition to the hundreds of ethnic and religious communities formed in the settlement of the American frontier, an especially evident and dramatic rhetorical focus on community can be found in the Nineteenth Century experiments with utopian and socialist communities. In general, these utopias defended and justified their endeavors by way of reference to the moral mandates of community, and for this reason, provide particularly rich, if radical, cases of rhetoric that directs citizens to re-order their lives in accordance with community as god-term. While there were over forty utopian communes developed between 1820 and 1890, none is more well-known and revealing of the transcendent powers of "community" than the Oneida Community of New York, initiated in 1840 and prospering until 1880.

John Humphrey Noyes was a Christian pastor and social philosopher who developed and promoted a millennialist theology called "Perfectionism." For Noyes, living in accordance with community meant that individuals could aspire to live perfect lives. Noyes was also a student of evolution and an enthusiast for enlightenment values. He believed the conflicts of faith, science, technology, and progress could be transcended or reconciled by living as a separate community with individuals devoted to and sacrificing for the perfection of relations within the association. Noyes' conception of the ideal community, and his address of the contemporaneous problems of society and spirt, are symptomatic of the "pieties" about community at play in the Nineteenth Century American culture, and are a milestone in the rhetorical uses of community to both preserve traditional values and align individuals with progress—thus embodying and transcending both the conservative and progressive values of community that lived on into the Twentieth Century. In this way, the Oneida might be taken as a "representative anecdote" of the rhetorical legacy of community as god-term in American political rhetoric.

Faith and Science in the Utopian Community Movement

In the Nineteenth Century world of dramatic industrial change, thousands of Americans decided to join utopian communities in hopes of discovering a more meaningful and humanistic form of life. Dissatisfied with the larger social order and economic orientation of modernism, citizens increasingly considered the possibility of creating "perfect" societies founded on alterative institutions. In this effort, "community" provided a guiding template and source of inspiration for remaking the social world based upon moral principles.

A defining feature of the utopian community movement, and of John Noyes' rhetoric in particular, was its fusion of the rivaling orientations of faith and science through the cause of community. To compensate for the malaise of industrialism by imagining a social order characterized by a more equal and participatory system of organization, the utopic experiments drew upon both religious and secular orientations, as represented by two driving forces of the community movement: The Enlightenment advances of scientific rationality and the restorationism of the Second Great Awakening. In the rhetoric of John Noyes, the division of faith and science was symbolically transformed into a unity through the god-term *community*, supplying a transcendent value from which to reorganize the material order.

From the dawn of the Enlightenment, Western civilization harbored a growing and uneasy relationship between scientific rationality and Christian doctrine. Scientific rationality was founded on the skepticism of inherited authority, while religious dogma largely relied upon it. Although it was commonly held that the revelations of religion and the findings of science were complementary, that view became increasingly fraught with the advent of Darwinian evolution. Darwin's thesis on the origin of species conflicted with what was generally upheld as a literal interpretation of Scripture. The growing antagonism between the claims of science and

the claims of faith led to a symbolic conflict of authority between two ways of knowing; religious authority was increasingly undermined and delegitimized as rationalistic presuppositions gained greater adherence.

This crisis or failure of worldview, where the claims of one orientation increasingly conflicted the claims of the other, was the rhetorical scene in which John Humphrey Noyes' created his Perfectionist utopia, the Oneida Community. In "community," Noyes found a unifying term for Faith and Science, a principle from which to criticize industrial society and to reorganize human affairs. His conception of community was a peculiar hybrid of Enlightenment rationality and Christian theology that supplied a spiritual value to guide the material order.

Scientific Rationality and the American Enlightenment

One major source of inspiration for John Noyes and the utopian community movement was the influence of scientific and Enlightenment rationality on American social thought. Proponents of Enlightenment thinking adopted a predilection for rationalism, skepticism of religious authority, emphasis on scientific method, conviction that men were essentially good, and belief in the myth of social and material progress. Its rationalist tendencies meant that, for a growing number, the chief source of authority was reason itself, not tradition or religious belief. The merit of existing institutions and inherited beliefs were to be measured by their consistency with abstract principles and weighed according to the available scientific evidence.

The Enlightenment extended its lessons to the nature of human relationships and social institutions. Social organizations were no longer self-justifying, but had to be vindicated by appeal to reason, principle, and consequence. In so far as the institutions of industrialism failed to attain such justification, it was thought that they should be eliminated and replaced with rationally-defensible alternatives. The undeniable material achievements of science created an

optimism for reform and experimentation, and served as evidence that an enlightened population could harness the power of reason to reconstruct a more perfect society. Since the Enlightenment taught that men were essentially good, but had been corrupted by irrational and immoral institutions, it was believed that by replacing existing institutions with rational democratic alternatives, civilization could recover the natural state of peace and harmony characterizing early human communities.

In this context, the Enlightenment provided a series of attitudes favorable to experiments with utopic communes: a desire to reclaim human harmony, confidence in the ability of citizens to rationally devise a superior social organization by redesigning institutions, and, for the more secularly-inclined utopias, a hope to live free from the infections of religious dogma. The secular drive toward community, however, was paralleled in the Christian movement that came to be known as the Second Great Awakening.

Restorationism and the Second Great Awakening

A second stimulus of John Noyes and the utopian community movement was the moral and theological justification received from the "restorationism" of the Second Great Awakening. Restorationism was a form of evangelical primitivism which taught that Christians could usher in the Millennium or Kingdom of God by returning to the pure and primitive model of the church and working to remake society in that image. The theology of restorationism can be understood as a rejection of the complexities of modern life and a call for simplicity, working to reclaim instead a minimalism of human needs and seeking intimate human relationships of sympathy and obligation. Communes, in this context, promised a way of returning to life's basic necessities.

Disputing the skeptical rationalism of the Enlightenment, the Second Great Awakening embraced a kind of romanticism that glorified the past and nature. The sentimentalized past,

where humans lived in close association with each other and nature—unlike the mechanical, unnatural, and divided state of modern society—held within it the program of remedy for the present. Such nostalgia was not pessimistic or reactionary; rather the backward-glance was used as an impetus for social change, pointing out the deficiencies of industrial lifestyles and calling for reform. The Awakening preached a doctrine of millennialism, where engaging in good works and social restructuring was praised for progressing the world closer toward Christ's perfect reign on Earth. The Awakening thus raised an awareness of contemporaneous problems of slavery, poverty, greed, and women's subordination—all of which were denounced for falling short of the Christian-communal ideal. Religious sources of inspiration, in sum, held a strong utopic impulse and back-to-basics message which found neat expression in the movement to found communes of like-minded believers.

As it stood, the religious and secular perspectives were in a rivaling relation: where the Enlightenment questioned the authority of belief and tradition, the Awakening relied upon it; where the Enlightenment rejected much of the past as corrupted by blindness, the Awakening sought to recover the past's virtue of simplicity. Faith and science invoked different sources of authority and conflicting standards of evidence.

Nevertheless, John Noyes and likeminded thinkers took the two and reconceived of them as a unity by emphasizing their essential similarities and compatibility in the cause of *community*. Both the Enlightenment and Second Great Awakening, he showed, were favorable to social experimentation with communes because they emphasized the virtues of simplicity and lost human community; both contained a strong utopic impulse founded on the belief that moral effort and reform could progress society toward a near perfect state; and both were optimistic that the antidote for Nineteenth Century social ills was a return to the natural harmony of the

human race by remaking social institutions in accordance with moral principles. When grouped together, Noyes used the Enlightenment and the Awakening to endorse a rhetorical vision of the material social order that was infused with and organized according to a transcendent value—the value of community. Community, as the unifier of orientations, enlisted secular and religious rationalities in the common pursuit of an improved society aligned with abstract and "spiritual" principles. Christian theology provided the picture of communal perfection; scientific rationalism provided the means for attaining it.

Unifying Faith and Science through Community

Noyes' first rhetorical move was thus to posit community as the highest moral striving of human life, to be aimed for at both the individual and social level. He drew upon a particular variant of Christian theology to develop his conception of community, turning to science as the vehicle for making the ideal of a reality. Noyes not only rhetorically unifies faith and science, but also attains a vision of community that rebukes the "selfish" values of industrialism and calls for a platform of communalized social change. He accomplished this through a rhetorical appeal to the Christian ideals of "Perfectionist" theology and the rational principles of scientific inquiry.

Community as Christian Ideal

Noyes' decision to found the Oneida Community spawned first from his Christian convictions and Perfectionist theology which submitted "Community" to be the highest Christian virtue. Perfectionism was a diffuse constellation of ideas held together only by the overriding conviction that Christ's resurrection made human perfection a possibility. It was a controversial belief system founded on a "heretical" doctrine: true Christians must become perfect.

Underlying Noyes' theology was the belief that the Second Coming of Christ had already taken place during the sack of the Temple of Jerusalem in 70 AD. This provision meant the

millennium of Jesus' reign of peace and harmony was imminent, awaiting only the labors of faithful Christians to bring it into existence by an "immediate and totally cessation from sin." Noyes took Christ's exhortation, "Be you perfect, even as my Father in heaven is perfect," literally. What this meant in practical terms was that Noyes, like other millennialists, believed that Christians could usher in the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth through the moral reformation of social life. It was the duty of citizens to make both the individual and the society perfect.

For Noyes, community as found in the Garden of Eden, the Pentecostal Church, and the Kingdom of Heaven was the model for "perfection" in human relations. In the original state of human affairs, there was perfect order, justice, unity, equality, and intimacy among all people. With the Fall of Man, that true community had been lost. However, with Christ's death and resurrection, individuals could again be purified and reinstall a true community. The theological image of this renewed community, for Noyes, was revealed with the primitive Church at the moment of Pentecost:

> All the believers were together, and had all things in common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, as every man had need.'—'The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul; neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things in common.' Acts 2: 44, 45, and 4:32. Here is unity like that of the Father and Son: 'All mine thine, and all thine mine (*Bible Communism* 28)

In Noyes' view, the selflessness displayed in the Pentecostal Community of Saints offered the ultimate portrait of an ethically superior society to be sought after in human affairs—one characterized by unity, equality, and the sharing of all things. Community was a people pledged together and living by a system of communism. Perfect citizens shared all possessions and owned nothing. Thus the communism of Pentecost presented a perennial challenge to the Church. The Pentecostal Community, he argued, should not be seen as a one-time historical event, but as the *organizational principle* of society:

> Pentecostal community of interests was its final and permanent condition in the heavens…The seed of heavenly unity fell into the earth, and was buried for a time, but in the harvest at the Second Coming it was reproduced, and became the universal and eternal principle of the church (*Bible Communism* 29)

As the eternal principle of the Church, the Pentecostal Community beckoned believers to put behind the selfishness of the world and implement a higher standard in their societies. Unlike the capitalist framework preceding in America, this social order would function through a *voluntary communism of property*. Like the Pentecostal Community, modern citizens must give up all they have for the good of the body, sacrificing their own interests for the collective good.

For this reason, Noyes proclaimed that it was the responsibility of citizens to reclaim ethical social relations by installing a perfect of communion of saints on Earth, and he labeled this program "Bible Communism." As a non-Marxist communist enterprise, Noyes lacked a conception of class warfare and an emphasis upon the Nation-state. Rather, Bible Communism grew out of the positive "Pentecostal" motive of Christian equality and community, and might be better labeled voluntary "communalism." In his program, communism was the Christian response to social ills, for it represented the triumph of holiness over sin. By forming a loving Community of Believers where each individual *subordinated their own interests* to the interests of the body, selfishness could be abolished.

In summation, for Noyesian rhetoric, Christianity supplied the spiritual values of ethical behavior, with "community" being the rhetorical template or set of principles to which individual and social relations should aim. Yet, Noyes decided that any hope of achieving such a community was dependent upon the promise of scientific rationality. Science was the indispensable counterpart of and mechanism for Christian Community.

Scientific Rationality as the Vehicle for Attaining Community

The second impetus behind the creation of the Oneida Community was Noyes' adherence to the rationalist presuppositions of Enlightenment science. Noyes' vision of Christian Community emphasized the points of convergence with the Enlightenment myth, such as the natural goodness of man, the corrupting influence of institutions on human character, vigor for experiment and reform, and optimism towards the ability of human mind to attain a more perfect morality. Both orientations believed the world had fallen from its organic harmony, but that perfect community could once again be achieved. Yet Noyes took this common ground further by demanding the Christian pursuit of community enlist scientific rigor. While Perfectionist theology proffered the communal ideal, scientific rationality provided the means of attaining it.

For Noyes, society had no excuse for persisting in disorder and injustice. Tradition and convention was not an adequate justification for social institutions because they were blind, irrational, and unscientific. The achievements of science were evidence that human rationality could now create for itself any society it saw fit, so long as it embraced an enlightened spirit of experimentation and reform. It was science which offered the best path forward for improving the human lot and attaining Christian Community. Therefore, in Noyes' rhetoric there was no discrepancy between the rationalities, but rather a "conjunction of faith and science" working together to bring forth a perfect human harmony:

> many things indicate to me that we are the body in which God designs to bring science and religion together and solder them into one…I should advise, therefore, that the spiritually minded look favorably towards science, and that the scientifics look favorably towards faith, and see if God will not bring the hearts of these long-separated classes together
> (Noyes, *Auto* 119)

What was separated, for Noyes, is united in community—science becomes the "handmaid of faith" (Noyes, *Auto* 168). The findings of Darwin, Lyell, Tyndall and the Positivists were contributions to the faith, and to ignore them would be to neglect one's Christian duties (Noyes,

in Parker, *Yankee Saint* 262). Christians must be scientists seeking to rationally improve their world, and bring social processes under the control of human reason. The Oneida Community was designed to be such a scientific experiment in Christian communism.

To be truly scientific, Noyes argued, there must be complete logical consistency in the application of community principles to the social order. This meant any institution of modern society which fell short of the Christian ideal must be eliminated and replaced with rationally-planned communist alternatives. Decisions about the social order must be scientifically directed so as to attain institutions which breed desirable human motives. Since perfect persons required perfect institutions, it was only through the scientific and rational design of the social order that true community could be reclaimed.

In summary, I submit that Noyes' accomplished the rhetorical bridging of science and faith from enemies to allies, uniting them around the ideal of perfect community—community was the Christian principle of ethical action, and scientific rationality was the indispensable means for attaining it. In a corrupt society, community was the transcendent spiritual value over the material organism, promising a purified individual morality and a utopic social relation.

Noyes' reconciliation of faith and science into a god-term of order and value enabled his second rhetorical move: that of reorienting the world away from the materialistic motives of economic man—which Noyes called "selfishness"—and toward the communist moral values of "Community." That rhetorical endeavor is the subject of the following section.

Reorienting Society toward Community

With a synthesis of scientific and religious rationalities, Noyes aimed to reorient American society away from the materialistic values of individualism and economic liberalism and toward those of "community." For Noyes, the dominant orientation of modern society was

one of self-interestedness, where individuals were encouraged to seek their own benefit above the welfare of others. In contrast, Noyes sought a purified socially-directed morality of sacrifice and submission to others that lived up to the ordering spiritual principles of community. He therefore constructed a dichotomy between the two competing perspectives, which might be called "selfish" motives and "community" motives, with Noyes advocating the latter as the only ethical system of human action. If "community" was the *god-term* of John Noyes and the Oneida, then "selfishness" was *the devil-term*—a short-hand expression of repulsion representing the social evils to be set right through the adoption of community values. As he hoped to rhetorically refashion social values, the actions of community formed the realm of sanctioned motives, while those of selfishness were condemned as moral failures.

For Noyes, selfishness was the defining feature of the modern world, and represented an altar of increasing individualism or "fall" from communal grace. The selfish motives were entrenched not only in philosophy and rhetoric, but also in the institutions of industrial society, and these exerted a corrupting influence on human character. Therefore, his mission was one of contesting the moral failures of the modern world and purifying the social order by removing the sources of "selfishness" and replacing them motives in rational accordance with the ideals of Christian and scientific community.

To understand Noyes' life-work as rhetorician and architect of the Oneida, it is integral that this re-orientation through the stark opposition of "selfishness' and "community" be expounded. Accordingly, in this section, I explore Noyes' attempt to reorient society away from the materialistic values of individualistic liberalism and to those of community by constructing a dichotomy between "selfish" and "community" motives. In so doing, Noyes embraced a rationalist and communist conception of community that called for the material restructuring of

social life along communist principles and the inward mortification of selfishness to the sacrificial principles of community. I here work to illuminate the conflict of motives as they were constituted in Noyes' dialectic, demonstrating how it formed a critique of industrial-capitalist values and advocated a communist conception of community as the only system in which real moral values could be secured. Because Noyes' rhetoric started from rationalist presumptions, his exposition of selfish and community motives became his premises for evaluating, reorienting, and redesigning a superior individual morality and social order.

The Selfish-Society Motive

The modern industrial world with which Noyes was concerned possessed an orientation that privileged individualism, economic growth, self-sufficiency, and private property. The corresponding value system it endorsed was one promoting action that bettered the lot of entrepreneurs, capitalists, and private individual citizens. Rather than foregrounding questions of social benefit and welfare, the orientation of enlightened self-interest supposed that in seeking the best for the self, the entire society would benefit. Yet for Noyes, this position was a farce, and what the philosophy of economic liberalism really amounted to was an endorsement of selfish motives that put individual interests above that of all citizens.

For Noyes, "selfishness" was essentially the desire to possess, to be preeminent, to control exclusively. Selfishness was founded in the spirit of *ownership* or *property*, for both are motivated by a desire to possess and control something *exclusively* for one's own gratification. To act selfishly is to emphasize *I* and *mine* to the neglect of *we* and *ours*. When acted upon, selfish motives incite individuals to gather and hoard possessions for their own exclusive use when they could be used to meet the genuine needs of others. It ignores the heavenly mandate to "love the brother as thyself," and instead seeks to advance the interest of the individual.

Selfishness is the opposite of love, fellowship, and brotherhood, because it views others as objects of manipulation and control.

The orientation of economic industrialism and the prevailing motives of modern "society," for Noyes, were outgrowths of "selfishness" which had been institutionalized into the fabric of the social order. Private property was the most prominent example of such moral transgressions, but it was not the only social evil implicated by the devil-term. Specifically, Noyesian rhetoric identified four social manifestations of selfishness in violation of the perfect principles of community. They were private property, "special love," love of preeminence, and isolation. Any action associated with such transgressions were cause for opprobrium and reproof. By reviewing each of these four evils, Noyes' view of Society and the devil-term "selfishness" takes on a more concrete character, and we can begin to understand how "community" functions as the rhetorical corrective to modern moral failings.

Private Property

The first incarnation of selfishness was found in the dominion of private property and the spirit of ownership. Noyes connected the exclusiveness of property with self-aggrandizement, egoism, disregard for one's fellows, and rejection of God's authority. In the industrial world, he argued, economic relations discouraged empathy for the suffering while exacerbating the financial gap between rich and poor. Rather than looking out for the needs of others, private property encouraged individuals to hoard for their own gratification. For Noyes, the spirit of property refused to acknowledge God's ultimate ownership of all earthly things, instead instructing the person to believe that they are the rightful owners with the authority to do whatever they want without consideration for the welfare of others. In this way, *private property exerted a corrupting influence* on an individual's character, because it taught citizens to view all

things of the world, including other people, as objects to be possessed and dominated. The first mark of selfish motives was therefore the idea that a person ever had an exclusive right to the ownership of anything or anyone. In so far as society was organized around such an idea, it was operating on a plane of immorality.

Special Love and Exclusion

The second manifestation of selfishness in society was a phenomenon Noyes labeled "Special Love." Noyes defined Special Love as the intimate and exclusive attachments which develop between two people, usually two romantic lovers or a parent and a child, that take on characteristics of the spirit of ownership. The problem with "special love" was that these individual attachments were by their nature *exclusionary*, meaning they prohibit a wider love of all humanity and bestow unwarranted privileges on the special lover.

Since the partner in a special love relationship is treated with the same sense of possession characterizing private property, Noyes argued that these relationships do not exhibit genuine love at all, but become another avenue for the sinful love of self. For example, in Marriage, the partner—especially the women—is controlled as if she was owned by the husband. Noyes claimed that this made Marriage more akin to Slavery than to love. A parent's jealous attachment to their biological children functions much the same way, as the child is viewed as the possession of the parent rather than as a free and equal being. The unreasonable preference for the advantage of one's own child over the good of other children may appear altruistic, but it is really a way of puffing up the parent's ego. Noyes thus decided that "Special Love," as it had been institutionalized in marriage and parenting, inserted the property-motive into the family and inhibited the development of a more universal love. Truly ethical human relations required feelings of attachment that were not characterized by such possessive, self-serving interests.

Love of Preeminence and Inequality

A third way selfishness gets expressed in society is through what Noyes' called the "Love of Preeminence." While property is accumulated through the selfish desire to possess and control, the love of preeminence is the kindred desire to be the greatest, best, or foremost amongst comrades. It could be found in those "monstrous swellings of egoism," excited by "envy, jealousy, and strife," that deny human equality and assert the superiority of the self (Circular July 19, 1869). For Noyes, this form of selfishness was primarily a spiritual problem exacerbated by the competitive nature of society (*Circular*, February 25, 1867). The lust for preeminence was nothing but self-adulation and elevation of personal interests above those of the Community and the common good. Love of preeminence, like private property, violated pure human motives because it was predicated upon human inequality. By desiring to attain acclaim, praise, and preeminence, individuals were showing themselves to be motivated not by altruism, but by the egoistic belief that they were superior to their fellows.

Isolation and Division

Finally, the selfish motive found expression in the social inclination towards *isolation* and *division.* Noyes asserted that citizens were born with an *obligation* to serve their fellows, and that true freedom could only be found in the unity of human association. Nevertheless, the predominate tendency of society was to withdraw and separate the self from its obligations to its fellow citizens. For Noyes, such isolation was not only personally unfulfilling, but was a lazy and neglectful form of self-aggrandizement. Individuals who tried to withdraw from their social commitments abused the shallow "liberty of independence" and forfeited the superior "liberty of union" (in Parker, *Yankee Saint* 234). Such a person cries, "Hands off, leave me alone" and "I want to do as I please without interference" (in Parker, *Yankee Saint* 234). This attitude of

isolation, for Noyes, was clear evidence that a person is held captive by the selfish motive: "Isolation and opposition of thought and will, instead of being the appropriate results of divine illumination, are the surest proofs that the society in which they appear, as a whole or in part, is guided by self and the devil" (*Berean*). Isolation neglects the human obligations to one's fellows inherent in ethical behavior. In this way, isolation was a form of selfish *division* that separated people who should be united in love.

Taken together, private property, special love, love of preeminence, and isolation might be understood as Society's constitutive sins encapsulated by the Devil-term "Selfishness." Such terms of the industrial orientation espoused values of exclusion, inequality, and division; they represented an undesirable and corrupted system of motives to be contested, eliminated, and purified by the perfect principles of community. In constructing the discourse of economic liberalism in such an unflattering way, Noyes aimed to reorient his auditors away from the materialistic motives of economic man and towards the transcendent community motives of *sacrifice*. In contrast to the corruption of society by the selfish-property motive, Noyes pointed to an alternative sacrificial ordering of values which could restore the proper moral relation between self and society. That alternative order was founded on community, which represented the state of Godliness, scientific progress, morality, and human perfection.

The Community Motive

As Noyes addressed the essentially "selfish" values of industrial capitalism in the most rhetorically disparaging way possible, so his rhetoric cast community in the most redemptive fashion he could. Accepting community and its transformative powers meant constant vigilance against the inherent selfishness of modern life, and adopting a set of practices that countered and

nullify the selfish motive. Five key terms represented the moral and behavioral reorientation to the value of community and the social harmony and ethical being it promised the individual.

Keeping in mind the template of Christian practice at the base of Noyes' program, one is reminded of Richard Weaver's position that "the capacity to demand sacrifice" is the surest indicator of the "god-term" at work" (*Ethics* 214) "Selfishness" becomes an "original sin" of sorts, in so far as its temptations and motivations are given to the modern individual, and insofar as these motives separate us from the ideal community and its redemptive power. Looking at Oneidan practice to vanquish this core motive, and to conform to the idea, one can see that the individual is called upon to be *in a state of perpetual self-sacrifice* on behalf of the community idea. I call this the "community motive," and while the Oneidan practice is extreme, we can find variations on this sacrificial motive in other kinds and degrees as regards the god-term community in contemporary society.

This state of perpetual self-sacrifice, a symbolic slaying of the "selfish motive" within oneself, is precisely what Kenneth Burke calls "mortification" in his analysis of *The Rhetoric of Religion* (188). It is not so much that one purges oneself of bad motives and emerges purified, but that social order depends on one's perpetual state of "mortifying" or encountering barriers that one "seeks not to cross." In this way, as Weaver styled it, our lives and practices are a constant reminder of the value and redemptive power of the god-term, community. Through active, and constant, participation in its making, this ideal is asserted and kept at the forefront of our motivations. We move toward the ideal, as it were, but never really hope to achieve it entirely, as this pursuit itself perpetuates the value and the practices that embody it and orient us toward "perfection" of the communal motive.

In the case of each of Noyes' five moral aspirations of the ideal community, we find the individuals suspended in this state of perpetual mortification or sacrifice. To endorse community meant to reject the dominant values and institutions of the modern world and embrace an other-oriented motive composed of unity, love, family, improvement, and communism. These five terms represented the moral aspirations of Noyes' reorientation toward community, that, if followed, promised to attain a more favorable social pact of human harmony, characterized by ethical action and social relations.

Unity (as Consensus)

The first value endorsed by community was that of *unity*, which was a corrective to the industrial tendencies toward *isolation* and *division*. To be united, for Noyes, meant to be likeminded, sharing in belief, doctrine, and purpose. He called for his followers to live as a singular whole, acting in concert because every branch of the doctrine of holiness [perfectionism] tends to unity" (*Berean* 461). The kind of unity Noyes had in mind was totalizing and doctrinaire, because it was founded on a consensus of Faith that allowed the religious body to subsume all other loyalties. Like much of his perfectionist program, Noyes' vision of unity took the Kingdom of God as its model. He writes:

> when that kingdom comes, a principle of unity will appear which will draw them all into one organization, or sweep them away with the besom of destruction…It is eminently ridiculous to suppose that the kingdom of God will be composed of a multitude of denominations, differing in doctrine, and antagonistical in action (*Berean* 443; 445)

In the perfect community, the division of the world would come to an end. All persons will be cleaved together in word and spirit, pledged in one encompassing association. For this reason, Noyes pleaded with citizens to strive for a complete unity of agreement, one that pushed all partial loyalties to the wayside and overcame division by flattening ideological difference into a common mission. That is, in unity, Noyes was advocating the value of complete *consensus*.

The consensus he envisioned was not of a coercive nature, but one internally compelled by participation in a common faith. Noyes believed Christianity naturally inclined believers toward a unity of heart and mind, so that "faith" and "unity" were essentially synonymous. The act of Faith, Noyes explains, is "an act of union. It joins the life of the believer to the life of Christ. It draws a man out of his individuality, and merges self in fellowship with another. It is directly opposed to isolation" (*Berean* 461). Faith, as a natural unifier, brings the individual out of isolation, blending with others and God. It was through faith that the many could become one, learning to speak with a singular voice. In Noyesian rhetoric, therefore, the Community principle of unity beckoned citizens to rise above the doctrinal division of society and strive for consensus in all matters. Whenever there was an instance of division or unity, ethical action always fell on the side of the latter.

Love (as Holiness)

A second value endorsed in the reorientation toward community was *love*. For Noyes, the world was run on a motive of self-love, but community motives operated on a higher plane of love—love not of the self, but of God and his people. Like unity, love calls for bringing together a separated people through spiritual harmony. Love of this sort comes through *holiness*, the ability to identify and care for one another as the self.

When a person has been made holy, they are necessarily brought into union with God and his people. This is the holiness "love-principle." Noyes explains:

> the love-principle of holiness looks, not merely toward God, but toward men. It is the love of God shed abroad in the heart; and as God loves men, so whoever has God's love in his heart, loves men. Holiness, then, is an attracting, harmonizing principle. Its tendency is to make all who possess it, one in heart; and unity of heart is the earnest of unity of mind and action. Persons who are in love with each other, easily learn to think alike (*Berean* 461-462)

The holiness love-principle builds upon the mandate for unity, and in fact provides the means of attaining it. Holiness serves as a natural *attractor* and *harmonizer* that brings persons to love each other and "think alike." It functions as through a common love object, whereby the mutual love of a "higher being" breeds love for the entire body, and this results in harmony and unity, understood as ideological consensus.

By describing love in this way, Noyes was asserting a normative claim about the kinds of relations that should predominate among citizens. Universal agreement is the ideal of any community, and to attain such consensus, there must be active *participation* in communal decision making through a deliberative body where members can converse and arrive at agreement. Because love and holiness abounds in true community, the achievement of consensus, he supposes, should not be difficult. For this reason, dissent must taken as a *moral failure,* a sign of division and a symptom of selfishness. Disagreement indicates a transgression on behalf of the dissident who has not yet come to think as the body does. They must, by definition, be lacking in holiness. But, community, motivated by true love, attains "the intimate union, mutual assistance and subordination, of the members of Christ" (*Berean* 463). By equating love and unity with ideological consensus, Noyes' rhetoric indicated that any expression of dissent was subject to condemnation as an exhibition of selfish motives on behalf of the dissatisfied party. Community Motives implicitly sanctioned conformity, and called on citizens to forsake their own preferences in the name of communal accord.

Family (as Intimacy, Obligation, and Equality)

Upon this base of unity and love displayed through consensus, Community Motives enlisted also the values of *family.* The image of family, as an intimately pledged unit dedicated to mutual care and assistance, provided an apt analogy of the kind of social relationships Noyes

associated with Community values. As a source of inspiration for Community motives, the

family analogy drew attention to a kind of enduring human relationships where individuals feel a

sense of obligation and compassion to care for one another. That is, ethical social relationships

should belong to the same category of familial commitments. Noyes, however, was critical of the

family as it had come to be enacted in society, and he argued that community motives invoke an

alternative vision of the familial ideal. He aimed to achieve an understanding of family that

tapped into the reservoir of familial affections but was free from the jealousy, exclusiveness, and

property-orientation of monogamous marriage. A community vision of family instead

emphasized the freedom of every member, with all sharing everything in common, but none

possessing another as their own.

For Noyes, community implied not only the intimate *obligations* of family, but those of a

family of *equals*. All citizens in a community should be on an equal plane, holding an equal say

and possessing and equal share of resources. To be in the realm of Community Motives meant to

break down class, power, gender, and economic distinctions in favor of an acceptance of the

mutual standing of all persons. Any violation of the principle of equality was likely to be a moral

failure that involved some encroaching of human selfishness.

Improvement (as Progress, Submission, and Purification)

Along with unity, love, and family, community values involved the constant pursuit of

improvement—so much so that he called improvement the "animating principle" of community.

Improvement, like progress, entailed the constant pursuit of betterment on both the individual

and collective level, and as a source of motives, it encouraged the submission of the individual

will to the interests of the greater good. Improvement was a future-oriented, sacrificial ethic that

sought to make the individual better suited for life in a larger body.

On the individual level, improvement represented the constant drive to purify the person of the vestiges of selfishness, to in every area make the self a better instrument of community. It meant challenging complacency and habit, and working toward becoming a well-rounded holy person attuned to the interests of others. And above all, improvement meant submitting to the demands and needs of the body, seeking consensus and conformity with the collective will, even if it temporary inconvenienced one's personal preferences, mortifying the self by dying to selfishness and being redeemed through the internalization of community motives.

On the collective level, community endorsed improvement as the purification of society through constant experimentation and planning to make the world a more harmonious, just, and united place. To operate in the realm of Community Motives meant to labor and sacrifice with optimism to usher in a perfect social order of complete communism. Any policy that promised to better, improve, or progress the prospects of communism was given approval and commendation, even if it required major restructuring or disruption of inherited ways of being.

Communism (as Selflessness and Sharing)

The final moral aspiration implied by appeals to community motives was that of *communism*. For Noyes, private property and ownership were the cornerstones of the industrial orientation and the clearest social manifestations of the selfish motive. In order to attain true community, the selfishness of property must be replaced with the selflessness and sharing of communism. His was not an ordinary communism founded on class warfare or economic injustice in the Marxist sense. Rather, Noyes specified that community itself was the organizational principle for devising a scheme of shared property ownership: "the Oneida Association cannot properly be said to stand on any ordinary platform of communism. *Their doctrine is that of Community"* (*Bible Communism* 10-12). Communism was embraced by

Noyes only because he saw it as the natural, rational extension of Christian Community and Scientific principles when applied to the social domain. In contrast to the prevailing perspective, to be a moral individual meant to contest "vulgar" capitalism and embrace an ethical economic social order free from exclusive possessions and run on a principle of joint-communal ownership. Community required motives of selflessness and sharing, where persons voluntarily gave what they had for the good of all.

When taken in sum, Noyes constructed community as a series of sacrificial, other-oriented principles in direct contrast to the selfish motive. Community entailed acting in accordance with communism, unity, family, singularity, equality, improvement, fellowship, holiness, faith, obligation, sharing, selflessness and love. The crux of Community Motives was the voluntary submission of the individual to the collective interest, a kind of mortification, symbolic slaying or dying of the self so that the community may live. Ethical action was a sacrifice that redeemed the individual and the world from self-interested transgressions. The selfish motive of society, meanwhile acted upon private property, ownership, exclusion, egoism, inequality, isolation, division, and self-love. The opposition of these two moralities formed the crux of Noyes' political, social, and rhetorical program; the dualism was his method of criticizing industrial society, and offering an alternative image of human relationships founded in the synthesis of Christian virtues and scientific progress. To act with the approval of community meant to reach the pinnacle of behavior, to conquer the self and be purified of sinfulness and ownership by submitting the collective interests.

In establishing this dialectic, Noyes aimed to rhetorically re-orient the world away from the materialistic motives of industrialism and economic liberalism and towards the spiritual, transcendent motives of community.

By so doing, Noyes articulated a series of first principles and moral aspirations from which to begin rationally rethinking the social institutions which did not bring forth ideal human experience. That is, Noyes embraced a communist conception of community which demanded the restructuring of social life. Community provided a template or guide from which to remake society and discover the proper relation between the self and society.

The Communalization of Social Life

Having constructed a dualism between selfishness and community, Noyes' final rhetorical move was to appeal to a shared platform of social change that rearranged social conditions so that community motives could attained. It was Noyes' conviction that for a person to live by a particular morality, the institutions of society needed to reflect that morality. True values could only be secured in a social order rationally designed to attain them, where the systems and arrangements pushed citizens along the path of moral action. The program of social change Noyes endorsed, therefore, was one of "communalization." Accordingly, in this section, I illustrate how Noyes employed "community" to provide a shared platform of social change whereby social institutions were "communalized" or reorganized to live up to the communal ideal. By rationally reconstructing social institutions, Noyes aimed to discipline and eradicate the material motives of self-interest and replace them with purified community motives.

In founding the Oneida settlement with a small group of like-minded persons, Noyes assumed the role of rational architect, designing a social order free from selfishness and predicated on the doctrine of community. In that effort, he identified five primary institutional domains needing purification through communalization: property, labor, marriage, parenting, and reproduction. We are not so much interested in the institutions, but their justification for revealing the role of the god-term community in providing order through rational application. To

examine that effort, I analyze Noyes' specific institutional policies and the community principles that justified them in light of his dualism of motives.

The Communalization of Property

The first method by which Noyes "communalized" the Oneida was through instituting a complete communism of property. A society predicated on community, he argued, must abolish private property and establish a system of shared possessions with a common purse. For Noyes, the "vulgar" capitalism of society was inimical to the values of community for two reasons. First, it was irrational and unscientific because it distributed resources randomly, without recourse to the ideal of community or standards of fairness and need (*Bible Communism* 10). Capitalism rewarded the strong at the expense of the weak, denying the poor an adequate living and morally corrupting the rich in their acquisition of their wealth. For Noyes, free markets violated the Christian sensibilities of justice and ignored the ever increasing-power of human rationality.

Second, capitalism and private property were inimical to community because they perpetuated the false assumption of individual ownership. For Noyes, God was the only true owner of possessions, so that "man can never in reality have absolute and exclusive ownership of lands, goods, or even of himself, or his productions, but only subordinate, joint-ownership with God" (*Bible Communism* 11). By claiming to be an exclusive owner of any object, the individual set the self in the place of God and above one's fellows. In both cases, private property corrupted human morality and bred selfish motives that sought the good of the individual while ignoring oo harming the plight of others.

Since no person should be an exclusive owner, Noyes advocated the Oneida embrace a communalized policy of "joint-ownership" in concordance with the metaphor of family and the model of the early Church at Pentecost where "all valuables, whether persons or things, are

family property; and that all the labors of the family are directed, judged and rewarded in the distribution of enjoyments" (*Bible Communism* 10-12). In specifically reconstructing the institution of property to live up to the communal ideal, Noyes designed a system for the Oneida where, upon entering the community, all incoming members were required to submit their possessions to collective ownership, where it was overseen by a small group of community elders. There would be, strictly speaking, no exclusive possessions for any individual. Instead, all was owned by the community as a whole, and they would decide together, with *one voice,* how to spend, invest, or expend the resources. This meant in practice that individuals were subordinated to communal discretion, but in turn individuals had all their needs met and were entitled to the same resources as every other member.

In sum, the rational application of principals led Noyes to uproot the institution of private property and replace it with a system of communal ownership. The hope was that by taking away the possessive-ownership element of society, he could mold human behavior in accordance with virtues of sharing, equality, love, and submission. This remedy for ousting the "selfish" motive was simple enough, but it did not resolve all aspects of the economic problem. The fact was that even in the absence of individual property, the community required a system of labor also needed to be communized if the whole economic problem was to be resolved.

The Communalization of Labor

Even as communists against the exclusiveness of private property, Noyes and the Oneida had a genuine appreciate for the benefits of labor and free trade. In fact, their embrace of the Yankee spirit of pragmatism and economic inventiveness was one reason the settlement flourished for over three decades. In his discourse about the work and community, Noyes portrayed labor as a natural aspect of human life which bettered the moral lives of individuals

and united persons together in a common cause. Yet, he lamented, with the lonely, liminal, and fragmented state of workers in society, labor had been robbed of its natural enjoyment and turned into a source of misery. Only through the application of policies of community could labor be restored to its edifying functions. In surveying the possibility of a communalized labor force, Noyes developed three policies: it should be done voluntarily on behalf of the common good, it should involve the rotation of occupations, and it should enable the comradery of the sexes.

The first principle of communalized labor was that it should be done *voluntarily* out of a pure heart with good will toward the family. All members of the community were expected to work and contribute, but none were to be forced into it. Noyes argued that since the communism of property eliminated precarity from the laboring process, citizens were free to work out of the positive motivation to improve the self and contribute to the good of the whole:

> They [Community members] must find a good power they can yield themselves to, and instead of working for themselves, go to work for somebody else…. Persons cannot join the Community until they see it in such a light that they can give themselves to it wholly, and say: 'Here I am person and property, and you can do just what you choose with me. If I can serve the interests of the truth better standing outside, I am content to do so. I have such entire confidence in the Community that I can put all my interests into its hands and go to work for it.' That would be what I should call joining the Community. And by such a course a person would get out of selfishness (*Daily Journal*)

Labor, in this projection, becomes a sacrificial, submissive motive by which the individual overcomes their selfishness by serving the greater cause of their fellows. The community takes priority over the individual, and the individual finds their place and purified morality by submitting to common good.

This ties into second aspect of a communalized labor order: the rotation of occupations. In addition to the domestic responsibilities required to maintain the settlement, the Oneida housed a number of industries that created a wide variety of jobs in need of different kinds of skills and expertise. Rather than develop stationary experts, Noyes suggested the frequent

rotation of jobs and responsibilities among the citizenry because it preserved the freshness of work and it enabled each person to feel invested in all aspects of community life. In this way, communalized labor promised to overcome selfishness by working altruistically for the good of the whole, while allowing persons to gain new skills and expanded their moral imagination.

Finally, alongside volunteerism and occupational rotation, Noyes endeavored to communalize labor through the co-laboring of the sexes. Community women were not designated to domestic duties or exempted from particular jobs. Rather, the principle of community, Noyes argued, meant "the equality of the sexes," and therefore women should be given full opportunity to participate in every part of Oneida business life. With men and women laboring side by side, the selfishness of division would give way to the unity of all persons.

Through volunteerism, occupational rotation, and comradery of the sexes, Noyes rationally reorganized labor to uproot selfishness and establish Community Motives whereby persons worked together in unity for the good of the whole. However, in order to completely eliminate the selfish motive, communism in the economic realm needed to be match by communism in the relational realm. The principles of Community should be rationally extended to every aspect of social life in the association, including the romantic and familial relations.

The Communalization of Marriage

The third area of social life to be disciplined and remade according to the transcendent template of community was traditional marriage. While marriage had become a pillar of Western society, in the ideal state of human relationships it would be abolished. Marriage, for Noyes, was founded in private property and exclusion, and therefore fueled selfish motives while violating the community principles of freedom, equality, and sharing:

> It is plain that the fundamental principle of monogamy and polygamy is the same; to with, the ownership of woman by man. The monogamist claims one woman as his wife—

the polygamists, two or a dozen; but the essential thing, the bond of relationship constituting marriage, in both cases is the same, namely, a claim of ownership
(*Bible Communism* 84)

For Noyes, marriage was essentially a form of slavery. Women were taken as property and treated as little more than "propagative drudges," while "men refuse to look upon women as equals, and refuse to regard their feelings and impressions" (*Circular,* Jan. 29, 1866). Noyes proclaimed that the violation of women's freedom and equality was incompatible with the values of community, and therefore, "marriage must give way to communism" (*Bible Communism* 27). That is, the marriage institution needed to be replaced with a communalized alternative that lived up to the ideals of community and enabled the equality of women.

In response, Noyes' endorsed a redesigned institution he called "Complex Marriage." In Complex Marriage, every member was considered "wedded" to ever other member; all members were considered to be one *family*, literally married and free to enjoy legitimate sexual relationships with any other person under the marriage covenant (with certain rules and regulations). This alternative arrangement, Noyes argued, rendered jealousy and exclusiveness moot because there were no strictures that prevented any person from engaging with any other. Marriage, as shared among all members, was void of the property relation: men and women all belonged to each other in a state of freedom, equality, and unity.

For Noyes, the communization of marriage, even more so than the communization of property and labor, was the glue holding the Oneida together, because it was the best "furnisher of motives" that "opens the way for Association" along the communal ideal (*Bible Communism* 57). As the complete sharing of the marriage covenant and the sexual relation stood in the face of jealousy and possessiveness, it taught the members to accept, even embrace, the sharing of loved ones with others. If communized marriage could break the fierce possessiveness of romance,

then it could break all forms of envy, ownership, and selfishness from the association. Sex therefore became the purveyor of motives bringing a person out of selfishness and into a love of others.

The effort to communize love and sex was so important that Noyes adamantly opposed any exception for those still desiring a traditional marriage. Even just one exclusive relationship could keep alive the selfish motive and undue the entire community project. He explains:

> Love, in the exclusive form, has jealousy for its complement; and jealousy brings on strife and division. Association, therefore, if it retains one-love exclusiveness, contains the seeds of dissolution; and those seeds will be hastened to their harvest by the warmth of associative life (*Bible Communism* 58)

For Noyes, just as communized marriage furnishes the motives of unity, so exclusive marriage spreads the seeds of division. A breach in principles opens the way for the dissolution of Community, making it imperative that the communalization of love be totalized. Noyes' rationalism could tolerate no inconsistency in application of communist principles.

Complex Marriage, in sum, was Noyes' rationalist program from uprooting an institution rooted in selfishness and replacing it with one founded in then genuine freedom and equality of community. As a shared platform of social change aiming to cultivate communal mores and motives, the communalization of marriage should also be extended to parenting.

Communization of Children

A fourth domain in need of communalization was that of child-rearing and parenting. Perhaps even more than in romantic relationships, the exclusive "special love" between parents and children was the most difficult manifestation of selfishness to uproot, with efforts to prohibit it often leading to resentment. For as in exclusive marriage, the child-parent bond was essentially a form of property, where the "love" of the child was really but a form of egoistic self-love. This familial 'representation' of love undermined the universal and equal love necessitated by

community, and therefore the children must to be communalized, even if it was responsible for "one of the hardest knots of discord" (*Circular*, November 5, 1863).

Noyes espoused the view that "the child is best brought up in an open Community element, and not in a closed circle of family relatives" (*Circular*, January 29, 1863). The familial circle was too closed, exclusive, and property-laden to permit moral growth along the principles of communism. Rather, it was better that no children "belonged" to any set of parents, and were raised as if all Community elders were their parents. Conversely, it was the responsibility of Community members to raise all the children together as like one extended family. The hope was that the hearts of citizens would be drawn to all children equally, a universal love without the hierarchy of exclusive attachments or irrational preferences.

To achieve this goal, Noyes implemented a policy of communal nursery where children of roughly the same age were placed under the supervision of a set of appointed guardians tasked with tending to the children. Members of a child's cohort were educated in the principles of community and liberal learning appropriate for their age. It was decided that children would know who their parents were, and parents were encouraged to develop warm relationships with their kin; however, this relationship was not permitted to become a source of exclusiveness or jealousy. To ensure this, primary responsibility for childcare fell on the Community Guardians. Simultaneously, parents were highly encouraged to invest in the lives of children who were not their biological heirs, because caring for other children "communizes the hearts" of the involved parties (*Circular,* August 6, 1866). That is, by taking a responsibility for and interest in other Community children, Noyes believed the exclusive attachment between parent and kin could be severed for a more inclusive love, extending the sense of service and loyalty to its completion.

Alongside the physical institution of a communal nursery, Noyes' efforts toward the communization of children were taken into the symbolic realm as well. One such idea was a ceremony for the naming of children meant to acknowledge the submission of the parents to the supremacy of communal guidance:

> We had a christening at the meeting last night. A baby was named—that is, the name selected by the parents was submitted to the appropriation of the Community. When a new baby comes, we have this little form of acknowledgment of Community ownership—the name is offered for general acceptance; or for objection, if such there should be one (*Circular,* August 7, 1865)

By requiring the approval of names by the entire Community, Noyes prioritized the Association over individual attachments, so that parents may be refined from their "selfish" affections through submission to the will of the whole. Sacrifice to the general will was the pinnacle of community morals, the most praiseworthy of all human actions. If parents could submit their authority over children to the judgment whole body, even to the point of naming, then the purification of hearts was well on its way to achieving the perfect state of human morality. That sacrifice reached its highest demands with Noyes' final effort remake society through the communalization of human reproduction.

The Communalization of Reproduction

For a true transformation of society into a community, Noyes believed communalization must be radically extended to the realm of reproduction, which he aimed to remake through Male Continence and Stirpiculture. With the communalization of marriage, Noyes portrayed sex as an integral part of Community life, to be enjoyed freely and without shame. That being said, free love came with responsibilities toward the Community and the partner. On this account, Noyes held sex liable to oversight and regulation to guarantee the principles of community were not violated. The most important of these was the practice of Male Continence.

Male Continence

If free sexual communion was the ultimate furnisher of Community Motives, it would have been impossible without a system of self-control that respected all members while preventing disease and pregnancy. Male Continence was such a system. In attempting to preserve the "social" and "unifying" elements of sex while avoiding its "expensive" consequences, Noyes distinguished between the "amative" and "propagative" functions of intercourse (*Male Continence)*. The "amative function" was the true purpose of sex, he argued, because as "an act of communion" it increased the affective bonds between persons. The amative elements of sex were an act of "social magnetism," useful for tightening the Community (*Bible Communism* 47). Meanwhile, the "propagative function," involving the discharge of semen, was the "expensive" department. Rather than the climax of the sexual act, the propagative discharge "is really the sequel and termination of it" (*Bible Communism* 47). In essence, Noyes' principle of Male Continence was that the amative and unifying functions of sex should be freely enjoyed within the Community, but that men should refrain from the propagative discharge.

For Noyes, Male Continence employed rational and scientific means to achieve the religious principles of community as a sexual impetus toward moral behavior. By preventing pregnancy and disease, Male Continence embraced a "scientific" method for achieving the unity, love, and intimacy of the non-exclusive sexual relation. It enabled Complex Marriage to function in the real world, so that communalization of love was more than just a moral ideal, but an achievable reality in human affairs; and on this account, Male Continence guaranteed that selfish impulses would not invade the Community.

Along this line, Male Continence, as a policy that required men refrain from the propagative discharge, also allowed women to reclaim their place as equal and free members of

the Community. Without a method for controlling pregnancy, women would be exposed to even greater injustices in Complex Marriage, and make a mockery of the supposed superior morality of community. But through Male Continence, Noyes asserted, women could be free regain their autonomy as equals of men.

The principle of communal *equality* when extended into sexual communion also meant that women were to be free to reject the advances of any and every member for any reason whatsoever, and were never to bear children for any reason besides their own conscious decision (though this principle became murkier during Noyes' "Stirpiculture" eugenics experiment). Male Continence, Noyes boasted, was the only system which could make this ideal a reality:

> It is certainly to the credit of Bible Communism that it guarantees a woman the possession of her own person; that it holds that it is her undoubted right to choose when and how often she shall bear children. This right is inviolable in the Community, and it is only upon the freest consultation that children are begotten (*Circular*, August 12, 1872)

The right to belong to the self and not be owned by another—to enjoy individual freedom within unity—was a sacrosanct right of women as Community members. When women were given the same rights and privileges of men, the communion of all members would be elevated to its highest limits. Yet, Noyes conversely preached that the needs and dictates of the Community trumped that will of any one individual, including in matters of reproduction. Because of the communalization of children, parents must sacrifice their preferences for the good of the whole. And Noyes' most radical belief was that the purification of society by community values required improvement of the human condition through eugenics.

Stirpiculture

Noyes touted the community's practice of "Male Continence" as a scientific discovery destined to revolutionize human sexuality and make rationally planned propagation a possibility, and added to the communization of children, he believed that for the first time, scientific

breeding could be executed so as to "improve" the human race toward a state of perfection never yet realized. Accordingly, the Oneida began an experiment with eugenics called "Stirpiculture."

For centuries, Noyes argued, humans had made use of their intelligence to advance the "inferior" races of animals by mating the best of the species, yet in human affairs, "man leaves the infinitely higher question of his own propagation to the control of chance, ignorance, and blind passion" (*Circular*, March 27, 1865). Noyes was dismayed that the very "place where science should rule most of all is ruled by the least science…Yet human breeding should be one of the foremost questions of the age" (*Circular* March 27, 1865). Reproduction and the advancement of human race was left to blind human passion instead of human reason. Noyes believed such randomness was wrong and stupid, for it was the responsibility of the Community to bring science to bare on a matter as critical as the perpetuation of the human race. The spiritual mandate guiding the Oneida's formation—to improve, purify, and remake society upon the perfect basis of community—found its culminating moment in Stirpiculture. Noyes argued that rationally planned eugenics, in supplement to the creation of communist institutions, could usher in an era of human perfection, a communist utopia populated with advanced intellectual and moral creatures. Darwinian science could be used to make the ideals of Christianity a social reality by selecting persons with dispositions amenable to community values for reproduction.

To conduct his experiment, Noyes had forty-three Community women sign the following contract pledging their loyalty to the principles of Scientific breeding with the oversight of Community members:

> 1. That we do not belong to ourselves in any respect, but that we do belong first to *God,* and second to Mr. Noyes as God's true representative.
> 2. That we have no rights or personal feelings in regard to child-bearing which shall in the least degree oppose or embarrass him in his choice of scientific combinations.
> 3. That we will put aside all envy, childishness and self-seeking, and rejoice with those who are chosen candidates; that we will, if necessary, become martyrs to science, and

cheerfully resign all desire to become mothers, if for any reason Mr. Noyes deem us unfit material for propagation. Above all, we offer ourselves as 'living sacrifices' to God and true Communism (Noyes, Reprinted in Parker, *A Yankee Saint* 257)

The Community men likewise signed a similar contract confessing obedience to cause of Stirpiculture. Stirpiculture meant acting in deference to the Communal ideals of the Christian faith attained through scientific means. For Noyes, the pledge was the definitive statement of submission, the hallmark moral achievement of a people operating under the plane of Community Motives. While the Community was the only place of true freedom, that freedom was never to do as one pleases; it was the freedom of association, where one voluntary sought the good of the whole, and in the case of Stirpiculture, the progress of the human race. Moral self-actualization was the conquering of selfishness through purified motives of sacrifice on behalf of the Community. Therefore, the Stirpiculture contract, by announcing the lack of self-ownership, the willingness to become martyrs to scientific progress, and the refusal to revert to envy if the will to became parents was not granted, was a statement of Noyes' communist morality *par excellence*, for it was the complete submission of individual preference to the idea of community itself. It was the final step in fully communalizing social life.

A Communalist Conception of Community

Stirpiculture represented the same rationalist-rhetorical presumptions underlying Noyes' entire system of communalization—property, labor, marriage, and parenting. In each instance, the dichotomy of Selfish and Community Motives provided a criterion by which to criticize and recreate the social world so that ethical human relationships and behavior could flourish. When taken in sum, the program of communalization was the culmination of Noyes' entire rhetoric of community—after bridging faith and science from a division into a unity and reorienting society away from materialistic values and toward the transcendent values of community, his

penultimate move was to rationally apply that value system through a platform of social change where sacrifice to community was the guiding template for communalizing the institutions of the social order. Utopic communism or communalism, was a rationalist attempt to purify the world through consistent adherence to the template of community, creating corresponding institutions that would breed humans with moral motives. Each institution was designed so as to make the ethic of self-sacrifice for the collective good a more attainable social reality, a material order reflecting spiritual virtues.

In the end, what Noyes articulated and endorsed amounted to a "communist" conception of community as an abstraction or set of guiding principles to be rationally applied to the social order. His conception of community focuses on institutions as the purveyors of motives, attributing harmony be the natural state of human affairs that has been lost to corrupt systems. It therefore seeks to remove unethical institutions and replace them with alternatives in rational accordance with community virtues. Such a conception of community is utopic, and essentially religious, for it seeks the purification of human motives as its end, contending that such radical reconstruction can attain a near perfect state of human relations because institutions determine behavior. Accordingly, community seeks to correct individualistic and economic assumptions by replacing them with a morality that takes sacrifice and submission to the collective good as the ultimate aim. Community was the ideal to be striven for and the mandate that society be held accountable for living up to it.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter we have seen that John Humphrey Noyes reconciled the values of religion and science through the ideal of community, founding the Oneida to redeem the world from the "selfishness" of the economic orientation by way of rhetorical reorientation. Noyes'

rhetorical program involved three essential moves: first, the reconciliation of faith and science through the idea of community, where community supplied the spiritual and transcendent values over the material social order; second, the reorientation away from the values of industrialism and toward those of community through the creation of a dichotomy between Selfish and Community Motives, whereby ethical action was based upon the sacrificial principle; and third, a platform of social change to "communalize" the social order by rationally applying the principles of community to construct moral institutions.

As a term of theology and political theory, community brought the Enlightenment's scientific advances and the Second Great Awakening's ethic of Christian communion together into an agenda where faith and science were allies in a great cause of moral purification. Noyes' transformed their antagonism of orientation into a mutually collaborative enterprise, where community represented the ethical pronouncements of faith and rationalism provided the means for attaining it. For whatever their rivalry in social discourse, Noyes overcame their division by endorsing a common utopic future where the remnants of human selfishness gave way to a world of harmony and justice. Community thereafter supplied a transcendent or "spiritual" value to rein over the material order, and this value was essentially an endorsement of redemption through sacrifice and submission to the needs of others.

There are three general lines of conclusion which can be drawn from the Oneida case: in it one may see evidence of the religious history and use of community and the extent to which that history influences our sense and value of community; the communalist idealization of community as a particular case of the rhetorical and social uses of community as the expression and healing of self-social relations; and the rhetorical functions of community as a god-term.

The first set of conclusions concern the general character of the religious history and reliance on community. The Biblical or Christian ideal of community, as captured by Noyes in his particular historical moment of nineteenth century America, represents a moral aspiration to be pursued by society and internalized by the individual. The crux of Christian community is a morality of individual submission and sacrifice on behalf of the collective good. "Community" represents the attempt to supplant exclusion and self-interestedness with an other-oriented ethic of care, sharing, and obligation. It was this sacrificial mentality, characterized by a sense of responsibility and concern for the welfare of the whole, that constituted the moral end of Noyes' Christian program, and should be taken as the heart of the religious sense of community.

While Noyes' radical "perfectionist" version of the Christian faith is certainly outside the American religious mainstream, his rhetoric serves as a particularly apt illustration of the purifying and redemptive functions of "community" in religious discourse. The Christian tradition, in specific, is especially concerned with the ideal configuration of the individual and social ethical orders, and therefore takes a suggestive interest in community's relation to guilt, redemption, and the purification of motives.

"Purification", as Kenneth Burke explains, is the symbolic process whereby we purge ourselves of guilt that originates in the nature of language itself (*Rhetoric of Religion*). In creating a discrepancy between the "perfection" of our symbols and the imperfection of human action, language elicits a sense of failure or "guilt" in need of redemption. Burke offers that this sense of guilt and responsibility/motivation for repair is not a "natural" response to transgression, but is part of a cycle or sequence of linguistic and social training set forth in religious symbolism "in the very authorship of [people's] motives" (*Rhetoric of Religion* v). When such guilt is felt by the signaling of social attrition, there are two strategies available for its mitigation:

"mortification," or the internalization of blame, and "victimage," or "scapegoating," the externalization of blame.

As evidenced by Noyes' rhetoric, the gap between the disorder of the selfish motive and the Christian "law" of sacrificial morality created a sense of guilt to be purified at the altar of community. As with the larger program of Christian religion, this sense of error is socialized in the abstract social contract of this community, and reinforced verbally, symbolically, and behaviorally in daily practice. "Selfishness" represented a kind of "original sin" or a "fall" from communal grace to be righted by a behavioral and moral reorientation. While Noyes' "communist" inclinations used "victimage" to attribute the blame on the institutions of "society," his religious inclinations focused on individual redemption by "mortification," demanding that individuals pursue perfection by submitting their possessions, preferences, and volition to the good of the community.

Put another way, Christian rationality demands a kind of "mortification," or "deliberate disciplinary slaying" of unruly motives (Burke, *Rhetoric of Religion* 190). The religious invocation of community places the self in a state of perpetual sacrifice to others—and in the occasion of the Oneida, submission to Noyes' leadership. Individuals were called to internalize perfection and live by an active and constant pursuit of selfless sacrifice on behalf of "community," exorcising sinful motives and keeping community at the forefront of motivation.

There is clearly a *sacrificial* and *salvational* quality to such appeals, and this is a key element of community's function as god-term; in fact, the sacrificial impulse may be taken as the core of the community, in both its religious and secular variants. We have stated that a god-term is a privileged expression providing order, value and universality to action, and that the surest indicator that are in the presence of god-term is the expression's ability to compel sacrifice.

Community, clearly served such a role for John Noyes and the utopian community movement. What is unique about this particular term is that community compels sacrifice for a higher good, but that community itself is a term of sacrifice on behalf of others. Service to community represents the process whereby our guilts are shirked and we attain a state of moral virtuosity, redemption and self-actualization, such as when a person is restored from their sins against society by "community service," or when a famous figure is praised not for their great accumulation of wealth, but for "giving back to the community." I contend that it is in the redeeming power of community as a sacrificial ethic that religious and secular perspectives converge. Community's sacrificial and salvational overtones is perhaps the greatest legacy of John Noyes, the utopian community movement, and the Nineteenth century attempt to grapple with the tides of modern industrialism and secularization.

It is in this vein that we can comment on a second line of implication, dealing with the "communist" or "communalist" perspective of community. The ordering function of a god-term is nowhere more evident than in the communist and socialist urges to make the social order "live up to" the principles of the communal ideal. It must be emphasized that Noyes' variant of communism was notably different from the European variants, although I would submit that the traditions share a great deal in common, as they both developed from the confluence of the West's Christianized moral inheritance and modern society's ascendant sociological rationality. In fact, both Noyes' "Bible Communism" and European communist perspectives might be understood as driven to find an institutional arrangement that enables and reflects community's ethic of individual submission to the collective interest. This theme is itself the subject of countless works of philosophy and literature in late twentieth Century America that offers dramatized critiques of communist ideology.

Noyes' communism, at least, embraced a rationalist vision which called on society to *live up to* community precepts. If community was the term of order and value, then citizens must accordingly labor to make society over in that image. This rationalist rhetorical posturing should be taken as the communist's demand for consistency between a society's professed principles and its actual organization, seeking to hold citizens accountable for the qualitative discrepancy between the spiritual and material orders. Accordingly, the solution for resetting the moral balance is to realign "spiritual" virtues with material practices. That is, for the relation between the self and the society to be moral and sustainable, the immaterial principles of community must be reflected in the material institutions and practices of citizens. In this communalist orientation, community becomes the template or guide from which material conditions are to be evaluated and remade. If institutions fail to align with the values of community and justice, they are to be reconstructed upon the guide of the communal ideal.

In so far as Noyes' rhetoric reflects larger socialist and communist inclinations, it identifies the centrality of the reformation of institutions as the primary method for attaining a moral populace in the image of community. Such a perspective presupposes a particular variant of what Kenneth Burke called the "scene-agent ratio," where changes to the "scene" or the context determines the action of the "agent" or individual. Put in the context of the communist attempts to attain a just society, this means that institutions largely determine human motives, and therefore by purifying institutions, human motives can likewise be purified. The advocate of the communist image of community accordingly considers how the social arrangement of relationships might be redesigned so as to make the world a more ethical place where individuals can live according to a higher, collectivist moral code. It seeks to make amends for the failings of the economic order and discover the structural conditions under which ethical action is possible.

Communism, from this angle, is essentially "utopic" or "religious" in the sense that it possesses a kindred desire to redeem a world fallen to the "selfishness" of individualism, and seeks civic adherence to an ethic of individual sacrifice to the collective good.

These conclusions, I believe, can be extended to other types of socialisms as well—not only those of the American utopian movement, but also those stemming from European roots. Noyes' application of the god-term community reveals a kind of template of the communist philosophy that, like the religious perspective, has at its end the purification of human motives— the removal of the "sin" of selfishness to the redeeming power of communal harmony and justice. As discursive ideal in communist rhetoric, community does the work of convicting society of its sins and demanding it live up to higher values. Noyes's perspective probably displays a more individualistic "mortifying" impulse then the self-proclaimed "secular" roots of Marxist socialism, but both are concerned with establishing an ethic of the common good through constructing an alternative valuation of institutions.

This radical communalist perspective, it must be stated, differs remarkably from more progressive and traditionalist ideals of community, which will be the subject of the following two analytical chapters. And while Noyes' communism is in significant ways outside the "mainstream" in contemporary religious and political discourse, the sacrificial and spiritual impulses of community as a god-term endure today, and in a way that transcends partisan divides. Amid Noyes' own historical moment, salvational appeals to community were being made by a vast array of thinkers and experimental communes such as New Harmony, Brookfarm, the Shakers, the Rappites, the Owenites, and the Fourier socialists. Similarly, more "philosophical" minded thinkers also turned to the "spiritualized" possibilities of community for enhancing the secular culture, among them Ralph Waldo Emerson's transcendentalism, Mary

Baker Eddy's Christian Science, Josiah Royce' Benevolent Community, William James' theory

of religious experience, and John Dewey's call for new forms of community amenable to a

democratic people. Such cooptation of the religious resources set up "community" as a kind of

civic-spiritual value beckoning citizens to temper their self-interestedness and pursue a more

"socially-minded" ethic by "sacrificing" for the good of others. I would submit that we can place

the more recent appeals of the communitarian sociologists such as Robert Bellah, Amatai

Etzioni, and Robert Wuthnow as continuations of this civic-spiritual legacy of the utopian

movement.

Even off-the-cuff remarks about community contain an element of the term's salvational,

purifying, and redeeming power. Community's dictate of sacrifice and service to others involves

a rhetorical convergence of spiritual and secular, religious and sociological, conservative and

liberal perspectives. For all parties, community remains an unequivocal good, an ethic directed

toward the needs of others, a redemptive force from selfishness, and a call for a higher morality

of voluntary acquiescence to the greater good with a salvational quality that transforms the

failures of the modern world into a source of profit.

CHAPTER FOUR

JANE ADDAMS AND THE COSMOPOLITAN COMMUNITY

Jane Addams has been called America's first female public philosopher and the Mother of Social Work. In the popular polls of her time (1860-1935), Addams was consistently voted the greatest woman in America, and in 1931 she was awarded the Noble Peace Prize, the first American woman to be so honored. As a close friend to some of history's most famous philosophers such as John Dewey, William James and George Herbert Mead, Addams played a central role in developing and populizing pragmatist political principles. While her contributions to pragmatist philosophy were significant, Daniel Levine argues that "it was in her role as publicist and persuader that Jane Addams made her greatest contribution to American life" (86). Addams was not only a key architect of progressive social philosophy, but the most successful practitioner of those principles in the civic arena, leaving a lasting influence on how Americans conceived of the nature of modern social problems and their appropriate remedy.

This chapter ventures to look at Addams' work holistically from the vantage point of her role as rhetorician, where her mission was one of reorienting the American public on the proper relationship between individuals and their society. I contend that the concept of *community* is the adhesive which holds her progressive rhetoric together, creating a means of attaining social change and an ultimate end of justice, peace and harmony. Addams' lifework can serve as an exemplar of some of the rhetorical maneuvers and possibilities characteristic of a "progressive" rhetoric of community. In what follows, I contextualize Addams' rhetoric as a response to the

industrialization and urbanization of American life that aims to set right the social order by finding forms of human relations and civic associations appropriate to the new scene of action. Her rhetoric embodies a cosmopolitan philosophy that seeks to create world community based on the value and virtue of local communities as they are presumed to function, with the goals of social amelioration, experiment, obligation, fellowship, and justice.

The Modern City and its Discontents

Jane Addams' rhetoric of community began as a response to the mass migration of workers from rural to urban spaces throughout late nineteenth and early twentieth century America. The arrival of the Modern City, spurred by the industrialization of labor, marked a new epoch in the American social landscape, with unprecedented changes to the lived experiences of citizens. Inherited presumptions about the agrarian character of American democracy and the nature of civic relationships were confronted with the harsh new realities of congregated, non-landowning, low-wage, industrial workers. As immigration, urbanization, and mechanization challenged the character of American identity, "progressive" thinkers such as Addams began reimagining possibilities for social relationships and democratic identity.

Guiding Jane Addams' mission was the conviction that the greatest problems facing early twentieth century America were problems of *maladjustment*, that ideology and policy had not yet caught up to the demands of urban life. For Addams, the restructuring of American society had created a new scene of action, the Modern City, where classic individualist assumptions about democracy lacked the ability to resolve the issues of isolation, chaos, and poverty among working-class citizens. What was needed, she believed, was a *re-orientation* of democratic theory through a new kind of social ethic that matched the particular struggles of industrial, urban peoples. Adjustment and reform was the order of the day.

The point of departure for this analysis is Addams' assessment of the American city, for her sizing up of the difficulties of the modern scene held within it the remedy of community. Addams minced no words in judging the dreary state of industrial life:

> The social organism has broken down through large districts of our great cities. Many of the people living there are very poor, the majority of them without leisure or energy for anything but the gin of subsistence. They move often from one wretched lodging to another. They live for the moment side by side, many of them without knowledge of each other, without fellowship, without local tradition of public spirit, without social organization of any kind (*Centennial Reader* 11)

As evidenced above, the language Addams selected to depict they city was overwhelmingly negative, consistently portraying it as "broken-down," "impoverished," "wretched," and without meaningfully human association. Elsewhere, Addams flatly admitted that "affairs for the most part are going badly in these great new centres" (*Centennial Reader* 115). The problems she identified were many. For one, economic precarity appeared an endemic condition of city life, with workers so concerned for basic subsistence that little else was of concern. In addition, the spatial beauty and rootedness of the country had been replaced by the machine, so that there was little in the way of sanitation, leisure, or escape from the drudgery of labor. The city lacked local tradition or public spirit, being more prone to isolation than fellowship. There was also stark division between the rich and poor, overstimulation of youth, insufficient education, and a disintegration of the family. Such a setting, for Addams, was inimical to meaningful human relationships, and prevented the development of a robust civic culture capable of resolving the issues inherent to urban democracy.

Beneath these complaints, Addams' critique of the industrialized city focused on the paradox of increased human proximity and lessened familiarity, of conglomeration without community. Of the many inadequacies of urban life, the lack of meaningful associations was perhaps most perilous for the democratic future. Addams' was especially concerned that

industrialism and urbanization meant the breakdown of the deep human relationships which sustained democratic culture and government, and with it, the possibility of order and justice. Such "isolation," besides damaging citizens' physical and mental health, prevented them from coming together and organizing for the improvement of their common condition.

The problem, as Addams saw it, was that the kinds of relationships and organizations in the country had been worked out over centuries, but that the industrial city, as an unprecedented phenomenon, still lacked forms of association appropriate for its particular setting. She did not, however, lament the urban condition in order to call for a return to the past. For all its failings, the modern city offered a grand opportunity for developing a universal sense of cosmopolitan community. One could not simply import old methods and assumptions into new realities. Rather, Addams' wanted experimental adjustments in accordance with the new realities of modern life, believing it was the duty of citizens to find innovative ways of building civic community that were compatible with the city. That is, the modern world demanded its own philosophy of relationships—a philosophy Addams would come to call "the social ethic."

The Individual, Familial, and Social Ethics

The social ethic was perhaps Addams' main contribution to twentieth century social theory. Although amorphous and at times difficult to pin down, the social ethic is best situated in Addams' differentiation between the kinds of relationships characterizing rural and urban life. The distinction between the "natural community" of the country and the fragmenting relationships of the city was a central assumption of Addams' humanitarian call to action, forming the foundation for her efforts at progressive reform. The city, for Addams, by its definition disintegrated the traditional ties that provided order and meaning throughout human history. It is a point she reiterates on numerous occasions, and I include two examples below:

Great cities tend to dissolve almost as by chemical process the customs and social ties which were nurtured in rural and provincial society, so that the very cement which groups together seems to disappear (*Second Twenty* 291)

The social relationships in a modern city are hastily made and often superficial. Common sense, household tradition, the inherited custom the desultory reading by which so much of life is directed, the stream of advice constantly poured over the radio, break down the restraints long sustained in smaller communities by public opinion, and in the end certain areas of life seem to be in a state of dire confusion (*Second Twenty* 412)

In each of these representative passages, Addams juxtaposes an ideal and a fallen state, with the community of the smaller rural groups representing the former and the Modern-Industrial-City as the latter. In the country, there was an inherited topography of relationships, worked out over centuries, that allowed for appropriate organization of civic action to tackle the recurrent problems of democracy. But the city, meanwhile, naturally fragments "the customs and social ties which were nurtured in rural and provincial society," so that "social life is in a state of confusion." Without tradition or custom to guide, urban citizens were left to wander in their plight seemingly alone, unable to associate or unite satisfactorily in the face of their new destinies, unless an alternative scheme of relationships could be uncovered. Such an alternative scheme of relationships is what Addams hoped to achieve through the social ethic.

The "social ethic" was a communitarian remedy for the deficiencies of urban conditions and relationships. Addams defined the social ethic as an extended sense of obligation and identification in antithetical relation to individualism. In fact, Addams believed that one of the biggest barriers to the development of new forms of association was American culture's predilection toward individualism. She understood individualism as its own kind of ethic, defined essentially as an obligation to the self, the resolve to make sure one's own needs were met and the desire to take pride in one's personal effort (*Democracy 3*). Alongside the individualist ethic was its partner, the familial ethic, which could be understood a sense of

obligation to one's small circle, the family and close friends, whereby the individual took an interest in and responsibility for the welfare of their kin. For Addams, the individualist and familial ethics, while distinct, were complementary, working hand in hand to support an ordered harmonious society in an agrarian civilization. The social ethic that Addams called for, in contrast, was an *extension* of the familial obligation to one's civic "community." It was the call to look out for one's fellow citizens *as if they* were one's family, to feel a sense of solidarity and mutual responsibility for the welfare of others and to be willing to sacrifice or labor on their behalf. The social ethic was devotion to the "common" good, with an enlargement of who and what was included in "common."

The purpose of Addams' rhetoric was thus a re-orientation of American values away from economic individualism and toward the community values employed in the social ethic. In Addams' account, most communities throughout American history operated on a code of morality suited to its smaller scale, the individualist ethic and its counterpart, the familial ethic. Individualism was the American morality *par excellence*, and was responsible for many of the advances of the young nation. The individualist code corresponded well to the demands of independent farmers and local citizens in a largely agrarian society only needing a narrow network of relations to sustain their livelihoods. Conditions, however, had changed, and Addams maintained that the inherited individualistic ethic could no longer be said to sufficiently guide social relations in the new century. It was not that Addams was against the individualist or familial ethics in and of themselves—indeed she praised their utility for building and sustaining democratic cultures in America's agrarian past; however, she was convinced that those ethics were incapable of dealing with the growing interconnectivity and shared destiny of industrial citizens in the new era of human relationships. The individual and familial ethics inhibited a

more robust democratic culture by confining loyalties to limited circles, thereby discouraging class solidarity, gender equality, and civic association.

Therefore, the inability to rectify urban problems, Addams' surmised, was essentially a issue of "ethical maladjustment" where "we are acting upon a code of ethics adapted to individual relationships, but not to the larger social relationships to which it is bunglingly applied" (*Democracy Ethics* 221). The urban difficulty was an example of "cultural lag," a miscue between old theory and new practice. Individualism reigned supreme at the very moment when collective action was most needed, and citizens' persistent adherence to the discredited ethic was a source of misguidance and stupidity: "To attain individual morality in an age demanding social morality, to pride one's self on the results of personal effort when the time demands social adjustment," Addams lamented." is utterly to fail to apprehend the situation" (Addams, *Democracy* 3). In response, Addams' pleaded for a transition away from the individualist and familial ethics which dominated in rural life and toward a new "social ethic" of extended obligation. By endorsing the "social ethic," Addams aimed to set civilization right again through a reorientation that brought social theory up to date with the modern situation.

In this light, it becomes evident that Addams' efforts to reorient values through the social ethic were meant as a corrective to an individualism that she thought was valuable historically in certain segments of society, but inadequate for workers struggling in the industrial city. Individualism must give way to community, meaning the self must be drawn out of isolation and back into meaningful human association, with an awareness of the growing connectivity of citizens. The social ethic hoped to bind persons together into an extended community, similar in feelings of obligation to the familial ethic, but brought to bear on a larger scale and a new context. That is, the social ethic bridged the old world and the new by *extending* obligations from

the family to the civic community, broadening the realm of imagined solidarity. It involved the active assumption of a sense of responsibility for the welfare of all members of the city, and the vigorous implementation of social efforts to improve the condition of the suffering. The social ethic would seek as its end *social justice*.

Social Justice

One way of situating Addams' hope for the social ethic is to view it as an attempt to achieve "social justice" in human affairs. As the industrialized city had transformed living conditions beyond recognition, so it had caused a breach in harmonious lifestyles of the lowliest citizens. Poverty, child-labor, and lack of opportunity were but a few examples of the growing inequalities confronting urban citizens. Accordingly, Addams sought not only alleviation of dire circumstances, but a social order that lived up the ideal of "social" justice, a concept whereby "society" had the obligation to meet the basic needs of its most suffering citizens and find a way to level conditions along the principle of fairness. In what was essentially a statement of her own God-terms, Addams heartily praised the persuasive warmth of "certain words which belong distinctively to our own times; such words as Prevention, Amelioration, and Social Justice." To these she also added "human compassion" and "obligation" (*Centennial* 86). This conglomeration of terms form a statement on the ends of the social ethic—it was an attempt to prevent suffering and improve social conditions through human obligations in light of the democratic ideals of compassion and justice. The social ethic was a reorientation that highlighted the duty of citizens to vouch for the "least of these" through mobilizing the community.

Such purposes required citizens to transcend their personal interests and individualist motives for the good of the collective. The social morality was one of submitting the self to the general interest, with the knowledge that all persons were better off when operating together to

recuperate the life of the suffering. Addams desired experimental adjustment through both voluntary and state efforts to alleviate misery and make life a little more humane. This required, above all, that she convince her era to move beyond individualism and discover a sense of human obligation founded in compassion. Only through a motivated people pledged together by a sense of duty could the situation be made tolerable. *Obligation* was the foundation of all social progress, the only way to "raise the value and function of each member of the *community*" (*Centennial Reader* 145).

Since "social obligation" was the cornerstone phrase of Addams rhetoric, it is wise to ask precisely "whom is socially obligated to do what?" An *obligation* is the counterpart to a *right*, and both terms exist under a similar state of ambiguity. Claims of right and obligation are by their nature inherently involved in the work of consultation and direction, edging its adherents toward a vision of how the world should function. Rights and obligations are assertions of *ought*, and with them, comes an *ethical mandate* by which human action is to be organized and evaluated. To assert a right, or in Addams' case, an obligation, is to impute a burden of responsibility upon the involved parties, utilizing language and rhetoric to plead, beckon, or demand certain persons to take certain actions. If such claims gain adherence, a new *ethic* emerges (in Addams' case, the "*Social Ethic*"); if not, there is conflict, symbolic or otherwise, between competing moral claims.

Certainly part of the rhetorical legacy of the concept of "community" in Western society concerns the way in which we are "obligated" to work on behalf of community. Here is a completely secular variation on the religious "sacrificial" principle of community exemplified by the Oneidans. The more abstract and distant our sense of relationship is to mass society, the less

immediate are our relations to others and the less we feel compelled or obligated. Yet, in smaller groups, our sense of responsiveness and responsibility are greater.

Addams' reliance on the tangible and immediate sense of obligation formed in local community relations becomes the wellspring of the "social ethic" she seeks to inspire for mass society in general, and through her cosmopolitanism, extend to the world community at large. As a "motive," community for Addams orients toward actions and interests that oblige us to work for justice and solidarity in human relations. Addams' progressivism and cosmopolitanism illustrate this function of the "community motive" as it might be found more generally in American or Western societies. By interpreting Addams' communal dream, we can observe the constitution of a progressive image of community and the tensions its faces in its contradictory.

A Rhetoric of Cosmopolitan Community

Going forward, I contend that Addams' communitarian rhetoric is best labeled *cosmopolitan* because it culminates in an image of world community and universal brotherhood that triumphs over American individualism. Although theorists of cosmopolitanism often differ on its precise definition, there is general agreement that a defining feature of cosmopolitanism is an affirmation of some sort of "global community." Addams' rhetoric strives for such an ever-extending, all-encompassing single community, while simultaneously foregrounding the needs and livelihoods of the local neighborhood. Her vision of community is a kind of dual citizenship to both the locale and the world. Community begins with the immediately proximate and extends to the universal. The farther that community is "extended," the higher the ethical achievement. Community, as principle of human relations, *transcends* geographic and economic relationships.

Accordingly, Addams' effort can be nicely divided along two lines: the move past individualism through the reform of local (urban) conditions by extending the familial ethic into

the social realm; and the call to attain a "community of nations" by widening the identification and obligations of the social ethic to world-wide proportions. For Addams, these two lines of community are not conflicting, but in harmonious, complementary relation. The one begets the other, until progress has achieved an enlightened community of all humanity.

This analysis follows Addams' lead in exploring this two-step relation. First, I look at Addams' vision of local obligations as represented by her efforts at Hull House. Then, I shift to her outward move toward pacifism and world community during the First World War.

Local Community

Addams' cosmopolitan rhetoric begins with an appeal to locale, emphasizing the obligations citizens have to their local neighborhoods and immediate relationships in the pursuit of justice and social progress. In urban Chicago, Addams advocated a number of measures to establish community within urban spaces, including the founding of the Hull House Settlement, the development of social clubs, and state intervention into recreation and labor. By so doing, Addams suggested a trajectory for the attainment of an ideal social order that began with voluntary social clubs, peaked in collective action, and culminated with government intervention. Her program called for a culture of fellowship, solidarity, and civic virtue, where community served as the primary vehicle for positive democratic change. Community was both a morality and a method for guarding the health of a democratic people.

The Hull House 'Settlement'

Addams' most significant vehicle for enacting positive change and community in Chicago was the "Settlement" she founded called "Hull House." The idea for the settlement spawned from a trip Addams made to London where she visited Toynbee Hall, an organization of socially minded citizens dedicated to living among and caring for the city's poor. Inspired by

their efforts, Addams devised a plan for a similar kind of organization in a poor immigrant

neighborhood in Chicago designed to improve their conditions of the city's most vulnerable

citizens. Hull House was decidedly not intended as a philanthropic organization or charity; rather

it was an open place "settled" by with the aim of serving the local community in any possible

capacity; it was established with the hope to "add the social function to democracy" (*Centennial*

10). Such a mission was necessarily abstract, articulating only the desire to assist those

struggling in urban spaces; Addams described Hull House as "an experimental effort to aid in the

solution of the social and industrial problems which are engendered by the modern conditions of

the great city" (*Centennial* 13). Situated within her pragmatist commitments and dreary

assessment of the urban plight, Hull House was meant to be the enactment of the social ethic in

Chicago, an attempt to experimentally improve living conditions by obtaining a new kind of

civic relationship appropriate for the industrial world.

Although not founded with specific material changes in mind, Hull House was committed

to a set of guiding principles. The Settlement aimed to be a community and, for Adams, that

required it possess the following qualities:

> It must be open to conviction and must have a deep and abiding sense of tolerance. It
> must be hospitable and ready for experiment. It should demand from its residents a
> scientific patience in the accumulation of facts and the steady holding of their sympathies
> as one of the best instruments for that accumulation. It must be grounded in a philosophy
> whose foundation is on the solidarity of the human race…They must be content to live
> quietly side by side with their neighbors until they grow into a sense of relationship and
> mutual interests…In short, residents are pledged to devote themselves to the duties of
> good citizenship and to the arousing of social energies which too largely lie dormant in
> every neighborhood given over to industrialism (*Centennial* 14)

The above might be taken as Addams' formal pronouncement of her image of the community

spirit, a spirit that she hoped would become emblematic of Hull House. These progressive values

laid accent to the questions of difference, unity, and civic responsibility. In professing to live in

accordance with such virtues as tolerance, solidarity and duty, Addams advocated a sort of patient humanitarian volunteerism, whereby the problems of any within her vicinity were accepted as the problems of all. The settlement, as a force for community, took upon itself an experimental role as improver of the industrial condition, that took for granted the inclusion of every citizen regardless of class, race, or creed. It professed the essential likeness of all persons as members of the same human race even in its diversity, and by participation in that common condition, assumed a level of obligation for their mutual welfare. Hull House was designed to be a place of tolerance and inclusion, where unity was found in diversity. The settlement, in short, operationalized Addams' vision of community as "civic obligation" and "imagined solidarity" in order to stimulate progressive adjustment and reform in a diverse urban populous.

The genius of the term *Settlement* as a label for Addams' enterprise seems to add an "artificial" component to Addams' attempt at community, in so far as settlers are not natives of the neighborhood, but are transplanted to settle in it. Settlement implies an intention on behalf of the settler and a gathering of prior strangers into new relation, not a community that develops "organically" or is inherited from generations rooted in place and tradition. Rather settlement highlights change, experiment, hardiness, and adventure. A settler has a vision that, albeit vague and idealistic, promises a better future. Like "pioneers" who settled new lands in uncertainty and resilience, so would Addams' community-settlement set out to pioneer new relationships and ways of life in urban Chicago.

The Settlement metaphor was particularly apt at capturing the newness and experimental nature of Addams' community, especially since her hope for a sense of mutual interest and solidarity among citizens was not grounded in homogeneity. Community arose out of a mash of cultural experiences and a vacuum of shared local tradition or public spirit. If the social ethic was

to manifest and community be achieved, it was to emerge from the unity of peoples of different tongue, class, race, and nation. Settlement, by emphasizing the artificiality of this extended view of community, illuminates the intentions and difficulties of Addams' mission, for she hoped to harness the "power of cooperation" in the "consciousness of a common destiny" in order to turn the "sentiment of universal brotherhood…from an emotion into a motive" (*Centennial* 25;10). Put another way, her community aimed to bring a people lacking shared traditions and conventional means of identification together to face their mutual problems and improve their collective condition. To do so, Addams turned to the binding power of voluntary social clubs.

Volunteerism and the Social Club

Generally, when Addams talked about community and collective action, what she really had in mind was the joining or creation of a club, organization, or voluntary association. The social club, for Addams, was the primary mechanism by which citizens could get involved in the life-blood of their communities and work for positive change. Clubs enriched the cultural lives of their communities and made feasible the organization and mobilization of citizens for meaningful collective action. Specifically, the voluntary association and social club initiated a three-fold process, that began by bringing otherwise separated citizens together and culminated in community-based amelioration of the industrial condition. On the matter, Addams writes:

> The social club forms a basis of acquaintance for many people living in other parts of the city…they are thus brought into contact, many of them for the first time, with the industrial and social problems challenging the moral resources of our contemporary life…[they]have increased the number of Chicago citizens who are conversant with adverse social conditions and conscious that only by the unceasing devotion of each, according to his strength, shall the compulsions and hardships, the stupidities and cruelties of life be overcome (*Centennial* 55)

The path of clubs, for Addams, is one moving from isolation to community, "from culture to civic activity" (*Second Twenty* 96-97). Clubs begin by forming a basis of acquaintance that

awaken a sense of identification and social obligation, leading to a conviction of social

responsibility and a vigorous culture of civic virtue. That civic passion and solidarity ultimately

manifests in collective action that alleviates urban struggles and improves the conditions

confronting all. It is worth dwelling longer on this trajectory of the social club, for it reveals not

only Addams' plan for progressive mobilization, but also the political presumptions embedded in

her rhetoric of community.

Club as Base of Acquaintance

The first function of the social club or voluntary association is that of forming the basis of

acquaintance for citizens. The city suffers not for a lack of people, but only for a lack of

meaningful relations between them. Persons brush by each other daily in the general mass of

conglomerated bodies without ever knowing or investing in their compatriots. Even among

throngs of people, the citizen is essentially alone. Social clubs, however, as community devices,

offer a remedy. Addams explains that "the value of social clubs broadens out in one's mind to an

instrument of companionship through which many may be led from a sense of isolation to one of

civic responsibility" (*Centennial* 55). By bringing people together around a common passion or

purpose, civic and philanthropic organizations connect citizens, often for the first time, drawing

them out from their estrangement and into comradeship. Such joinings develop a common

consciousness and awareness that there is, in some sense, mutual sharing of a common lot. It

does not matter much what the organization is for, though Addams recommended those focused

on particular social problems or interests, such as poverty, education, or immigration. However,

even clubs devoted simply to cultural and educational pursuits sufficed to create neighborly

companionship. In fact, Hull House initiated several organizations devoted to America's

"spiritual inheritance as enshrined in poetry, in history, in science, in art, in drama, in music"

(*Second Twenty* 95). The utility of such cultural clubs was to bind citizens together and enrich the life of the community. Addams proudly pronounced that "the constant coordination of these fructifying specialized studies reacted intimately on the life and character of each community," culminating in a "wave of civic emotion" (*Second Twenty* 95). When successful, clubs and voluntary associations unite a diverse people, serving as platforms that heighten the sense of companionship, ultimately actualizing in a felt social obligation and invigorated civic culture.

Social Responsibility and Civic Virtue

The second use of clubs and associations, after acquainting citizens by bringing them to an awareness of their shared condition, is the attainment of a sentiment of human solidarity, realized in a culture of civic virtue. If "obligations" are the stuff of community, then this is the stage where citizens begin to recognize they are members of the same community, marked by responsibility for the welfare of their fellows. Not only this, but they also come to feel that their individual needs are best met, and their individual selves most fulfilled, as part of the whole. When achieved, personal interests become submerged to the collective need, resulting in a community culture of devotion to the greater good. At its best, clubs may "build a structure of civic virtue" where citizens believe that "individual needs are common needs, that is, public needs, and that they can only be legitimately supplied for him when they are supplied for all (*Democracy* 269). When this occurs, and the self is seen in intimate relation to the needs of the ever-expanding unity of humankind, the social ethic has been internalized by the citizenry-turned-community. Improvement of and resolution to collective problems becomes not only possible, but inevitable.

Reform through Collective Action

As clubs serve to connect and rouse identification among citizens, expanding their sense of obligation and bringing out a respect for the needs of others, the natural conclusion is the co-laboring of citizens for positive social change. Together, the community seeks alleviation from the burdens of industry, rallying around the needs and demands of the neighbor. As we will see, Addams encouraged such reform in labor, recreation, immigration, race relations, local politics, women's equality, education, justice, crime, and poverty. For these ameliorative efforts to succeed, Addams' argued it was crucial for it to come through collective-community effort and not individual philanthropy. Addams was not against the generosity of individual charity itself— as a matter of fact, Hull House was largely supported by such means. Rather, her objection was that the philanthropist was still operating on an ethic of individualism while the problems of industrial life by their nature required a social ethic; it demanded change arising from the community itself. By permitting the collective to work out its own problems, the remedies would be long-lasting, better fitted, and more readily accepted.

The benevolence of philanthropists, business owners, or other powerful persons could still be effective to a degree, Addams admitted, but it was not in line with the shifting contours of American democracy. Social clubs and voluntary associations, however, brought community passion to reform, with the process of collective action itself contributing to the improvement of the common lot. Collective effort was not only a means to an end, it was also an end itself.

There were certain difficulties and inefficiencies to associated movements that the advocates of individualism were quick to point out. Collective effort was slow, frustrating, and splintered, sometimes even considered as a public nuisance by the outside world. But the awkwardness was a necessary concession, for social effort not only provided an outlet for

obligation and crash-course in civic training, but in the end it guaranteed better results. On the matter Addams wrote:

> If, as is many times stated, we are passing from an age of individualism to one of association, there is no doubt that for decisive and effective action the individual still has the best of it…And yet, if the need of the times demands associative effort, it may easily be true that the action which appears ineffective, and yet is carried out upon the more highly developed line of associated effort, may represent a finer social quality and have a greater social value than the most effective individual action (*Democracy* 137-138)

Transitioning from a rural to urban society, and by implication from an individualist to social ethic, ensures that there will be a bumpy period where inherited discriminations toward individual action still seems preferable; the rowdy social ruckus would still appear diffuse and unorganized. But given time and patience, Addams asserted, the public would be up to the challenge. It may appear ineffective, but community action would prove to be the most rewarding and effective means of change: "associated efforts toward social progress, although much more awkward and stumbling than that same effort managed by a capable individual, does yet enlist deeper forces and evoke higher social capacities" (*Democracy* 153).

In summation, the social club, the association, the civic organization, was the backbone of Jane Addams' conception of community. In the realm of ideals and principles, Addams imagined a society guided by a spirit of obligation and fellowship, mystically apprehending a common will or consciousness in the knowledge that they constituted one human community where the needs of one were the needs of all. In the realm of human action, Addams turned to the social club as the clearest and most practical avenue for attaining this spirit, believing this base of acquaintance could foster companionship and rouse a culture of social obligation and civic virtue, ultimately leading to collective social change.

The social club stands in as a kind of substitute between individual action and governmental coercion. In between the isolated altruism of individuals and the external

imposition of state agencies, is the community. Clubs, as the clearest sign that community is alive and well, enable autonomy, involvement, and true democracy to gain a foothold by making sure the people themselves are the active authors of their collective fate. Accordingly, Addams' vision of community, which appeals primarily to the *obligation* and *imagined solidarity* senses, finds *volunteerism* as a third critical component.

Volunteerism

Much like Alexis de Tocqueville's commentary on the American character, Addams centralizes the culture of joinings as the mainstay of democratic community. To take part in a local club or organization is in some way to answer the call of citizenship. But such activity in local affairs can never be forced; it depends upon a culture of involvement, participation and volunteerism. It stems from the dual convictions that (a) the best solutions are created by the people most immediately effected by the conditions themselves, instead of some external or governmental agency and (b) citizens within the realm of consequence will naturally desire to be involved in such affairs themselves. Volunteerism says that there is little need for outside imposition or coercion—citizens are capable and competent to work out their collective destiny themselves. This is, for Addams, the genius of the "American Method—that is, reaching our own ends through voluntary action with fair play to all the interests involved" (*Second* 295). Community is autonomous and internally motivated, never coerced.

Concomitantly, if there is a dearth of joinings and lack of voluntary associations, there is a good chance the culture is sick and decadent. Government or individual philanthropy may be able to do something, but what is more needed in such a state is the revitalization of a culture of activity and association. And this is precisely the role Addams saw for social clubs. Her aim was to set the conditions by which urban life in Chicago might flourish in civic activity, so that

meaningful fellowship might be had and citizens would be equipped to adjust and ameliorate the industrial ailments. Volunteerism, as a fundamental aspect of Addams' communitarian vision, meant no one could be forced into it; community must arise out of an overflowing of the heart, one with compassion for neighbors and a sense of responsibility, spurred by a culture of civic virtue. Only then, could progressive reform truly occur, for the small group of motivated citizens was the true impetus for change: "every crusade, every beginning of social change, must start from small numbers of people convinced of the righteousness of a cause; that the coming together of convinced groups is a natural process of growth" (*Peace and Bread* 225).

Addams purported social clubs and the spirit of volunteerism to be a relational manifestation of the social ethic and the ideal method of securing democratic progress and reform along the principle of social justice; however, this remains in the abstract until given specificity with her actual efforts in the social arena. Because Addams' Chicago efforts at industrial amelioration in association with Hull House were too numerous to recount in this chapter, I will briefly discuss two of the most prominent reforms to highlight how Addams' rhetoric of community expressed itself in actual organizational measures and responses to socio-political programs. These include reforms in youth recreation and labor unionizing.

Youth Recreation

One area to which Addams dedicated considerable energy was the condition of the youth in Chicago. She was abhorred by what she saw as the modern city's neglect in providing outlets for positive play and recreation. Children, Addams believed, naturally held an "insatiable desire for play," but the city was engaged in a "stupid experiment of organizing work and failing to organize play" (*Centennial* 151). The urban youth were rushed into a monotonous and mechanical life of child labor, while their development was stifled and their moral imagination

left unkempt. Nevertheless, the insatiable lust for adventure must find an outlet, and in lieu of

adequate forms of recreation, the youth turned to alternative methods such as child crime and

cheap "immoral" excitements like the petty theatre (*Democratic* 51). Children were over-worked

and overstimulated; rancorous behavior, petty-crime, and law-breaking on the streets, Addams

argued, were virtually the only recourse available to the youth to feed their ambitions. And

instead of building upon children's human imagination through planned recreational facilities,

the city left their ingenuity unrealized. "The whole apparatus for supplying pleasure," Addams

concluded, "is wretchedly inadequate" (*Spirit of Youth* 15).

Addams found the sorry state of public recreation especially damning because she

believed play was a powerful impetus toward civic community. The spirit of youth, she wrote,

was one naturally characterized by a desire for adventure, a felt sense of obligation, an expanded

moral imagination, and a vigor for social reform. Not only does play prevent life from becoming

mechanical, but it could be a great city-wide provocation toward the creation a "cosmopolitan

community" of diverse and otherwise separated people. Addams explains:

> Play is the great social stimulus, and it is the prime motive which unites children and
> draws them into comradeship. A true democratic relation and ease of acquaintance is
> found among the children in a typical factory community because they more readily
> overcome differences of language, tradition and religion than do adults (*Centennial* 158)

By investing in recreation, the city spaces and "factory communities" could afford an

unprecedented opportunity to elicit new forms of unity and comradeship, but it had instead failed

to meet the needs of urban children. In refusing to cater to its youth, the city was wasting its

chance to fully apprehend the social ethic and create a new cosmopolitan community of active

engagement and solidarity.

To set matters right, Addams began experimenting with different social clubs and

programs to make Hull House a place where the recreational needs of children could be met

within the urban context. With the intent of compensating for the city's recreational lack, Addams came to establish a theatre, musical school, art gallery, library, gymnasium, kindergarten, language and reading courses, and a playground at the Hull House complex. The voluntary creation and joinings of clubs for child recreation were meant to improve the conditions of industrial citizens from the ground up. By providing meaningful outlets for the development of youths' moral imagination, Addams believed their enthusiasm would initiate an unstoppable force for positive social change.

Addams, however, did not stop her efforts with Hull House clubs; she also mobilized Chicago citizens to pressure the City Government into taking direct action into the matter. With her leadership, a group of citizens contended that it was the city's responsibility to provide for the needs of children and recreation; in the same way that the city organized labor, they argued, so should the state take over responsibility for organizing play. After years of community pressure, Addams' playground initiative was taken over by Chicago, becoming a city-wide program to create safe places for children to interact and express their adventurous spirit.

This trajectory is emblematic of how Addams saw community change occurring in the local level—it should start with a motivated small group of citizens experimenting together to find successful solutions to industrial problems. When they had discovered an adequate scheme of adjustment, their efforts should be taken over by government bodies who serve as a permanent protector of social programs. Community, in this trajectory, was a move from volunteerism to state action for the furtherance of the social good. Addams' work with youth recreation was in keeping with her aims of social justice, extended obligation, and indigenous collective action. A second example—her support for workers' rights and the laboring classes—can serve as a further validation of this reading of her trajectory for "community" reform.

Labor Unions and the Working Classes

Perhaps the problem that most concerned Addams was the treacherous conditions of the poor and laboring classes. In industrial Chicago, the main source of employment was low-skill factory jobs where workers labored in dangerous conditions for long hours and low-wages. Business employment of child labor was rampant and these children were often the main bread-winners for their families. The laboring classes suffered physically, economically, and psychologically from their work, and in turn looked toward the formation of trade unions for the improvement of their collective lot.

Addams became an unabashed supporter of the workers unions, yet was firmly against class warfare between the rich and poor. Her faith was in democracy, believing the issues between capitalist owners and laboring classes could be worked out through the instruments of association. Nevertheless, Addams found her sympathies drawn to the plight of the workers, and sought to rally local citizens to stand by the "weak and the wretched."

Addams determined that one reason factory occupations were unfulfilling was because workers were disconnected from the final product of their labor. By being restricted to a sole station with a limited sense of responsibility, the individuals were alienated from the majority of the process of production, disabling them from feeling a sense of importance within the greater scheme of industry "or its connection with the community" (*Democracy* 213). A worker saw little value in their work, and when mixed with the monotony of their automated tasks, had an effect that was "deadening to his intellectual and moral life" (*Democracy* 213).

Addams decided progress could be made if the laborers developed a social consciousness where they came to see the value of their work within the larger social system: "If a working man is to have a conception of his value at all, he must see industry in its unity and entirety; he

must have a conception that will include not only himself and his immediate family and the community, but the industrial organization as a whole" (Centennial 149). To achieve this, Addams turned to education. She advocated a shift in public learning towards the history of industry and the position of the laborers within the larger historical and geographical context. Such an education would give an "offset from the overspecialization of his daily work" and "provide some historic significance of the part he is taking in the life of the community" (*Centennial* 149; *Democracy* 192). Accordingly, at Hull House, Addams created a labor museum and offered night classes that dealt specifically with the social implications of the laboring class.

Beyond educational measures, Addams' concern with the dreary state of the workers led her to publicly support to the union movement. Addams promoted unionism as an exemplar of the social ethic due to its inculcation of brotherhood, fellowship, and solidarity in order to improve the state of the working classes (*Centennial* 149; 198). Particularly, Addams thought unions had reached the pinnacle of morality in their willingness to sacrifice and submerge their individual interests to the interests of the community in the name of social duty: "many of them see their wives and children suffer, and yet they hold out, for the sake of securing better wages for workmen whom they have never seen, for men who are living in another part of the country, and who are often another race and religion" (*Centennial* 210). By privileging the good of those they did not know, even those separated by race and creed, the unions had grasped toward the cosmopolitan community the city so badly needed.

For her part, Addams assembled the larger Chicago community to petition the city government to intervene on behalf of the workers. And when the unions were faced with criticism for failing to achieve their objectives and causing social disturbance, Addams defended them as striving to fulfill the obligations that the entire community was responsible for; the

public had shirked its duty, she argued, so that "the trades unions alone are obliged to do what the community as a whole should undertake. Scenes of disorder and violence are enacted because trades unions are not equipped to accomplish what they are undertaking. The state alone could accomplish it without disorder" (*Democracy* 213). Had only the whole community arisen to meet their obligations to the laboring classes, the union would not be overburdened and forced to resort to such extreme measures.

In assembling Chicago to support the unions, Addams started with voluntarist methods. She opened Hull House to the meetings of workers and labor unions so they could plan an organized response. Addams also served as a mediator between the business and working interests during the 1910 Garment's workers strike. But in the end, as with her efforts on youth recreation, Addams mobilized the community to petition for government intervention. In specific, Addams and her associates championed child labor laws and the government regulation of industry: "Child-labor laws" she argued, were a register of "the community's humanity and enlightenment," while state regulation was the only responsible option for public citizens (*Centennial* 205). It was the duty of the state as the representative of the community, Addams maintained, to protect its most vulnerable citizens, ensure adequate working conditions, and establish social justice.

From Voluntary to State Action

Child recreation and workers' rights were but two of the myriad areas to which Addams employed community forces to improve the life of Chicago citizens. Women's rights, criminal justice reform, race relations, immigration, and public education were other issues where she labored to adjust urban conditions to the social ideal. I use the two examples because they adequately exemplify how Addams' progressive rhetoric of community contains a particular

vision of how social change should occur in a democratic society. Social action should begin with a small group of motivated individuals, work to capture a wider audience, and ultimately become solidified into government policy. Such a program for community demands a spirit of civic volunteerism and cooperation around shared issues of common concern. It depends upon the assumption that change should begin from the grassroots with common citizens that are competent and motivated to work out their own problems; and it has as its end an ideal of social justice realized in an inclusive community amid diversity. Out of a sense of growing social obligation and imagined solidarity, citizens must take responsibility for the welfare of others, even strangers with different backgrounds and beliefs, submerging their individual interests for those of the common good, until their experiments are taken over by state intervention.

Unlike more "conservative" conceptions, government action was not in opposition to community action; it was the ultimate and logical completion of it, because the state was nothing but the representative of the community will. The state was the expression of a "general will" in an almost Rousseauian sense, so that Addams did not see a significant chasm between the two methods of resolving social problems. To her contemporary critics, this was a central flaw in her program, for she took a rosy view of government as a statement of the community's will, overlooking the realistic and confrontational elements of statesmanship. But for our purposes, the relationship between the social clubs, collective action, and state intervention in Addams' rhetoric was a statement about community as not a tangible group of people, but a spirit of voluntary cooperation, obligation, and imagined solidarity on behalf of social justice and reform. For Addams, there was no contradiction in the principle of community between Hull House's voluntary founding of a playground and a state-sponsored initiative to build playgrounds; both were ameliorative attempts founded in concern for the welfare of the community.

Individual in Progressive Reform

Clearly Addams' program and her rhetoric addressed the complex relation of the individual to the social group in American society. Addams found the social club to be the primary means for bringing isolated citizens together and working toward positive social change. Social clubs served as a base of acquaintance that drew individuals from their estrangement and into comradery, leading to a sentiment of human solidarity realized in a culture of civic virtue, whereby individuals submerge their interests to the collective need and greater good. Inclusion and identification results in the co-laboring of citizens for social change and industrial amelioration, a kind of intermediary between individual and state action. Addams' vision of local community, as evidenced by her reforms in child recreation and labor unions, followed a trajectory from voluntary action to state intervention, with the government absorption of responsibilities being the natural and rightful culmination of the community spirit of obligation and extended identification.

From this exposition of Addams' progressive rhetoric of community, a few preliminary conclusions are possible. Addams' local-oriented program continues her concern for adjusting the new modern realities to first principles. Contextualized within her belief that the modern city was broken down because it was operating on an individualist code of morality no longer suited to it, and believing that error resulted in a lack of meaningful associations and a violation of justice, Addams rhetoric of community should be seen as an effort to fix a damaged social order through reorientation. In place of the individualist obligation to the self, she deployed a language of obligation to society. Community was the vehicle through which modern realities could be adjusted and reset along the progressive path toward justice.

Addams' local labors were designed to counter the dominance of the individualist ethic through an ethic of "extended" obligation beyond the family and toward the civic community, using the practical means of social clubs and organizations as its stimulant. For this reason, it may initially be presumed that Addams' rhetoric of community was pronouncing an alternative to individualism. This was, after all, how Addams sometimes framed the social ethic. From my vantage point, however, Addams' adoption of volunteerism is actually a move to preserve the essential heart of individualism by adding the social bond as a complementary base; the choice to join, after all, is still left to the individual volition. A person unaffected by pleads of "social obligation" is still free to ignore. So rather than understanding Addams' social ethic as opposed to American individualism, it is perhaps better to view it as the *salvation of individualism*, the community-impulse that rescues individualism from its own excess. Social clubs preserve individual choice by encouraging adequate social activity and solidarity so as to prevent mandated government action. Rather than disqualifying individualism, as Addams sometimes suggests, she adjusts it to the industrial condition by imbuing it with social responsibilities. Her reorientation was to add a social component to individualism so as to correct and preserve it.

Yet the program becomes complicated with Addams' predilection toward government intervention as the desired culmination of the community bond. Addams saw little distinction between voluntary and state action, obfuscating the opposite directions from which these two "community" interventions flow. One was grassroots-oriented and the other was imposed by authority. Addams did not acknowledge this essential difference because government, in her rhetoric, was nothing but the instrument of the community's voice, the actual representative of the general will and the result of citizen activism. Democratic institutions were the protector of the community's sensibilities and achievements of social justice. While this was sometimes this

case, her conflation of voluntaristic and state action created a "communitarian mask" over what is to the author two opposing methods of securing social ends. It is a point that can be drawn out by looking to Addams second cosmopolitanism maneuver, the plea for International Community.

If the above were the end of Addams rhetoric, community could be said to be a relatively prescriptive method for resolving social problems through voluntary clubs in the local arena along progressive values of tolerance, obligation, and social justice; however, Addams continued her program with a second critical Cosmopolitan step to attain World Community. Addams' ability to use the trope of community to move from the social level to the world level illustrates the rhetorical utility and transcendent quality of the god-term. Since this dissertation is interested in the rhetorical fecundity of "community," we can see how the community enables a further extrapolation of immediate human relations to a larger social program of world obligation.

International Community

Beyond her work with industrial amelioration in her immediate Chicago "community" and a brief stint in National politics, Jane Addams set her sights on a higher—and after the outbreak of World War I, more pressing—moral achievement: International Community. The 1910s saw international accord disintegrate amidst the brutalities of global conflict. As ardent nationalism arose on nearly all fronts to support the war effort, Addams staked a controversial pacifist position. Her commitments to democracy, justice, and community prevented avid participation in the war frenzy, isolating her from her fellow citizens and tarnishing her hard-earned reputation.

The later years of Addams' life were spent wrestling with this press opprobrium and her ideological distance from the majority of her compatriots. In the face of growing national unity at the behest of a common foe, Addams envisioned an alternative unity founded it what was

universally held in common. She turned to the "primitive" motive of feeding the hungry as a more fundamental drive than the fury of war, believing that compassion and humanitarianism was as universal as fear and anger. The summation of her rhetoric called for a New Internationalism, a global accord characterized by peace, justice, cooperation, and fellowship. Rather than nationalism, Addams sought a wider purview for the passions and loyalty of citizens, pleading for an ultimate extension of the social obligation and shared identity to global proportions. Addams envisioned a cosmopolitan international community of complete inclusion.

World War and the Pacifist Position

In the summer of 1914 war erupted between nations, engulfing the world in global conflict with a scale of death and destruction unprecedented to that time in history. President Woodrow Wilson, reelected in 1916 on the platform "he kept us out of war," brought the United States into the conflict the very next year. Jane Addams, who had campaigned on behalf of Wilson, was dismayed by the turn of events. It was not lost on her that those same industrial conditions she vigorously labored to improve were largely responsible for the massive destruction rocking the globe. Addams could not endorse the war because she believed it to be avoidable; and while she supported the progressive principles and democratic idealism of Wilson's fourteen points, she iterated that "democratic ends could not be attained through the technique of war" (*Peace and Bread* 60).

Addams' objected to the war as a matter of principle and exigence: war was a tragic loss of human life that drew upon the cruder elements of human motives, and war could not achieve the objectives it set out to attain. Addams saw war as a kind of sin or regression of human motives that went against the gradual progress of civilization toward rationality, cooperation, and democracy. The great conflict had caused a rupture in the upward move of history, bringing back

the "primitive" motives of tribalism and prejudice in an age otherwise increasingly prone to an enlarged human morality. That passion was now funneled toward nationalism, militarism, and limited loyalties. For Addams, the return to the crude beginnings of the race was bringing forth unimaginable human suffering, rekindling an obsolete and inadequate method for dealing with human affairs to the ruin of countless lives. War was a violation of the myth and value of modern "progress," a catastrophe to highest moral achievements of universal brotherhood. In response, Addams pleaded with her fellow citizens to adopt an enlarged consciousness of human loyalty for the pursuit of peace. Her rhetoric of community was meant to combat the limited allegiance of nationalism on behalf of a progressive international ethic of "global community." It was a reorientation away from violence, war, and conflict and toward peace, collaboration, and humanitarianism.

The war was often defended by its proponents as a pathway to peace, progress, justice, and democracy—the "war to end all wars"—but Addams knew that slogan had been used throughout history to motivate recruits to support the cause while failing to deliver on its promise: for Addams' fundamental conviction was that war does not spread democracy, it only destroys it (*Centennial* 273). Those who were proclaiming that the war could achieve a new state of justice and progress were fooling themselves, because "Social advance depends as much upon the process through which it is secured as upon the result itself" (*Peace* 4). There could be no progress through hatred and violence. Rather fellowship and justice must come through community: "justice between men and nations can only be achieved through understanding and fellowship, and that a finely tempered sense of justice, which alone is of any service in modern civilization, cannot possibly be secure in the storm and stress of war" (*Peace and Bread* 4).

In sum, Addams' portrayed the war as a reversion from "progressive" motives of human cooperation and fellowship toward more tribalistic and primitive behavior. It was a rebuke to the best achievements of most recent century. The war, Addams contended, was caused by the failure to achieve a sense of world identification and international obligation; a curtailed sense of national loyalty predominated at the expense of a more inclusive and extended allegiance. In contrast to those hoping to achieve democratic ends, neither progress, justice, or democracy could be spread through the techniques of war. They required an entirely different set of human motives found in the peace and collaboration of "community."

The Nurturing of Human Life (Peace and Bread)

Addams progressive values and community convictions naturally led her to adopt a pacifist position in regards to the war; but as she soon found out by the scorn of her contemporaries, pacifism was not an easy position to hold. Pacifism was lampooned by the press as cowardly, unpatriotic, and an irresponsible embrace of isolationism, and its advocates were commonly dismissed as weak, naïve, idealistic, or treasonous. Addams took deep issue with such characterizations. Seclusion and isolation were the antitheses of Addams' communitarian rhetoric in the local-urban arena, and she could not stand such a charge in world affairs; for her, pacifism was an attempt to achieve the same ameliorative goals of social improvement on the world stage, which required not violent conflict, but a peaceful and cooperative "wider life of coordinated political activity" (*Peace and Bread* 112). The difficulty confronting Addams became how to take a position condemned by her peers and show it to be an ethical achievement; how to get citizens to envision an alternative pattern of human behavior in world affairs. The situation thus required a work of rhetorical reframing, which Addams enacted through her communitarian grammar by redefining Pacifism as the "active nurturing of human life."

Addams' reframing of pacifism began by countering the dominant narrative that pacifism was isolationist. Pacifists, she argued, were not neglecting their responsibilities to the world stage, but fulfilling their duties by edging humanity toward the higher achievements of peace and justice in "International Community." To advocate for peace was more than to plead for an end to hostilities; rather pacifism meant actively working to improve the condition of all members of the human race. It involved a shift in emphasis *from domination to community* as the method of resolving world problems, focusing on collaborative efforts toward alleviating the condition of the suffering in International Affairs. By forsaking violence, American pacifists were not forfeiting their influence on the world stage as its critics alleged, but actually assuming a position of leadership by attaining a "wider life of coordinated political activity." Addams defended this "activist" conception of pacifism by arguing that:

> a dynamic peace is found in that new internationalism promoted by the men of all nations who are determined upon the abolition of degrading poverty, disease and ignorance, with their resulting inefficiency and tragedy. I believed that peace was not merely an absence of war but the nurture of human life, and that in time this nurture would do away with war as a natural process (*Second Twenty* 35)

For Addams, the active destruction of life through war should be replaced by a commitment to "nurturing" of human life. In accordance with the "nurturing motive," a pacifist perspective endorsed an "International Community" uniting around common humanitarian causes to eradicate war. In this way, pacifists would not be shirking their responsibilities to their fellows, but fulfilling them by looking toward the universal human needs—food, shelter, and health.

The substitution of *nurture* for *isolation* as the antithesis to *violence* was Jane Addams' critical rhetorical maneuver. Doing so symbolically transformed pacifism from a passive to an active program, one not simply against something (war), but for something (improved human

living standards)—peace was not the absence of violence, it was collaboration and fellowship for a common cause. That is, peace was International Community realized.

In juxtaposing nurture with violence, Addams' reorientation set up a contrast between two motives, both of which she saw as "primitive" resources for inciting human behavior. By placing *pacifism*, and the cognate terms *justice*, *cooperation* and *fellowship* within the "Nurture" camp, Addams asserted the primacy of *community-building*, life-giving virtues over those of combat and war. The ascending language of peace and nurture could then be said to be a legitimate and natural way of approaching international discord. For, however intrinsic and natural violence was to the human experience, the instinct to nurture was equally as primitive and natural to the human condition, and could thus serve as a countering force to war. In her rhetorical frame, war-violence and peace-nurture were two competing impulses, with praise-worthy impulse being that of communal harmony. Addams formulated a switch a from a terminology of war to peace, violence to nurture, atavism to community. The best way forward was to capitalize on the act most directly implicated by the nurture metaphor: feeding the hungry.

Addams wrote that "Peace and Bread has become inseparably connected in my mind," and that "Through an effort to feed hungry people, a new and powerful force might be unloosed in the world and would have to be reckoned with as a factor in international affairs" (*Centennial 283; Second Twenty* 144). That force was a sense of human fellowship and collaboration around a universal cause for the improvement of the collective lot. Addams realized that the epidemic of world hunger was of far too great a magnitude for simple philanthropy, local organization, or even national effort; feeding the hungry required no less that a united global effort, virtually equal to that of world war, but directed toward benevolent purposes. "Peace and Bread" became Addams' slogan for the program of contesting war and building world unity through the

international effort to help those in need. The effort to feed the hungry was a natural extension of the pacifist aim to "nurture human life" across the globe. If harnessed correctly, Addams believed humanitarian causes, which were the natural outlet for familial compassion, could supplant the war motives and work toward a cosmopolitan World Community.

The appeal to peace and bread can be understood as an appeal to fundamentals, a kind of "lowest common denominator" of human motives that all persons of the world would share. Peace, and not war, was the natural state of human activity, and the primitive urge to nurture was more engrained then the inclination toward violence. She asserted a shared universal premise of human compassion that could foster a progressive unity against child hunger, a union treated on "an international basis, the nations working together whole-heartedly to fulfill a world obligation" (*Peace and Bread* 208). That, above anything, was the aim of Addams' enthusiasm for "peace and bread"—the directing of human energies toward the possibility of International Community. Community was the glue holding together her various appeals for peace and humanitarianism. Her rhetoric followed the same progressive community logic of local affairs: surely if your neighbor was hungry you would feed them. In the same way, why not have compassion and feed your fellow "neighbors" in the global community?

Internationalism

Both Addams' defense of pacifism and call for humanitarian action on world hunger were subsidiary to her larger hope for a politics of Internationalism (*Newer Ideals; New Conscience*). Throughout the duration and conclusion of the war, Addams used all the resources at her disposal to plead for a program of Internationalism whereby all the nations of the world would come together and work out their differences to avoid war, establish justice, and initiate a long-lasting peace. If all the efforts that went into the great war could be redirected toward the

humanitarian needs of the world, she assured, there would be no reason the poor could not be fed and international accord be established. It was, Addams, believed, the duty of her time to inaugurate an international assembly where every nation was represented and had its interests heard. The ultimate end of Addams' progressive rhetoric was the creation of an all-encompassing "Community of Nations."

The greatest deterrent to such an internationalism was the curtailed sense of loyalty among citizens, especially that found in nationalism. Just as the familial ethic inhibited the development of a social ethic, so a firm national obligation prevented a sense of obligation toward the international community. Addams cautioned that, "their sense of duty thus specialized and limited, is dangerous because it refers only to a small group of men and excludes the penetrating sense of the fundamental unity and interdependence of society. They lost the challenge to a wider and more human relationship—the lure of fuller fellowship" (*Second Twenty* 155). A too narrow sense of community, while eliciting socially usefully behaviors within its domain, actually causes injustice and antagonism toward those left outside the fold. As society grew increasingly interdependent to the point of international implication, there was a corresponding need for a more extensive community sentiment and sense of world obligation. "The wider movement of civilization," Addams argued, "is against limited loyalties" and toward "a new courage, more generous association, more freedom of expression and at the same time more candid and intimate relationships" (*Second Twenty* 156). International community, for Addams was the natural culmination of the widening move of history, beyond national boundaries and into the "cooperation of all nations" (*Peace and Bread* 3). Cosmopolitanism, with the peoples of all countries partaking in one human community, could enter the world into

an era of humanitarian social ends without a common enemy. Citizens of the world would come

to acknowledge they are members of "the same human family" (*Peace* 6).

Practically speaking, the manifestation of "world community" that Addams most ardently

supported looked similar to her advocacy of community at the local level: organizations working

for positive social change. The major difference between the two programs was that "world

organizations" were not necessarily made up of citizens voluntarily working toward

improvements in their locales, but of governments and nations meeting to accomplish similar

ends. There is thus a transition in the emphasis of Addams' communitarian vision from

voluntaristic non-state action toward world government.

Above all, Addams staunchly defended proposals for a formal "International

Government" as the desired culmination of world community. She thought it "unspeakably

stupid that the nations should fail to create an international organization," because the great

world crisis for all its tragedy, brought forth an opportunity to create a new international

government capable of making the appropriate political and economic changes to avoid future

disaster (*Centennial* 281). Naturally, at wars end, Addams looked to the League of Nations as the

great hope for world community:

> One turned instinctively to the newly creation League of Nations. Could it have
> considered this multitude of starving children as its concrete problem, feeding them
> might have been the quickest way to restore the divided European nations to human and
> kindly relationship. Was all this devastation the result of hypernationalism and might not
> the very recognition of a human obligation irrespective of national boundaries from the
> natural beginning of better international relationships (*Peace and Bread* 173)

The League of Nations, as she conceived of its purpose, brought together the connected

threads of Addams' progressive rhetoric of community: an effort toward the alleviation of

modern suffering, feeding the hungry as a primitive motive for global unity, the move beyond

nationalism and toward world community, an awareness of the shared condition of all peoples,

and an overseeing government body tasked with the responsibility for establishing peace, justice, and fellowship. A universal guardian of human welfare, as the League of Nations purported to be, would be the ultimate culmination of Addams' communitarian care ethic; for it would necessitate a complete world unity without a common enemy, a new motive founded in humanitarianism, compassion, and obligation to all persons. In fact, Addams' defense of "International Community" was founded in the same logic of progressive reform itself—the hope that if people are brought together, they will be responsive and responsible for each other, and work together through "community action" to achieve reform in state policy and human activity.

Inclusion through the Extension of Obligation

In review, the second step of Addams' cosmopolitan rhetoric was toward a world community founded in what was universally held in common. She employed the familiar vocabulary of community to contest the Great War, which she saw as primarily a failure of human ethics. The war was a rupture in the progressive curve of history that brought back restricted tribalistic motives an age otherwise prone to an enlarged conception of human obligation. Social justice and world progress, Addams argued, could not be attained through the instruments of war, but only through an extended International Community characterized by fellowship, understanding, collaboration and peaceful conflict resolution.

It can be said that Addams international rhetoric was a moral challenge to its auditors toward universality, for 'progress' defined as complete inclusion, community without borders, outsiders, or a common enemy. It is the abandonment of war for peace and fellowship; the collaboration of citizens toward improvement of living conditions and amelioration of human suffering; the forsaking of self and family for an idea called "society."

As with her local-oriented rhetoric, "community" was best understood as a sense of obligation and imagined solidarity operationalized for adjusting and improving the material conditions of citizens. Both culminate in a state-sponsored organization sentinel that oversees the attainments of human welfare. The significant differences between them were that Addams call for internationalism was more clearly defined in opposition to a social force—the world war— and less concerned with the voluntary notion of organizational change. Her enemy was no longer the restricted sense of individualist and family obligation, but the restricted sense of national obligation. However, in both cases, Addams relies on the same essential maneuver toward greater inclusion. The motives and vocabulary of community were fruitful and malleable enough to be invoked in progressive platforms of vastly different scopes.

This, then, is the emblematic rhetorical move of Jane Addams—the extension of *obligation* to an ever-larger number of people through an *imagined solidarity* of the entire human race. In her work with Chicago and Hull House toward amelioration of the industrial condition, Addams pleaded for a social ethic which expanded the familial obligation to the social ream of civic relationships; in her advocacy of pacifism, she used the same line of appeal, calling for a broadening of "human brotherhood" beyond the limited loyalty of nation and toward international community. In both instances, the progressive impulse gains its impetus through a move toward universal inclusion. Jane Addams' progressive rhetoric is the perfect antithesis to provincial, sectional, or partial conceptions of community, because her complete community is the identification of all with all, with a concomitant duty to seek the welfare of every person; or, as she succinctly captures it herself, community means "to come into friendly relationships with ever larger and larger groups, and to live constantly a more extended life" (*Centennial* 321). In

every case when confronted with a choice between partial and universal loyalties, Addams advocates the side of universality. That was her rhetoric's defining feature.

Conclusion

This chapter has captured what can be called Addams' two rhetorical "reorientations" of the American mind; in the face of changing social circumstances, Addams worked to attain a socially conscious vocabulary of civic obligation and solidarity as a corrective to the language of individualism; in the face of global conflict, Addams attempted to reorient the world away from violent-war motives and national loyalties in trade for pacifist and humanitarian motives of global cooperation. In both cases, community was the vehicle for democratic change in adjusting modern life to the ideals of justice, tolerance, harmony, fellowship, and civic collaboration. Addams' rhetoric relied upon the appeal to community as the "extension of obligation" to enlarge citizens' imaginations about who was included in "us." In so doing, her rhetoric endorsed a cosmopolitan ethic, whereby the further the sense of obligation is extended, the higher the moral achievement. While endorsing a dual citizenship to both the locale and the world, the ultimate aim was universal community understood as the identification of all with all, manifest in collaborative organizational efforts toward humanitarianism and social justice.

It is appropriate, by way conclusion, to return to the research questions guiding this dissertation on what kind of work gets done with community? What actions/values does it sanction? And how does it navigate the relation between self and society, providing meaning and order to the American orientation? "Community," in Addams' rhetoric accomplishes the discursive work of re-framing and re-orienting the American public toward a value system in competition with individualist ethics and provincial loyalties. Addams' invoked community to endorse progressive values of inclusion, tolerance, unity in diversity, obligation, and social

justice. To seek community meant to experiment with social improvements, especially improvements that helped those most in need. Accordingly, community sanctioned actions that invoked humanitarian ends, such as the joining of social clubs, the strikes of worker's unions, benevolent state intervention through programs of social welfare, and the formation of a global governing body.

In the way of navigating the self with society to reset the social order, community for Addams was compensatory to the losses inherent to modern industry and urbanization. Community did not mean an escape or return to old forms of life, but the development of alternative forms of relationships appropriate to urban realities. Community was also a corrective to individualism, but one that served to preserve individualism's essential core. For Addams, to seek community meant to bring citizens to an awareness of their shared destinies and mutual obligation in order to mobilize citizen to improve of their collective lot. Community was both ends and means, a method for social change and state of unity where individuals could find their rightful place. A rebalanced social order would be one where relationships were characterized by compassion, civic virtue, and a zeal for social reform.

What then can be said to be at the heart of a progressive conception of community? In sum, the progressive conception of community displayed in Addams' rhetoric was a future-oriented program of adjustment, with community serving as a vehicle for democratic change. Community was an ethic of inclusion and extended obligation that aimed toward an imagined solidarity of all people as citizens of one cosmopolitan community.

In so far as Addams' program is representative of progressive urges, it reveals the ethical underpinnings of liberal community to be one concerned with the predominance of individualist and nationalist assumptions. Progressive community attempts to correct the excesses of

individualism so as to create a social order more favorable to association and justice. It points to the possibility of a more inclusive and cooperative society characterized by solidarity and obligation. This progressive conception of community is not so much a thing as a morality, that aims for motives of humanitarianism, fellowship, and problem-solving through collaboration.

In such a progressive take on community, voluntary associations take on a central role. The accessibility and limited functions of clubs permit them to serve as platforms from which to enter the civic arena, sites where citizens learn how to express their political voices and come to find that their destinies are linked with their compatriots. Within an individualist system that by its nature grants autonomy and breaks down totalized unities, voluntary associations provide the critical outlet for curtailing the radical separation of individuals pursuing their own interests.

Yet the progressive rhetoric of community that is dependent upon voluntary association is goaded by a paradox over state intervention. Because democracy requires civic participation, the club provides an outlet for directly democratic action on behalf of citizens working to resolve issues of common concern; but in so far as the state subsumes those responsibilities as the natural culmination of civic activism, it also ironically renders them increasingly unneeded. The further the state encroaches upon the role of the club, the less power the club has to change conditions themselves, and the less incentive there is for citizens to establish such contingent solidarities. What is encouraged by such assumption of responsibility is a passive citizenry and an expanded government. These two forms of "community," if the critic accepts Addams' grouping, are at odds when both seek to become the primary vehicle of social change. One stems from the bottom-up while the other flows from the top–down. While Addams' theory of government suggests that the state is the expression of the community's will, even granting this assumption, it becomes hard to overlook the complexities and harsh realisms of governing that Addams

ignores. Addams' rhetorical equivalence of voluntarism and state intervention as vehicles for positive social change rests upon a theory of government that strikes modern readers as idealistic and naïve. The dialectic between volunteerism and state intervention is a conflict that Addams' use of community masks. It would therefore seem that the progressive who adheres to Addams' conception of community must find a way of reconciling the desire for direct democracy with the advocacy of state institutions as benevolent guardians of social welfare.

The cosmopolitan is similarly faced with the difficulty of rallying support for "world community," while smaller attachments—to family, friends, city, or nation—appear more natural, and certainly are more prevalent. The progressive cosmopolite such as Addams believes a more inclusive, extended, and totalized community is the preferable ethic and deploys the language of community on its behalf. This attempt at International Community in the League of Nations, as well as the United Nations, is founded in a kind of progressive logic that presumes if people (or nations) are brought together in "communal relations," they will develop a sense of responsibility for each other. This movement from local to global, from community action to state policy, is in fact the model of progressive reform itself. Nevertheless, it seems likely this misses or underestimates the difficulties of apprehending an abstract concept of world community when the immediately proximate relationships breed more concrete and intense commitments. It may be that the cosmopolitan rhetoric of community conflates two very different forms of loyalty as belonging to the same "stuff," building its moral system on a presumption of likeness for two processes which are better understood as dissimilar. Perhaps the fiction of world community, pragmatically, is less easily realized than those of nation, family, and individual. This does not mean the cosmopolitan must give up their moral standard of inclusion and acceptance, but it does magnify the difficulties present to the rhetorical endeavor.

By choosing the language of community for such a task, Addams found a moral vocabulary

attuned to her progressive values; but the very malleability of it also put it in competition with

the power of more provincial and partial deployments of the same language. A provincial

rhetoric of community, as a near perfect antithesis to the cosmopolitan one, will be the subject of

the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

SOUTHERN AGRARIANISM AND THE PROVINCIAL COMMUNITY

"For, in conclusion, this much is clear: If a community, or a section, or a race, or an age, is groaning under industrialism, and well aware that it is an evil dispensation, it must find the way to throw it off. To think that this cannot be done is pusillanimous. And of the whole community, section, race, or age thinks it cannot be done, then it has simply lost its political genius and doomed itself to impotence" (*I'll Take My Stand* lii)

In 1930 twelve men, all in some manner associated with Vanderbilt University, convened to discuss the growing predominance of modern industrialism and its deleterious effects on the American social order. The writers, who called themselves the Southern Agrarians (1920s-1930s), were dismayed by the state of affairs, and decided to stake a defense of the traditional way of life found in the United States South, believing it represented an ideal order of humane social relations. What emerged from their shared convictions was the manifesto, *I'll Take My Stand* (1930), a virulent critique of modern society and passionate vindication of Southern communities. In it, the Agrarians called for a return to the small agricultural economy of rural America as the best means for preserving the traditions, values and customs of the South.

The twelve contributors to the volume—Donald Davidson, John Gould Fletcher, Henry Blue Kline, Lyle Lanier, Andrew Nelson Lyle, Herman Clarence Nixon, Frank Lawrence Owsley, John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, John Donald Wade, Robert Penn Warren, and Stark Young—were men who differed considerably in matters of expertise and ideology, but they united around one common conviction: the South, for all its failings, was an image of

community, and it needed to be preserved from the disorder of the industrial system. They therefore turned to language of community to defend and endorse the Southern tradition.

Upon publication, *I'll Take My Stand* received a surprisingly wide circulation, eliciting both sympathetic affirmation and vehement condemnation by its readers. Its critics denounced it as nostalgic and reactionary plea for a mythical past, while its supporters commended it as a piercing appraisal of modern deficiencies and an endorsement of Western humanism. In its historical moment, the Agrarian program was polarizing and its image of community highly contested. Yet the legacy of the Agrarians and *I'll Take My Stand* has long outlived its immediate context—historians credit the Southern Agrarians with garnering momentum for the conservative cause, serving as a kind of intellectual precursor to the traditionalist wing of modern American conservatism (Murphy; Nash). Since its publication, *I'll Take My Stand* has never been out of print. For these reasons, the rhetoric of the Agrarians can serve admirably as a case study of the rhetoric of community as its occurs in a traditionalist discourse.

In this chapter, I consider the Agrarian manifesto *I'll Take My Stand* as a rhetorical text and statement of community values. I argue that the Agrarians employed a provincial rhetoric of community to transform the social failures of American industrialism and the moral failures of Southern identity. Community, for the Agrarians, occurred in an inherited tradition and social order which enabled a stable and humanistic culture to provide a home for the individual. In light of its historic sins, they submitted the South could be redeemed by its community virtues. I also argue that the Agrarians' shared endorsement of community concealed their conflicting positions on racial inclusion and justice, and this conflict significantly undermined their program.

To make this case, I contextualize the Agrarians' historical circumstances, showing how their rhetoric of community was crafted to contest the rhetoric of industrial progress. I then

elucidate the characteristics of their provincial ideal of community, drawing attention to its construction as specifically South virtue. Finally, I discuss the Agrarians' conflicting positions on the question of justice for African-Americans within the community, and close with a commentary on the implications of this analysis.

Contesting the Rhetoric of Industry and Progress

The twelve authors of *I'll Take My Stand* chose to frame their program as one against *Industrialism* and in defense of *Agrarianism*, writing: "all tend to support a Southern way of life against what may be called the American or prevailing way; and all as much as agree that the best terms in which to represent the distinction are contained in the phrase, Agrarian versus Industrial" (*I'll Take* xli). As evidenced by their self-proclaimed defensive position, the Agrarians were incensed as much by that they stood *against* as what they stood *for*. "Industrialism," as their chosen terminological nemesis, was diffuse and imprecise, encapsulating a host of trends the Agrarians found undesirable, including progressivism, mechanization, abstraction, and adulation of the applied sciences. Industrialism served the role of summarizing Devil-term for a series of modern evils to be resisted at every turn.

The selection of "Agrarianism" as the term of the South and "Industrialism" as that of American society writ large formed a fundamental binary at the heart of their rhetoric. As the explicitly offered point of contestation, the Agrarians defined Industrialism as "the economic organization of the collective American Society. It means the decision of society to invest its economic resources in the applied sciences" (*I'll Take* xliii). The problem with industrialism was that it had over-capitalized on the mechanical prowess of the applied sciences to the point where its power had "become extravagant and uncritical; it has enslaved our human energies to a degree now clearly felt to be burdensome" (*I'll Take* xliii). For the Agrarians, the unquestioned

industrial reign of the machine had ushered in a destitute society void of leisure, purpose, and human attachments. Labor had become monotonous, unfulfilling, and insecure; over-production, unemployment, inequality and economic instability was the norm. The inevitable result was the centralization of political and economic power, with a concomitant loss of individual liberty and communal autonomy. Industrialism was creating persons without names or place, unrooted masses lacking status and driven only by the pursuit of profit. In such a state where citizens are removed from nature, aesthetic and religious sensibilities inevitably decay.

Amid the number of objections to industrialism and the rhetoric of progress, the Agrarians' central complaint was the encroachment on the Southern way of life as they understood it. Industrialism, they believed, threatened to uproot, delegitimize, and eliminate their inherited social order. Business and technology were running amok and colonizing organic ways of life, leaving in their place an artificial and liminal habitation. The Agrarians therefore announced their mission as one of preserving the good in the past—the local community and traditional inheritance—from the destructive path of industrialism within the context of Southern life and culture. Industrialism was assigned the character of outside invader of indigenous practices, and the rhetorical move of the Agrarians was to accordingly position themselves as a beleaguered bloc fighting for the survival of their community.

The Agrarian angst reached a fever pitch when a political program called the New South garnered widespread social support. The New South was a reform-oriented movement which implored Southerners to abandon their traditional economic reliance on agriculture and embrace modernization through integration with American industrialism. Writer Henry Grady, who first coined the phrase "New South" and was considered the movements spokesman, pronounced that the "South was Dead" and must be rebuilt by aligning itself with Northern capitalists. The New

South's focus on economic development, in addition to FDR's New Deal policies, saw farming mechanize into large-scale agricultural businesses, leading to a rapid migration of Southerners to cities for employment as cheap labor.

The Agrarians were disconcerted by this development and attempted to stem the tide by staking a defense of independent farmers. For whatever inroads industrialization and progressivism was making on the rest of the country, its march into Southern territory, for the Agrarians, amounted to an invasion and declaration of war. The issue was one of lifestyle and values, but also the identity of Southerners. Ransom summarized the matter as follows: "The question at issue is whether the South will permit herself to be so industrialized so as to lose entirely her historic identity, and to remove the last substantial barrier that has stood in the way of American progressivism" (Ransom 22). To embrace the progressivism of the New South would be to give up the traditions and lifestyles the Agrarians believed integral to Southern Identity. The rest of the nation do as it will; let the South remain an anti-industrial agrarian community.

Yet they were discouraged by the relative acquiescence given to manufacturing, warning: "Of late, however, there is the melancholy fact that the South itself has wavered a little and shown signs of wanting to join up behind the common American industrial ideal. It is against this tendency that this book is written" (*I'll Take* xlii). The people, they feared, were being seduced by the shallow achievements of technology and wealth, trading the simple but meaningful pleasures for a life of aimlessness and instability.

The Agrarians did not oppose technology or capitalism as such, but rather the *theory* underlying its application into the social order (Lanier). This theory of industrialism was the philosophy of "progress," a doctrine they decried for championing change for change's sake.

Leading Agrarian John Crowe Ransom compared the progressive mentality to purposeless

"pioneering," the waging of a war on nature to make profit without concern for what was being

lost. The South was, for Ransom and the Agrarians, the last bulwark preventing industrial

progressivists from annihilating the natural, inherited good life of regional communities.

Within this context the Agrarians' aimed toward a rhetorical transformation. As they

looked around, they saw that the resources for defending agrarianism were at a notable

disadvantage. The rhetoric of industrial progress, drawing upon scientific, technological, and

mechanical achievements, was the governing narrative, and to call for a program of reaction or

preservation was to go against the general social enthusiasm for reformation. Lyle Lanier sized

up the rhetorical difficulty as follows:

> Modern industrialism has found the use of 'progress,' as a super-slogan. Very efficacious
> as a public anaesthetic. The magic word…progress is perhaps the most widely advertised
> commodity offered for general consumption in our high powered century, a sort of
> universal social enzyme whose presence is essential to the ready assimilation of other
> commodities, material and intellectual, generated by the machine age. A steady barrage
> of propaganda issues through newspapers, magazines, radios, billboards, and other
> agencies for controlling public opinion, to the effect that progress must be maintained. It
> requires little sagacity to discover that progress usually turns out to mean business, or
> else refers to some activity which serves to ally the qualms of the business conscience.
> General sanction of industrial exploitation of the individual is grounded in the firm belief
> on the part of the generality of people that the endless production and consumption of
> material goods means 'prosperity,' 'a high standard of living,' 'progress,' or any one
> among several other catchwords (Lanier 123)

As much as a complaint as a diagnosis, the Agrarians realized that progress, as the promise of

prosperity and advancement, held a great social sway, and any assault on such discourse must

overcome a rhetorically subordinate position. The mission for traditionalists was to dismantle the

rhetoric of progress and replace it with a conservative alternative, because the "super-slogan"

progress, left unchecked, would serve to trample Southern ways of life. Responding to this

threat, *I'll Take My Stand* was framed as a tract of resistance, a rallying cry of a culture fading

against the overwhelming force of history. In searching for a competing discursive framework to complement their program, the Agrarians decided upon the language community; industrialism's rhetoric of progress would be met with an agrarian rhetoric of community.

Negotiating Southern Identity

There was a second rhetorical endeavor as well. As much as the twelve men were concerned with the preservation of agrarian communities in the face of American industrialism, their rhetoric was concerned equally with white Southern identity in light of the South's disrepute and moral failings on race and slavery. The Agrarians felt a strong affinity with their regional past, but also an acute awareness of its racial evils. So, while they desired to contest the changing American landscape by appeal to the tradition they inherited, the Agrarians were also cognizant of the state of reproof to which the South had fallen for its historic sins. Perhaps the problem was best articulated by Allen Tate in his Poem, "Brief Message":

> This, Warren, is our trouble now:
> Not even fools could disavow
> Three Centuries of piety
> Grown bare as a cottonwood tree
> (A timber seldom drawn and sawn
> And chiefly used to hang men on),
> So face with calm that heritage
> And earn contempt before the age.
> (57)

Tate's poem can be read as a dramatization of the rhetorical problem confronting the Southern Agrarians: to appeal to the Southern legacy as a statement of desirable community relations while also realistically confronting the sins of the past and the disapproval of their contemporaries. A further look into the subtleties of the poem can reveal the rhetorical context of the Southern Agrarian movement and the hurdles they faced in proffering a qualified defense of Southern identity in the Twentieth century.

Like the Southern Agrarian movement as a whole, Tate's note begins by highlighting the shared condition of Southerners, with an intimate appeal to his friend and fellow Agrarian Robert Penn Warren. The condition these friends share is the common "trouble" they must confront. As inheritors of the Southern tradition, their difficulty was that it would be blasphemous and beyond foolish (i.e. "not even fools could disavow") to reject their heritage outright; it was "three centuries" worth of "piety," that despite its shortcomings, was an established set of morals, customs, and outlooks that constituted "a way of life" to be received with honor. For all its weakness, it was their responsibility to preserve their inheritance. Yet, Tate writes, the piety had "grown bare" like a "cottonwood tree." A tree, as a father-like image analogous to the Southern tradition, represents the longstanding structure and enduring weight of the past. But a cottonwood tree is not a timber of particular utility; it is a wood that offers few solutions to contemporary problems, not unlike the Old South itself.

Furthermore, the cottonwood tree enters the image of the South's original sin—slavery, and the horrific practices of Black lynchings. To be a Southern white meant to encounter the evils of the South's systems, the tainting of its culture with a history of racism and brutal treatment of Blacks. If the Agrarians could not "disavow" their inheritance, neither could they proclaim its virtue. Any discussion, therefore, of the virtue of community as it was found in their region would have to answer for its oppression of African-Americans.

Tate's poem concludes with the somber declaration, "So face with calm that heritage and earn contempt before the age." Stuck in this state of tension because of the South's shame and repeated moral failure, the Agrarians felt nonetheless that the region had something to offer and be defended, and so they must venture to face that heritage to find its source of redemption. The drift of American civilization, it had become clear, was turning against the customs of the South;

but the Agrarians ventured to look into the past for inspiration, and that put them in a state of separation from the common outlook of their age. They could respond with either defiance or resignation. *I'll Take My Stand* was an attempt to navigate this bind.

It could be said, by way of summary, that the emergence of the Southern Agrarians and their manifesto *I'll Take My Stand*, occurred in the realm of two failures: the failure of the American industrial system to provide for a desirable order of social relations, and the moral failure of their Southern tradition which led to its modern disrepute. The Agrarians found salvation from both failures in the idea of community—community was the redemptive virtue of the South and the corrective to the rampant industrialism threatening to erode agrarian lifestyles.

The ensuing section analyzes the Agrarians' rhetorical transformation of these failures by claiming the language of community for the Southern tradition. In contrast to the rhetoric of industrial progress, the Agrarians appealed to a militant *provincial* ideal of community where an inherited way of life enabled an autonomous association of individuals to find their place and live localist lives of stability, liberty, order, and purpose. I will also show how the Agrarians' shared support for Southern "community" served to mask their vehement disagreement on the question of racial justice, a discrepancy that would fracture and undermine their project.

<h3 style="text-align:center">The Provincial Community</h3>

The Industrial Violation of Community

The opposition between two forms of life—Industrial and Agrarian—formed the crux of the debate between what it meant to be a homely provincial community and a ruthless, rootless society. There was, strictly speaking, for the Agrarians, no possibility of community among urban industrial spaces, and when they did invoke the term "community" in association with such lifestyles, it was only to draw attention to the incongruity between the communal ideal and

the nauseating reality. John Crowe Ransom, for example, captured the sentiment of *I'll Take My Stand* when he indicted "certain Northern industrial communities as horrible examples of a way of life we detest—not failing to point out the human catastrophe which occurs when a Southern village or rural communities becomes the cheap labor of a miserable factory system" (Ransom 23). Industrialism did proffer a way of life, he wrote, but it was one the Agrarian sensibility found horrific, hardly warranting the label of "community" in any significant way, except that it involved a large conglomeration of people in a singular space. Industrialism was, in fact, a straightforward disruption of true provincial community as it manifested in agrarianism, threatening to all but eliminate it from the face of the Earth.

At base, the Agrarians cast industrialism, and its various allies of progress, science, materialism, and state centralization as violators of the principles of community. On nearly every account, its social life was portrayed as deficient, where not totally abhorrent. The modern person was rootless, anxious, unstable and isolated, as they were forced to give up their land and independence for a precarious dependency on machines and manufacturing. Industrial citizens did not control the means of their own labor and subsistence, but were forced into an economic system that exploited their labor, where the only option was between working poverty or unemployment. Further, they claimed the artificial habitation of the city was at war with nature, and left its citizens in a state of arrested adolescence, where they could not pursue the meaningful and humanistic portions of life such as religion, the arts, and human fellowship. The beauties of individualism and particularity had given way to aimlessness, mass consumption, fractured identity, and alienation from the past.

For the Agrarians, if a community was a place of order, freedom, fellowship, and purpose, the industrial reign of the machine was its antithesis. What industrialism did in effect

was take a distinct and free people and turn them into a mass. Such masses may be close in physical proximity but are completely isolated in function. Bereft of genuine relationships or social purpose, citizens faced only ceaseless labor and moral collapse. There could be little by the way of artistic or spiritual satisfaction. In a word, industrialism for the Agrarians meant "communication without communion" (Warren, *Reader* 304). They claimed a meaningful life in such circumstances was all but impossible.

As disturbing as the Agrarians found this state of affairs, if constricted to its own realm, they thought the two ways of life might live in a relatively peaceful coexistence. But industrialism was not satisfied with a partial existence; to survive, it must spread, and that meant marching into livelihoods where it was not welcome. The fear was that this decadent social order which corrupted human character was making significant inroads into the remaining worlds of community—the South and like-minded cultures still holding to a "humanistic" conception of social life.

In lieu of its growing power and influence, the Agrarians adopted a militant framing of industrialism as a conqueror and foreign invader of communal homelands. Lytle used the phrase "industrial imperialism" while Ransom wrote that it would best be "represented to the Southern people as—what it undoubtedly is for the most part—a foreign invasion of Southern soil" (Lytle 244; Ransom 23). When an alien army occupies a country, the anticipated response of a patriotic people is to rise to the occasion and defend their home-land; why then, they thought, would agrarian communities permit such an invasion by industrial forces into their districts? In the same way as war, the Agrarians beckoned for a motive of militancy, where the community "asserts and defends" the natural human functions of living (Lytle). The provincial narrative was that a communal way of life was in danger and in need of preservation from a majority trend bent

on dissolving it. Accordingly, the Agrarians positioned themselves as an embattled remnant coming together to fight for their homes against overwhelming odds. Their rhetoric assumed a siege mentality that pitted the natural harmony of agrarian community against the disorder and aimlessness of industrial society.

The situation rhetorically named was one of battle, and if agrarianism was to subsist, it must ready itself for combat. Such a frame, was not simply one of fear and local patriotism, but one of tribalistic boundary work, making sharp and violent demarcations between "us" and "them." The invasion frame also drew echoes to the still prevalent "lost cause" ideology, which saw the union army as "Northern Aggressors" in the Civil War. And yet, while advocating for the South, the Agrarians tempered their boundaries by crafting their appeal as one directed toward any community friendly to an agrarian, humanistic lifestyle. They called for an alliance of all "minority communities opposed to industrialism," and were willing to pledge allegiance to a "national agrarian movement" should one arise (*I'll Take* xliii). Their tribalistic defense was thereby softened by a sense of pragmatic solidarity with potential cultural allies. The true enemy, they insisted, was industrialism, and it must be resisted to preserve agrarian communities everywhere.

In attempting to ward off the advances of industrialism, the Agrarians considered numerous methods, such as the possibility of embracing party politics: "Should the agrarian forces try to capture the Democratic party, which historically is so closely affiliated with the defense of individualism, the small community, the state, the South?" (li). And yet, the Agrarians were pessimistic that such bodies would adequately look out for the general interest of the "small community." They therefore decided upon a more radical proposition: a total rebuke of the industrial economy and a deliberate reorganization of the economy around independent farmers.

Lytle explained, "the answer lies in a return to a society where agriculture is practiced by most of the people," recommending that "the large surplus of chronically unemployed should be induced by all possible means to return to agriculture" (Lanier 203; 152). That is, the answer to industrial woes was the complete return to provincial communities.

That these were radical reactionary measures, the Agrarians did not deny—Allen Tate explicitly advocated such a revolutionary reaction, writing "Reaction is the most radical of programs; it aims at cutting away the overgrowth and getting back to the roots. A forward-looking radicalism is a contradiction; it aims at rearranging the foliage" (Tate, "Remarks" 175). This, in a word, was the heart of the Agrarians' rhetoric of community: to cast away the sources of social disorder and return to communal purity. The demand to recover agrarian provinces was a jeremiad, a plea to return to basics and fundamentals in order to reclaim a lost and fading sate of communal harmony.

Only through such radical and resolute defiance could industrialism's momentum be halted. The South, they submitted, for all its failings, was the nation's best restraint on such materialistic motives (Nixon 198). It was decided that the best recourse for saving the social order was a militant defense of provincial communities—said John Crowe Ransom: "Industrialism is an insidious spirit, full of false promises and generally fatal to establishments…Only a community of tough conservative habit can master it" (Ransom 16). That tough-minded conservative community was the core of the Agrarians' political program—a defiant people clinging to their provincialism from the advances of the industrial mass.

Provincial Community as the Agrarian Alternative

Disenchanted with the modern scene and the presuppositions of progress, the Agrarians

marked an insolent tone in defense of the South through the language of localist and regional

self-determination:

> Nobody now proposes for the South, or for any other community in this country, an
> independent political destiny. That idea is thought to have finished in 1865. But how far
> shall the South surrender its moral, social, and economic autonomy to the victorious
> principle of Union. That question remains open. The South is a minority section that has
> hitherto been jealous of its minority right to live its own kind of life. The South scarcely
> hopes to determine the other sections, but it does propose to determine itself, within the
> utmost limits of legal action (*I'll Take* xlii)

Against "infiltration" by the outside forces of industrial entrepreneurs, the Agrarians asserted the

right of autonomous communities to live their own kind of life, and in so doing employed a

rhetoric of community that was thoroughly *provincial.* The endorsement of the provincial

community, for the Agrarians, was the integral move in what they saw as their battle for survival

against the annihilation of agrarian values and social practices. Such a community, in appealing

toward a militant "minority section" determined to live by their own code, represented a counter-

statement to the "progressive" impulse toward change and the rationalist's predilection toward

abstraction. Community is marked by union, yes, but also by division, and the Agrarians

advocacy of provincialism draws attention to the role of difference in forming collective

character.

Unlike cosmopolitanism's search for a community of complete inclusion, provincialism

depends to a degree on exclusion, being defined not only by what it is, but what it is not.

Provincialism should not, however, be taken as purely a program of negation; the provincial

community is one rooted in an inherited way of life, looking not toward rational abstraction, but

the traditions accumulated over generations to provide a stable, satisfactory, humanistic social

organism. Such a community is necessarily limited in size and scope, for it depends upon the sense of rootedness and permanence found in close attachments to land and blood. To flaunt provincialism is to trumpet the virtues of particularity and local flavor over the flattening effects of centralization and massification accompanying modernity. A provincial community, then, is one that finds its character through the peculiar genius and customs that distinguish it as an autonomous and self-directed unity.

To some degree, regionalism, localism, sectionalism, parochialism, and totemism all fall under the cloak of provincialism, as they share an accent on the manner in which narrow affiliations or shared practices of meaning inform cultural identity. The emphasis is not upon the nationally or generally held, but on the locally distinct. Provincialism prefers particularity to universality.

The provincial community might then be said to exhibit something of a "tribalistic" impulse, in so far as it displays an inclination toward intense group loyalty and reverence for kin, ancestry, tradition, and myth, as well as an acute awareness of the threat posed by "outsiders" to its avowed way of life. Tribalism involves a notable desire for cultural purity through the preservation of shared customs, rituals, conventions, beliefs, and values from intrusion or subversion. Penetration into the community is met with alarm and resistance, sometimes rage, in the name of safeguarding the social order.

This tribalistic description is not meant as a form of censor, as Agrarian John Gould Fletcher himself mused on the tribalistic foundations of all communities and agrarian ones were no different (Fletcher 100). There is in fact a certain type of provincialism amounting to little more than blind collective egoism, manifest in narrow and unthinking devotion to one's section. And it is true that provincial ideals of community may display a greater inclination towards

exclusion, and in extreme cases, violence. But a proper provincialism is no bad thing; it is an ethical system built on fellowship, comradery, and obligation with an eye toward intimate human companionship between persons that share a common history. It is community on a smaller, particularistic level that is acutely aware of its boundaries and differentiation from surrounding cultures.

It was toward such a provincial ethic of community that the Agrarians turned for setting right the social order and preserving the Southern inheritance. Herman Clarence Nixon declared that "the South must cultivate its provincial soul and not sell it for a mess of industrial pottage" (Nixon 199). In looking to Europe for inspiration, John Crowe Ransom spoke highly of "self-sufficient, backward-looking, intensely provincial communities," commending their affability with nature, fixed roots, comfortable institutions, modest affluence, and generational perpetuity (Ransom 12). Stark Young likewise recommended provincialism as a sense of place and identity that provides life with direction, making it a state of mind amenable for defending a communal home (Young 344). Together, the Agrarians settled on provincialism as the communitarian program that could stymie the advancement of industrialism into unwelcome territory.

It is important to note that the Agrarians were sure to define provincialism so that it was not only an autonomous system of values and way of life, but an ostensibly *agrarian* one. Andrew Nelson Lytle explicitly conducted such an association when he wrote that the heart of provincialism "prefers religion to science, handcrafts to technology, the inertia of the fields to the acceleration of industry, and leisure to nervous prostration" (Lytle 235). Here, the continuation of the dualism between industrial and agrarian frameworks functions to associate the ideal of a provincial community with the particular legacy of the South and its religious, aesthetic, and soil-based culture.

The provincial communities of the South, in the Agrarians discourse, were directly opposed to economic modernization and the industrial values espoused by the rhetoric of progress. Provincial communities thus held within them a rebuke to the larger American culture, promising an alternative lifestyle where the precarity and exhaustion of industry was replaced with a light and easy life of the land, where aesthetic and spiritual dynamism mixed with meaningful toil and human communion in a stable, tried-and-tested social order past down from generations. Such Southern communities, they argued, were guardians of individual freedom, bringing together liberty and order into a social organism where every person could find their place in peaceful accord with the dictates of nature.

My thesis is that the Agrarians, in navigating the moral failures of Southern history and the ethical outrages of American industrialism, embraced provincial "community" as the antidote to modern problems and the redemption of the Southern tradition. Community served to rhetorically transform failures into a possibility of restoration for both the American social order and Southern identity. Embracing provincialism meant making amends for the past and restoring the balance between freedom and order, liberty and authority, past and future, self and society. I here work to more fully illuminate the traditionalist characteristics of provincial community as it was constructed by the Agrarians to contest the modernization of the South and the rhetoric of industrial progress, paying particular attention the way "community" permits rhetorical transformation of the failures of Southern identity. For the Agrarians, provincial communities were the ideal kind of social organism, defined in opposition to the order of industrialism which consistently violated the principles of the good life. The agrarian alternative involved an inherited tradition and way of life, founded on a culture of the soil, that initiated a particularist

humanism which safeguarded the freedoms of the individual and the autonomy of the local community.

Inherited Way of Life

For the Agrarians, the first mark of community was a satisfaction with the *inherited* order of things. The provincial soul is received from one's ancestors and the land, whose very distance from the larger civilization bestows it with its rich parochial character. Only within the confines of an inherited tradition can a satisfactory, stable, and meaningful life be lived. It is the tradition that bestows a sense of order and purpose to the lives of the individual and community.

By framing the ideal social order as an *inheritance*, the Agrarians highlighted a kind of continuity with the past that imputes to its recipients a the responsibility to protect it. It considers existing values and ways of life as something that has been worked out over generations and therefore worthy of respect and preservation, even as it must be amended in the face of new circumstances. Change can come, but it must not come lightly; only out of a sense of fear and trembling, awe and admiration, should a people depart from the way of their ancestors. Accordingly, the burden of proof falls to those suggesting change or departure from convention. For this reason, arguments from mere abstraction must be met with suspicion when they advocate the radical disruption of social practices or stark breaks from the past. For the Agrarians, reasoning does not occur in a vacuum, but must occur within the community's traditions and customs, keeping an eye to the practical necessities required for a stable life. The framing of community as an inheritance placed the emphasis on permanence and preservation, not on change and reformation, and imputed its inheritors with the obligation to defend it.

Disdain for the communal inheritance, the Agrarians believed, was why industrialism had gone so far astray: it radically departed from convention because it questioned the existence of

social institutions based on secular rationalist principles. Lyle Lanier denounced how, "Institutions and customs were no longer regarded as self-justifying; they were subject to critical rational analysis…In general there was a tendency toward emancipation from the past, an attempt to settle the problems of man's nature and destiny in a purely abstract fashion and apart from the 'vital force of historical reality'" (Lanier 129). Yet Lanier warned, "logical cogency is no criterion of empirical practicability in the realm of social reorganization" (Lanier 129; 141). Existing institutions were to be considered self-justifying because they had organically evolved to provide a modest and satisfactory efficacy for its people. The evaluation of a tradition from rational principles coming outside of it is not only ill-advised, but when used as justification for forsaking the tradition, ushers in unstable state of constant change and chaotic upheaval, upending the order of things for an infinite series of adjustments. The result was a life without purpose or direction.

A proper respect for the social order, meanwhile, begins with an appreciation for the order of things as they are, and does not reject a tradition simply because it is goaded by shortcomings. It seeks instead to make amends for its failings, but always within the confines of the inheritance, and making sure to preserve the tradition's essential core.

Such a conception of communal guardianship was easily amenable to the Agrarians for justifying a qualified defense of the Southern tradition amid its shortcomings. John Crowe Ransom commended the South's agrarian lifestyles in these terms, writing that, "They have elected to live their comparatively easy and routine lives in accordance with the tradition which they *inherited*, and they have consequently enjoyed a leisure, a security, and an intellectual freedom that were never the portion of pioneers" (Ransom 4). By continuing in the way of their ancestors, the Agrarians contended, Southern community members attained a certain safeguarded

quality of life that could never be known in the industrial scene. While the culture of South was flawed and that needed to be addressed, it should not be forsaken, because its established communities provided citizens with a source of permanence amid a time of change. The constant pursuit of innovation, change and wealth comes with a price: such a society risks losing all that was so slowly gained over generations—a humble life, yes, but one with a tested practicality and steadiness. A provincial community is thus "a way of life which had been considered and authorized," meant to endure permanently, rather than the provisional nature of industrial reforms (Ransom 13).

This social ease within a communal inheritance required, not only a glance to the future, but a long and appreciative look toward the past (Ransom 13). A people who had lost a sense of their past had lost their identity. Such was the lot of the industrialists and progressivists who were so enthusiastic about technological advancements that they had lost the connection between a people and their land. It is only when a people operate within a scheme of social practices grounded in remembrance that they can subsist in meaningful relation and order. When this does not occur and there is a dislocation of identity, the natural reaction is one of *nostalgia*, which for the Agrarians was a reminder of the good being lost, a warning to slow the tides of change and preserve the tradition being forsaken. Ransom explained:

> Nostalgia is a kind of growing-pain, physically speaking. It occurs to our sorrow when we have decided that it is time for us, marching to some magnificent destiny, to abandon an old home, an old provincial setting, or an old way of living to which we had become habituated. It is the complaint of human nature in its vegetative aspect, when it is plucked up by roots from the place of its origin and transplanted in foreign soil, or even left dangling in the air. And it must be nothing else but nostalgia, the instinctive objection to being transplanted, that chiefly prevents the deracination of human communities and their complete geographical dispersion as the casualties of an insatiable wanderlust
> (Ransom 6)

Nostalgia serves as a chief impulse of human nature toward preserving and protecting "human communities" from destruction. For the Agrarians, it was human nature to be rooted and fixed in a place and tradition with one's fellows, and nostalgia represents the soul crying out when such needs are violated. To do harm to nostalgia, to dismiss it as a romanticization of a life that never was, is to ignore the human need for continuity and the cautions against abandoning an inherited way of life.

It was through these terms that the authors of *I'll Take My Stand* defended and recommended the agrarian life, and by implication, the cultural history of the South. Industrialists, rationalists, and progressivists all promised a life of prosperity, but the Agrarians argued it was a shallow life filled with empty promises; the agrarian South, despite its many flaws, offered an example of a true culture for other citizens desiring a way out of the brunt of industry. The South was a real community, which meant it first was an inherited tradition providing a life of order and stability. Amid a time of change, widespread nostalgia was the evidence that the good in the past was being lost; and it was the duty of Southerners to come to their community's defense and safeguard the way of life that had been built up over generations. The answer to modern problems lay within the Southern tradition itself.

Culture of the Soil

The second mark of a provincial community was its close attachment to the land, manifest in a rooted life of the soil. The essential conviction of Agrarianism was that "the culture of the soil is the best and most sensitive of vocations" (*I'll Take* li). This culture entailed not only an agrarian economy, but a concomitant spiritual culture attuned to the dictates of nature.

In the Agrarian portrayal, a life of independent farming knows nothing of the disruption and artificiality of industry, for it involves participation in humanity's eternal toil with nature.

The labor is hard and difficult, but it is meaningful and rewarding. The farmer takes part in "the most ancient and the most humane of all the modes of human livelihood," earning their living and autonomy through a wrestle with the land (Ransom 18-19). Yet the farmer's relationship to the soil is one of respect and reverence, while the industrialists wage an "unrelenting war" on nature (Ransom 7). What farmers gain through their toil is their independence and spiritual development, the humanistic satisfaction that comes with a life well lived.

While the Agrarians admitted that farmers would never reach the same level of economic prosperity as the most successful entrepreneurs, that was no knock against them. It was to the credit of Southern provincial communities that they preferred a fixed life of the soil to the imaginary wealth of bankers and industrialists. Agrarians citizens were content with a modest living, so long as it provided basic subsistence and allowed participation in a humanistic form of life. As Andrew Lytle put it, "A farm is not a place to grow wealthy; it is a place to grow corn" (Lytle 205). Community members prize quality of life over an abundance of capital, especially when they possess the most tangible of all possessions—land.

For the Agrarians, land was most valuable possession because it guaranteed peace with nature, social stability, and individual freedom. Land was a kind of "social anchor" that discouraged restless mobility because it established a degree of permanence and continuity between person and place. This rootedness connected individuals with their ancestors and cultural inheritance, creating a base for enduring fellowship and communal humanism.

Land was also the protector of individual autonomy, for the person who owned land had security in an independent means of subsistence that could not be taken away. The progressive industrialists, in calling for farmers to embrace mechanization and urbanization, were offering a sour deal which served to confiscate that individual autonomy. Lytle warned, "In exchange for

the bric-a-brac culture of progress he stands to lose his land, and losing that, his independence"
(Lytle 205). The "floating populace" of industrial centers had nothing, but land within a regional
community enabled one to find a life of satisfaction and independence among a similarly free
people who associated in genuine fellowship within a tradition of shared values. Land ownership
formed a kind of common identity, but one that was racialized and classed.

The spiritual and aesthetic benefits of land were not to be overlooked either, for the
contemplative labor and preservation of individual liberty of agrarianism permitted the
development of a robust philosophical culture of spiritual fulfillment and communitarian
humanism. The citizen of a provincial community, the Agrarians proclaimed, "identifies with a
spot of ground, and this ground carries a good deal of meaning; it defines itself for him as
nature…and so his life acquires its philosophical and even its cosmic consciousness. (Ransom
19-20). In the traditionalist rhetoric of community, the land is representative of the communal
inheritance itself, an integral marker of the people, and a cause for reflection on the eternality of
nature and the qualities of a good life. The farmer in close contact with the land "concludes a
truce with nature and he and nature seem to live on terms of mutual respect and amity, and his
loving arts, religions, and philosophies come spontaneously into being: these are the blessings of
peace" (Ransom 7). Permanency and concord with the dictates of human nature were bestowed
only to those who lived a life of the soil. Within such a system of reverence and reflection, a
humanistic local culture intuitively follows.

Humanism and Particularity

This introduces the third defining characteristic of provincial community: a genuine
humanistic culture founded on localism and particularity. Such a humanism strikes a cordial
balance between labor and leisure, providing ample opportunity for the flourishing of art,

religion, manners, and education. What emerges from such a culture are free, spiritually and aesthetically cultivated individuals living in the company of fellow citizens who share in a common way of life.

A humanistic social order, for the Agrarians, required operation within an inherited order with close ties to the land. Humanism "is not an abstract system, but a culture, the whole way in which we live, act, think, and feel. It is a kind of imaginatively balanced life lived out in a definite social tradition" (*I'll Take* xlviii). The Agrarians argued that a humanistic culture could never be implanted or imposed by the adoption of abstract principles into an otherwise vacuous culture, as the supporters of industry attempted to do. Instead, humanism must emerge from a particular social tradition or provincial community received from the past and evolved over time. The good life is one which has been established over generations and is given its character from its history and particularism. It had managed to secure a satisfactory habitation by gradually working out a cordial relation between labor and leisure through the local arts.

For the Agrarians, the South, despites it's obvious shortcomings, partook in such a "deeply founded way of life," and therefore offered a model of cultural balance for those discouraged by the barrenness of industry (*I'll Take* xlviii). They believed that the mechanized labor of modern citizens at its core was abhorrent and aimless: "his labor is hard, its temp is fierce, and his employment is insecure" (*I'll Take* xliv). While the Agrarians acknowledged that good labor must be effective—something industry could claim—labor must also be an enjoyable undertaking (*I'll Take* xliv). In this regard, industrialists failed miserably. The condition of industrialism necessitated an addiction to work and loss of vocation; but agrarian communities, like those of the South, had steadily evolved a homely balance between leisure and labor. On this note John Crowe Ransom wrote, "There are a good many faults to be found with the old South,

but hardly the fault of being intemperately addicted to work and to gross material prosperity. The South never conceded that the whole duty of man was to increase material production" (Ransom 12). Community citizens instead found the qualitative and aesthetic virtues worthy of devotion. So, while Southern provincial community farmers retained a noted dedication to work, they possessed an equally esteemed devotion to the life of leisure and the mind.

In specific, the Agrarians lauded the regional and particularist cultural experiences of provincial traditions for enabling shared participation in a communal order. John Crowe Ransom dubbed them "arts of living" and "community arts, in which every class of society could participate after its kind" (Ransom 12). The romantic arts which flourished in Southern agrarian communities—such as conversation, manners, hunting, fishing, oratory, poetry, and preaching—provided not only a leisurely outlet for entertainment, but also a sense of regional identity and solidarity where everyone could contribute to the social order and find their place (Ransom 12; Lytle 211; Young 346). Pragmatically, the arts established a common set of social discriminations and shared judgments that facilitate fluid action by members of the community. Allen Tate referred to this as the public development of "Taste"—"reliance on custom, breeding, ingrained moral decision" ("Remarks" 17). By holding confidence in the shared standards of taste rather than insisting on abstract and independent moral reasoning, communities made way for easy and harmonious decision making by the provincial body.

Within this realm of taste, communal history, and shared worldview enters the role of education. The end of education is to fit a person for life as a productive member of their provincial community by training students to be intellectually capable of learning about any subject they wished and applying it to human affairs. Mere exposure to information on its own does little good to a person when it is not situated within their actual surroundings. It is better

that a student be brought up in the ways of the community and instructed in a kind of local civic

patriotism. "The purpose of education," explains John Gould Fletcher, "is to produce balanced

character—the man of the world in the true sense. Who is also the man with spiritual roots in his

own community in the local sense," (Fletcher 111). That is, students should be brought up in

communal norms, tastes, and expectations, so that they are cultivated into a sense of place,

identity, and loyalty to their province. Education, like religion and the arts, was a source of local

color and community pride, serving to bind the unity together in a humanistic culture that

safeguarded order, harmony and freedom. Holding this shared reservoir of experience and

discrimination, the people could truly come to know each other.

It is only in such communities, for the Agrarians, that genuine human fellowship is

possible, where the self can find its proper relation to society. A provincial, humanistic culture in

which citizens ascribe to a shared set of aesthetic and social preferences encourages voluntary

gatherings and joyful companionship in a way not possible in industrial society (Lytle 231). A

meaningful way of life must not only be lived in a thriving cultural tradition, but in close

association with likeminded fellows. This authentic human intimacy requires a physical

grounding and consistent contact through face to face communication:

> The only association or communication of any psychological import is that of face-to-face interaction among individuals, and it appears that instead of more association of this sort in the corporate age there is actually less of it…This real association exists, for the generality of people, only in the agrarian community and in villages and towns which are its adjuncts. It depends upon a stable population, upon long acquaintances, since human beings do not bear spigots by which 'fraternity' can be drawn off for the asking (Lanier 145-146)

True human companionship cannot be sustained based off convenience, happenstance, strategy,

or other trivial pursuits; a person finds association only in smaller communities amid long-

enduring personal acquaintances. Within industrial circles, relationships are always goaded by

ambition and business; even when the mass of individuals attempt to act in concordance and unity, they are absent of any genuine communion. As Lanier puts it, "The two thousand patrons of a modern movie palace engage in no real communication or interaction, and consequently could scarcely be said to participate in an aggregate emotional life" (Lanier 145-146). But in the provincial life of agrarian communities, like those of the South, the neighborhood gathers for old-time socials and traditional forms of fellowship and comradery. They are present with each other physically and spiritually. Relationships are not built on convenience but on custom, cultivated over years of acquaintance and stability. A person has a name and is known; like their ancestors, generations grow old side by side on the same plots of land, linked by blood, kin and friendship.

Individualism

In this way, community-based art, religion, education, taste, and fellowship were functional contributions to individual and collective judgment. The virtue of provincial communities, like those found in the agrarian South, was that they enabled citizens to live along pre-set guidelines, not intruding on individual liberty, but granting freedom within a defined social tradition. Social custom becomes the patron of communal autonomy, preventing any need for outside intervention. Within this society, the individual can operate freely without disrupting the order, all the while contributing to the communal well-being. Stark Young explains this correlation when discussing the social-consequences of provincial arts: "Manners and sincerity are matters understood only with reference to a state of society that assumes a group welfare and point of view rather than individual whims, a flow among a group of human beings, a life to which each single human being contributes and in which he lives" (Young 346). By operating within the unique provincial traditions and customs, the whole-body benefits because the

regional sensibilities have been built and cultivated so as to put the interest of the community first. The individual has direction to his or her affairs, but their "whim" is directed toward socially productive ends. There is, in sum, public benefit to individual action.

For the Agrarians, these customs and traditions, far from violating the individual's freedom, actually guarantees it. The provincial community, in preserving stability and a relationship with the past in a world of change, protects indigenous customs and practices from dilution and interference by outside forces. By so doing, provincialism enables an autonomous self-directed subset of human relations to develop organically with a balance of liberty and order. The individual finds their home, their place of ultimate satisfaction, in the company of persons with shared values, traditions, and sensibilities. Community in the Agrarian taxonomy was not an antagonist to the philosophy of individualism, but its fulfillment

There was for the Agrarians, strictly speaking, no such thing as society or collective behavior as it had been portrayed by progressives and industrialists (Lanier 144). "Society" was an abstraction and rhetorical device used to do violence to the needs of actual persons. Any alleged benefit to society which did not manifest in tangible remunerations for actual individuals was for all intents and purposes non-existent:

> They tell us—and we are ready to believe—that collectively we are possessed of enormous wealth and that this in itself is compensation for whatever has been lost. But when we, as individuals, set out to find and enjoy this wealth, it becomes elusive and its goods escape us. We then reflect, no matter how great it may be collectively, if individually we do not profit by it, we have lost by the exchange (Lytle 201)

For the Agrarians, the prosperity of bankers and entrepreneurs was imaginary, and no claim to the "wealth" bestowed by progress could change the fact that few actual individuals saw little if any of the supposed riches; as "society" benefitted, real persons were worse off. So, when the

Agrarians heard appeals by industrialists for sacrifice and allegiance to "social progress" and

"social welfare," they were appalled. There was no such thing as society:

> Men are prepared to sacrifice for their private dignity and happiness to an abstract social ideal, without asking whether the social ideal produces the welfare of any individual man whatsoever. But this is absurd. The responsibility of men is for their own welfare and that of their neighbors; not for the hypothetical welfare of some fabulous creature called society (*I'll Take* l)

For the Agrarians, there could be no responsibility to society or social welfare. Every person

does have an obligation, but it is not to society; it is to individuals and the members of one's own

community. That is it. A citizen must look after their kin and tribe, but cannot be held

responsible for the welfare of so-called society.

For this to happen, they argued, it was imperative that the provincial community be left

alone, and given the right to determine itself through the voluntary effort of its own citizens (*I'll

Take* xliii). The small association was sufficient to handle its own affairs, and when government

tried to intervene, or foreign influences interfered in local affairs, the integrity of the community

was at risk. This was more than a claim to "state's rights," though such a line of appeal was long

familiar to Southerners, where it was employed frequently before and after the Civil War to

justify the region's secession and dependence on slave labor. But the claim of the right of

provincial communities to determine their own way of life by the Agrarians was also an assertion

of social and philosophical individualism, the conviction that issues pertaining to a particular

locale were best worked out by the citizens who actually live there. Communal mores and

customs were the prerogative of the individuals most invested in them, and while insiders might

dispute among themselves the proper direction of community affairs, meddling from outside

forces, whether from economic markets or state action, was a violation of the right of the

community people to self-determination and self-government.

In the same way, the community has no right to meddle needlessly in the life of its individual citizens. The agrarian farmer or community member is autonomous and self-sufficient, associating out of the need and desire for companionship, but not to be dominated by the dictates of their fellows. The humanistic culture and the life of the land guide the individual into a particular image of the good life and establishes a standard for how one ought to see the world, but this is never to be compulsory. While the community provides a framework for the individual, the person is free to act and follow their convictions wherever they may lead.

For the Agrarians, this relation between the self and the society was not a contradiction, because freedom does not occur in a vacuum; a person's choices are always curtailed by the available choices, and a communally inherited tradition serves to incline the individual toward an authorized understanding of the good. It is only within the confines of a shared way of life that a meaningful individualism possible. The community is the home for the individual, the site where freedom and order are united, allowing everyone discover their sense of place and belonging.

What the Agrarians endorsed through its appeal to "provincial community" amounted to a kind of social-bond individualism where individuals control their own destiny, but find their identity and ultimate fulfillment within a solidified social system, an inherited community of value that serves as the shared scene of action (Weaver, *In Defense*). Individualism was the natural order of things, but it was not the isolated individual living alone and freed from all constraints that constituted the proper relation of self to society; it was the voluntary coming together of autonomous citizens to take part in a shared way of life. A person's first obligation was to seek after their own welfare and that of their family, but that responsibility depended upon a stable social order, with a thriving aesthetic and religious experience, cultivated in a humanistic culture and way of life. And it was the community that ultimately gave meaning and

fulfillment to that life, extending the individual a home free from repressive regulation where they could control their own destinies.

In sum, these were the virtues of the provincial community: it operated within an inherited tradition that gave order and meaning to society, preserving continuity with the past and inculcating an appreciation of the gradually developed way of life. Such communities were closely attached to the soil and land, displaying a sense of rootedness, permanence, and stability that establishes a humanistic culture. The communal life is one that has struck a balance between labor and leisure, believing both to be integral to a meaningful existence. As a humanistic culture defined by its particularity, the community generates the spiritual and aesthetic sensibilities necessary for the good life while also providing a shared set of values and tastes. These sensibilities permit the community to operate autonomously without outside intervention, consequently protecting the right of the individual to live their own kind of life. The community, in turn, provides a home so that the individual can find a sense of place and belonging. These provincial virtues, for the Agrarians, were also the paramount virtues of the South.

The South as Provincial Community

The provincial sense of community was proposed as the ideal social order for American society, and as a counter image to the progressivist rhetoric of industrialism. The Agrarians actively endorsed "community" as a traditionalist political program in order to rally citizens to take up arms against modernization, preserving the kind of life that had been lived for generations and was fundamental to the history of human experience. Their analysis and portrayal of the two diverging forms of life aimed to give ammunition to agrarian communities everywhere experiencing the deterioration of their traditions. At the heart of this rhetoric is the

conservative lament for what has been lost—and this loss came to be symbolized and most visible in the loss of material community relations.

Equally as central to the Agrarians' purpose as catalyzing resistance to the industrial economic organization was their participation in Southern identity work. For whatever hopes the Agrarians may have realistically held for the future of a purely agrarian economy, the rhetorical reclamation of a praise-worthy Southern identity was of further importance to their mission, or at the very least, was the more effective element of their enterprise. There has been disagreement among researchers of the movement over the degree to which the Agrarians' demands for an agricultural economic reorganization should be understood as the true objective of *I'll Take My Stand*. The predominant perspective now understands the Agrarians as really making a statement about Southern identity and values rather than actually calling for the abandonment of industrial techniques. Decades after the book's publication, several of the Agrarians themselves adopted this view. Seen in this way, the portrait of the provincial community as an alternative to industrialism is best interpreted as the route through which the Agrarians attempted to rhetorically negotiate Southern identity in lieu of its disreputable state. The provincial community was a mythic statement about what the South represented, a communitarian virtue that subsisted through the region's many failures.

When the Agrarians wrote about persevering within a communal inheritance, they were speaking of their own sense of obligation to Southern communities, an obligation they fulfilled by casting the Southern tradition in the most praiseworthy light they could find—the dignity embodied in the language of community. The South, in its state of reproof dating back from the Civil War, needed redemption from its failures, and while it was tainted with its racial legacy, its promise as a site of provincial communal relations offered a possibility of transformation. As the

modern world cried out in misery from the maladjustment of industrial relations, the South's

agrarian order could be granted legitimacy as the last hope for a meaningful alternative to

dehumanization and social chaos. The terms of local community—leisure and land, order and

freedom, continuity and harmony—presented a stark and appealing image in a social world

speedily transforming beyond recognition. The romantic language of provincial coherence where

everyone had a place and purpose could be readily applied to agricultural lifestyles of the South.

While such a perfect image of community never existed in the South, or anywhere else for that

matter, the ideal served its primary rhetorical purpose—that of reconstructing Southern identity

within the dueling demands of past and future, or in Allen Tate's phraseology facing "with calm

that heritage" and earning "contempt before the age."

In the rhetoric of the Agrarians, the source of the South's failure became also the source

of its redemption—its backward-looking provincialism, insistent regionalism, and tribalistic

inclinations were precisely what the contemporary world needed to set the social order right

again. The South had always been maligned as backwards-looking and reactionary, but it turned

out, so the Agrarians claimed, that its resistance to change was wiser than supposed, for it

preserved a semblance of the good life while the rest of the nation marched on into mass hysteria

and moral chaos. Amid the failures of industry, South found validation for its community-

centrism.

Nevertheless, the Agrarians' glorification of Southern community concealed as much as

it revealed about the qualities of provincial life. There were reasons, after all, why agrarianism

was fading into oblivion and Southerners were increasingly open to the advancement of

mechanization and manufacturing economies into their midst. The fact was that farmers were

overwhelming poor and dependent on the yield of their crops, a yield which could easily be

ruined by forces as fickle as inclement weather or changes in market demands. For all the Agrarians' trumpeting of the sense of purpose that came from tilling the land, mechanization eased what was a physically exhausting form of labor so time could be devoted to other pursuits.

The Agrarians' portrayal of the "invasion of industry" also concealed the fact that Southerners were willingly leaving their farms for economic and social opportunities in urban settings. While manufacturing jobs may have been a monotonous and under-paying, the drift of civilians to those occupations could hardly be said to have been coerced. It was the intentional decision of citizens to leave behind their social inheritance in search of greener pastures. While there was something tragic about this depleting of traditional lifestyles, the sheer number of urban migrants indicates that Southerners believed the advantage was worth the cost. This reality was something that the Agrarians largely missed or ignored.

But most troubling of all was that the Agrarians' portrayal of Southern community made at best an inadequate account of the role of racial hierarchy within its social order. If "community" was the redemptive virtue of the South for its failures, then it is troublesome that their depiction of community made few remunerations for the region's great failure—the continued injustices those communities enacted against African-Americans. While the Agrarians primarily had in mind the small independent farmer as their ideal when praising Southern communities, so much of what they held dear—the culture of leisure and humanism, regional autonomy, intense awareness of difference, and deference given to tradition and custom—was either predicated on the disenfranchisement of Blacks or undermined by the refusal to grant those same privileges equally. So much of what the Agrarians praised was not available to African-American populations, and was in many cases was dependent upon their subjugation, even after the formal end to the institution of Slavery, as Jim Crow laws effectively served to continue

Black suppression and exclusion. The fact that the Agrarians hardly dealt with this aspect of the Southern inheritance in their depiction of provincial community functioned practically to ignore and erase the oppression of Blacks.

It should be said that several of Agrarians were not blind to this fact and did attempt to wrestle with the question of racial justice. Yet the concept of Southern "community" was ambiguous enough to hide the stark differences among them over how the failings of Southern racism ought to be addressed and what the legacy of racial hierarchy meant for the possibility of reclaiming a provincial ideal. In fact, it was the divided attitudes toward racial justice which largely led to the undoing of the Agrarians' enterprise. Before closing the chapter, it essential to look more in depth at the role "community" played in concealing the racial dynamics of Agrarian philosophy.

The Racial Fissures of Agrarian Community

The twelve Agrarians came together through a common advocacy of "community" as the paramount virtue of Southern culture, understood as a free and ordered way of life, authorized by generations, that provided individuals with a sense of place and belonging. The Agrarians agreed that the modern situation required the strengthening and preservation of such communities, as they afforded the best alternative to the rampant scientism, materialism, consumerism, and dislocation of industrialism.

Yet the purpose which served to unite the Agrarians also in turn divided them—their shared endorsement of agrarian community masked their vehement disagreements on the question of *who belonged* to the Southern communal inheritance. When advocating a return to agrarian community, and portraying an idealized vision of the Southern past, the inevitable

question was how do African-American figure into such a community? On this point, the Agrarians were split.

I have said that the Agrarians, perhaps with the intent of keeping a show of unity, largely left this question unaddressed. As a whole, *I'll Take My Stand* rarely took up the questions of racial justice for or inclusion of African-Americans in Southern community, and when the Agrarians looked at the Old South for inspiration, Black oppression was often left out of the account. A large part of the Agrarian portrayal of Southern community left the plight of African-Americans invisible.

However, the manifesto was not bereft of abhorrent statements about Backs, nor repugnant attempts to minimalize the brutality of the slave-system. John Crowe Ransom acknowledged that slavery was monstrous in theory, but suggested it was not as cruel in practice (Ransom 14). Owsley, in the most virulent of the essays, denied slavery was the cause of the Civil War, framing it in terms of local autonomy and agrarianism versus industrialism, and speaking of African-American in appalling terms (Owsley 99). Donald Davidson was a brash defender of segregation, and even flirted with White Supremacy. In each case, the endorsement of "community" by these particular Agrarians functioned to justify racial hierarchy or downplay the severity of the section's racial evils. If community was the virtue through which to make amends for the South's failings, its racism was not met with much remorse or acknowledgement from certain Agrarians.

Other Agrarians, however, condemned Southern racism head-on, and sought for a form of community that involved inclusion of and justice for African-Americans. Stark Young admitted that while the Agrarian life was founded on the land, it was also predicated on the

ownership of slaves (Young 336). Yet it was Robert Penn Warren who most thoroughly wrestled with how the Southern community might be attained so as to make for racial justice.

Warren wrote that, as a principle of community, "If the Southern white man feels that the agrarian life has a certain irreplaceable value in his society, and if he hopes to maintain its integrity in the face of industrialism or its dignity in the face of agricultural depression, he must find a place for the negro in his scheme" (Warren, "Briar" 263). Defense of the Agrarian way of life, for Warren, was contingent upon the well-being of Black citizens and a sense of common rural consciousness among the races (262-263). And since the manufacturing labor of industrialism exploited both poor white and Black, they might attain a shared solidarity and anti-industrial sentiment; accordingly, the rural community lifestyle would make for the "most satisfactory relationship of the races" (264). Above all, for Warren, if Southern community was going to persist it must provide for the inclusion, justice, and affluence of African-Americans in that scheme.

At first this conviction led Warrant to a qualified defense of segregation, which he originally saw as the best means for African-American prosperity, but he later evolved into a steadfast supporter of integration and Civil Rights. Warren recanted his views on segregation and adopted a firm belief in racial integration, interviewing several of the key Civil Rights figures such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X (Warren, *Segregation*). This did not sit well with certain other Agrarians such as Donald Davidson, who found Warren's ideas so progressive that he contested their inclusion in *I'll Take My Stand.*

This dispute between Davidson and Warren is a telling indicator of the racial fissure within Agrarianism hidden by shared appeals to community; both claimed to be exponents of the Southern inheritance, but that led them to starkly different ends. Historian Paul Murphy explains

that, "In the 1950s and 1960s, Davidson played a leading role in the attempt to preserve the system of segregation. Warren took his stand against it. Loyalty to the southern past and the ambiguous lessons of Agrarianism led both men in very different directions" (Murphy 10). Community for one meant racial hierarchy and segregation, while for another it met avidly supporting the Civil Rights movement and seeking justice for fellow African-American citizens.

It is clear then that the Agrarians' shared appeals to community temporarily served to mask their opposing ideologies, but ultimately, their conflicting positions on the racial identity of Southern community hastened the splintering of the movement. As Donald Davidson, representing the worst of the Agrarians program, became an ardent segregationist and even defender of white supremacy, Allen Tate, John Crowe Ransom, and Robert Penn Warren each disavowed their commitment to Agrarianism, motivated in large part by their dismay and abhorrence to Davidson's racial politics. Allen Tate traded his commitment to the Southern past for a kind of urban literary cosmopolitanism; Robert Penn Warren became actively involved in the cause of integration and Civil Rights; Tate, Ransom, and Warren each redirected their energy for the South toward the burgeoning literary movement New Criticism—an aesthetic and poetic alterative to the Agrarian tradition. New Criticism, which focused on the structure and meaning of literary texts, offered a grounding in the aesthetic, spiritual and inherited values of the West that the Agrarians sought in the Southern tradition. As New Criticism became a staple of twentieth century literary criticism and poetic theory in the Academy, it effectively replaced Agrarian community with a literary alternative.

Historian Paul Murphy has insightfully observed that, "At the heart of Agrarianism was the question not only of where do I stand, but also, who belongs?" (*Rebuke* 10). On this matter, the Agrarians could not offer a unified answer. The fact was that racism and not just community,

was a part of the Southern inheritance, but this was not universally acknowledged, and even those who did could come to no consensus on the proper steps for making amends for that evil. The fiery call to resist industry and embrace "community" concealed this fact.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have traced the traditionalist rhetoric of community the Southern Agrarians, demonstrating how they used provincial and localist language to construct and redeem the Southern tradition and contest the rhetoric of industrial progress. The research questions directing this study inquire into the discursive work community accomplishes by endorsing certain values and actions, including and excluding certain peoples, uniting and masking differences, and navigating the dialectic between self and society.

The objective of the Agrarians was to preserve the good of the Southern tradition from the invasive and destructive forces of industrialism and modernism, as well as to negotiate Southern identity in light of its disrepute state and racial moral failings. This was accomplished by appealing to a provincial ideal of community that framed industrialists and progressives as invaders of an autonomous social order. The provincial ideal of community entailed a tribalistic sense of intense loyalty to a particular lifestyle and an acute awareness of boundaries. A community, for the Agrarians, was an inherited way of life, built up over generations, that established an organic and secure social order. Provincial communities were enduring and permanent organisms rooted in the land, that displayed a humanistic culture of particularity and local flavor; its citizens enjoyed a balance of labor and leisure, finding spiritual and aesthetic fulfillment in the customs of the community and intimacy with nature. The rights and freedoms of the individual were protected by the autonomy of the community, and the individual found their place within it.

These virtues of the provincial community were the very attributes that the Agrarians attributed to the Southern tradition. Not only did the Agrarians endorse community so as to present a more preferable alterative to the growing industrial lifestyle, but they did so to redeem Southern identity from its subordination as a backward, condemned state. The redemption of Southern identity occurred by claiming the dignity and prestige of the language of community for the agrarian values of the South and for Agrarians, rhetorically transforming the region from a transgressor to a heroic and messianic remnant.

Yet the Agrarians' shared advocacy of community as the virtue of Southern culture concealed the fact that they were starkly divided on the character of that community as it pertained to the question of racial inclusion and justice. Much of their portrayal of Southern community left the plight of Blacks ignored, effectively erasing the historic oppression of African-Americans. The Agrarians split attitudes was represented by the opposing trajectories of Donald Davidson and Robert Penn Warrant; the ideal of Southern provincial community led Davidson toward segregation, while it gradually led Warren to embrace the Civil Rights movement. Appeals to community masked these differences for a time, but the division was ultimately too great and contributed to the fracturing of the Agrarian unity.

Although there were clear and substantial fissures within the Agrarian movement, their shared appeal to community was a call to defiance and resistance to modern industrial defense. Community worked to drum up enthusiasm and anti-modern sentiments among those identifying with the South. Community functioned as an affirmative device for a beleaguered Southern identity, imputing its inheritors with not only a sense of regional pride, but a sense of custodianship and guardianship of the tradition. Appeals to community were the imputations of identification and obligation to Southerners to defend their rural roots from dissolution.

The core of the traditionalist rhetoric of community, in summation, was a move to *protect and preserve a good*. Community was conservatory, a mechanism for eliciting identification with a threatened cause, and the mandate to prevent its change, alteration, or termination. Provincialism was a tribalistic war-like frame that in accenting particularity, also drew attention to the aggressive forces undermining of *who we are*. In this role, the move to community is one to resist change, buckle-down, and return to basic principles, protecting the essential core of who we are as a people. There is nostalgia and romanticizing in this traditionalist move, but it invoked is one with a clear rhetorical purpose—to define who and what the community is at a time when it might become something else. Community, in this usage, is a motive of conservation.

It appears, then, that the crux of this traditionalist conception of community is a past-oriented program that seeks to preserve the constructive elements of a social tradition. Community is an ordered and organic way of life where the individual finds their freedom and place amid stable human relationships. There is a tribalistic sense of limited loyalty and awareness of outsiders and boundaries, and an emphasis on the possible loss of the community. The traditionalist community is not an abstract principle or vehicle for change, but a grounded locale, an association of those sharing values and beliefs in an autonomous tradition that resists outside interference.

The Southern Agrarian reliance on community to advance its cultural and moral values may seem to represent only the quaint offerings of twelve authors in early Twentieth Century. Yet the Southern Agrarians were powerful spokespersons for the Conservative movement in the United States, and their doctrinal way of summarizing what was "lost" in the South, and America generally, provided a spearhead for conservativism and resistance to progressive change that reverberates in politics through the 1950s, 1960s and yet today. Neo-Agrarian Richard Weaver

played a pivotal role in bringing and translating Agrarian ideas of community into the national consciousness with his book *Ideas Have Consequences*, and contributed greatly to the development of the "traditionalist" wing of twentieth century conservatism (Nash). Further, common support for the Agrarian idea of an autonomous community free from government interference aided the formation of a crucial alliance between "traditionalist" and "free market" thinkers. Shared support for the autonomous local community helped fuse previously oppositional philosophies and permitted conservatism to develop into a powerful political bloc.

The "exclusive" and past-oriented character of the Agrarian attempt to anchor their rhetoric in "community" can well be contrasted during those important years with the "inclusive" and future-looking rhetoric of community in the progressive movement—the cosmopolitanism of Jane Addams forms a near perfect antithesis, while Martin Luther King Jr.'s notion of the "beloved Community" that would give us a model of society where all would be included and find equal footing, affords a kind of sequel and response. In a sense, there was a rhetorical contest between these two notions of community: one that found the family, tribal, and regional roots of the small autonomous community as the protector and preserver of individualism and Southern entitlement; and one that found the unifying and transcendent potential of community as an abstract ideal and social model that would counter and dissolve precisely these excesses of individualism and restricted communal boundaries.

The Southern Agrarian doctrine helps to capture the kinds of practices and pieties that can be sponsored by the invocation or designation of "community." That is, we can invoke "community" not as a way to elevate and transport individuals into identification and service with general others, as seems to be its utility with progressive rhetoric, but as a way of marking a sub-group as an autonomous group of individuals that share some common and exclusive

membership or culture to be celebrated and preserved. In common and general practice, "community" might be found doing both at once: to be a member of the fan, quilting, or medical "communities" at once distinguishes one as having individualized identification or membership attributes, but also creates a social bond with others and some obligation or motivation to work on behalf of the group. However, the ambiguity lurking in the concept of community can be used to create division as well when it is seen as the basis for defending territory and identity which empowers the individual against the anomie of mass society and those who are different or in competition.

In either case, what we find is that the rhetorical connotations and implications of the symbols and values of community, like most rhetorical terms and especially "god-terms," contain within them the ambiguities and contradictions to both create and to transcend divisions. In both cases community is a term of identity and identification, and it necessarily can either unify or divide depending on the social dialectic (Burke, *Rhetoric of Motives;* Aune, *Burke's Palimpsest*). What we can observe in the cases of American progressivism and Southern Agrarianism is the function of "community" to navigate and mediate the tensions between "self" and "society" that are characteristic of American society and its formation through the Nineteenth, Twentieth, and Twenty-first centuries (Bellah, et. al; Etzioni; Lasch, Lippmann; Nisbet; Payne; Putnam; Rheingold Riesman, Schlesinger; Sennett). This navigation of self-society, as well as past-future, and spiritual-material are topics I return to in the conclusion discussion of this thesis.

For traditionalists, as conveyed by Southern Agrarian philosophy, the relationship between self and society is made right by a kind of social-bond individualism, where the community provides the individual with protection so they can seek their own needs and live

independent lives; but the community also bestows the individual with a collective home, and it is within this communion and obligation to fellow members that they find a sense of belonging and purpose.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

My purpose in this dissertation has been to arrive at an understanding of community that is at once critical and appreciative. I have therefore aimed to illuminate what kind of rhetorical work gets done with community, paying particular attention to the actions it sanctions, the values it endorses, the people it includes/excludes, the motives it weaves, and the conflicts is masks. My primary interest has been in discovering what "community" reveals about the modern orientation, and how it is constructed by various groups to provide meaning and order for citizens navigating the relationship between self and society. Although the foregoing case studies have been historical in basis, it does not take much imagination to see their relevance to the Twenty-first Century. This concluding chapter therefore serves to discuss the findings of the dissertation and demonstrate its applications to contemporary discourse.

In Chapter One, I explored the ubiquity and centrality of "community" as a rhetorical term, proposing to investigate the persuasive and symbolic functions of rhetorics of community in the American context. Consequently, I traced "community's" rhetorical history in the modern West, showing its importance as a concept of democratic theory and a source of modern sense-making. Community, I argued, provides symbolic compensations and consolations for the material transformations of mass society and the dominance of the individualist orientation by directing citizens towards reparative actions and alternative schemes of value in accordance with the way community is constructed in relation to the modern world.

In Chapter Two, I reviewed the prevailing approaches to the study of community in Communication Studies, demonstrating the inattention of such perspectives to community's function as a rhetorical device. I then drew upon the work Kenneth Burke to outline a rhetorical approach to the study of community as a god-term and key to a motivational vocabulary. I discussed the implications of such a framework for understanding community, and offered a corresponding taxonomy of the five general "senses" of community to which rhetors appeal. I concluded the section with seven hypotheses about the inclinations of community rhetorics.

Chapter Three looked at the discourse of John Humphrey Noyes and the Utopian Movement as a rhetoric that appeals to a rationalist and "communalist" conception of community. I showed how Noyes employed community as a spiritual value, guide, or template to be applied to the society in order to correct the "selfish" material values of industrialism. Community effectively served to bridge the orientations of faith and science, provide the material culture with a spiritual ideal, and direct citizens toward a platform of social change in alignment with moral motives. The heart of community ethics was sacrifice to a higher good.

The cosmopolitan rhetoric of Jane Addams is the subject of Chapter Four, where I cast her efforts as exemplifying a "progressive" doctrine of community. For Addams, community was a vehicle for democratic change where citizens voluntarily worked together to improve and ameliorate their shared conditions. Community was invoked to contest war, individualism, and exclusion, and advocate for a kind of comprehensive cosmopolitan community, where a sentiment of shared solidarity and joint obligation enabled citizens to collaborate for the welfare of the human race.

In Chapter Five, I analyzed the "traditionalist" rhetoric of the Southern Agrarians and their ideal of a provincial community. The Agrarians, I argued, appealed to community to

challenge the values of modern industrialism and restore Southern identity in the context of its

historical failures. Their image of provincial community unified freedom and order in an

autonomous local organism characterized by cultural particularity. Appeals to "community"

were defiant and defensive resolutions to preserve an authorized and inherited way of life where

the individual could act independently while finding a stable home in the presence of a definite

social tradition.

In concluding the dissertation I would revisit the hypotheses offered at the onset of the

project and weigh them against the evidence accumulated over the analytical chapters. In

Chapter Two, I offered seven theses restated here in summarized form:

1.) Community serves as a god-term in American discourse, inviting identification, transcending partisan divides and endorsing an ethic of sacrifice for the collective good.
2.) Community is compensatory for the losses of modernity, and is offered as a 'spiritual' corrective to the deficiencies of the materialist paradigm of economic individualism.
3.) Community accomplishes the rhetorical work of navigating the self-society dialectic, looking to restore the social order and find the ideal conditions for moral social relationships.
4.) Rhetorics of community weave a historical vision of past and future to contextualize the present, relying upon myth to situate their own historical moment and call for a program of restoration.
5.) Communalist rhetorics tend to take community as an abstract set of values and spiritual principles to be applied to the social order.
6.) Progressive rhetorics tend to frame community as a vehicle of democratic change for adjusting and improving modern living conditions.
7.) Traditionalist rhetorics tend to portray community as an autonomous and ordered way of life that serves as a home to the individual.

We can divide these seven theses into three groups, the first discussing community's status as

god-term, the second set pertaining to the general discursive relationship between community

and modernity, and the third concerning three significant formulations of the communal ideal.

Community as God-term

The first thesis I have maintained throughout this dissertation concerns "community's"

function as a god-term in American social and political discourse. I contend that community has

come to represent one of the highest aspirations of modern society; to invoke community as a goal or value is meant to transcend partisan division and generate consensus and motivation. In general, working on behalf of "community" is accepted as an inherently positive act, and one which conveys moral and redemptive purposes for both the individual and the social order.

Part of community's allure as a modern ideal relates to its association with a sense of loss or lack in need of recovery and restoration. The paradox of community, with which I opened this dissertation, is that everyone wants it, but no one seems to have it. This paradox has been borne out in the analytical chapters, where Noyes, Addams and the Agrarians all sought to "recover" community in a modern world which had forsaken it. I suggest that this sense of loss and its corresponding mandate of recovery is in fact a constitutive element of the community itself, as the term functions as a spiritual value which could never be achieved in actuality, but only "in principle." Community, as a god-term, represents an aspiration or prayer on behalf of modern rhetors to fix, reset, or redeem modern life by sacrificing on behalf of a higher ideal, and as such could never be attained. Rather, to plead, create, preserve, or restore community is to act in pious conformity with the tropes of modern American discourse.

Similarly, to label some organization or collective of people a "community" is to bring it into existence, to give it a symbolic identity as a collective. Rhetorics of community are constitutive, in that the invocation of community invites its auditors into a sense of identification, obligation, and shared identity which enables collaborative action for the reformation or preservation of some perceived social good. From this perspective, all communities are "imagined," and created by discourse to accomplish specific goals and purposes. And since community is a god-term, calling a community into existence not only establishes a sense of

"we"-ness, but it shines the "we" in a most favorable light. Community eulogizes its object, constructing a collective identity to be accepted and praised (or have its loss mourned).

I have also shown that the inherent moral value of community competes with the predominance of the individualist ethic, providing an alternative ordering of values and correcting for modern excess (as the Oneidans illustrate in the extreme). Rather than self-interest, community posits sacrifice on behalf of others to be the highest good, and in this displays a spiritual and salvational quality which it inherits in from its modern political and religious history—and community continues to function as a god-term for sociologists, philosophers, and political practitioners, as displayed by the succeeding laments every few years in academic, popular, and political literature (Bellah et al; Blanchot; Bookchin; Caney; Etzioni, *Spirit*; Frazer; Glendon; Macintyre; Putnam; Nisbet, *Quest*; Rieff; Sennett; Taylor, *Ethics;* Walzer; Weaver, *Ideas;* Wuthnow). This narrative of community's inherent value and redemptive purposes being lost to society is a key trope in the process of modern-sense making, as it permits citizens to understand and act upon their place in the modern world and work toward a better alignment of self and society. This general relationship between community and modernity is the substance of the following three theses.

Community and Modernity

The second set of theses are concerned with the relationship between community and modernity, specifically with community as a discursive frame for making sense of and correcting the modern predilection for individualism. Community is "compensatory" in the sense that it annotates the failures of modernism's essentially secular and economic paradigm and seeks to correct it by way of an alternative ordering of values. In Chapters One and Two, we saw how historically the concept of community presented an image of organic harmony being lost to

"mass society," and correspondingly became associated with a way of life which had been conquered by industrialism. Henceforth, the language of community served as a kind of antithesis or inverse to "society," a specter gliding over the modern soul's shoulder, beckoning the world to examine itself and recognize what it lost in its idealization of individualism and economic rationality. As god-term and motivational vocabulary, community was offered as the remedy for a host of modern problems, especially that of easing the tensions of three dialectics: the relation of past to future, spirituality to materiality, and self to society. These dialectical tensions represent discursive and symbolic ways of understanding and talking about perceived conflicts that lead to dislocation and failure in identity (Payne).

Past and Future

Community operates as a "history-making" device which situates the modern scene of action as one lacking the organic life of close relationships and moral associations. That is, appeals to community navigate the relationship between the inherited past and the desired future by connecting them in a present call to action. In every rhetoric of community, there is a value-laden construction of history that gives meaning and warrant to an endorsed program promising to provide permanence amid a time of change.

For John Humphrey Noyes, the past involved a perfect communion of all persons in a natural state, but that harmony had been lost to sin and the institutions of "selfishness." If the proper actions of purification and communalization were taken in the present, the future could become a place of reclaimed community. Thus, past and future were reconciled by Noyes in a utopic narrative and program of radical communism.

Similarly, for Jane Addams, the present was in disarray because recent changes had upended the social order. In the historical arrangement of rural life, she claimed, there was an

organic and robust life of association, but the modern city had eradicated this hearty life of community. Rather than reclaiming a lost form of association, what was needed was a new form of community amenable to modern times capable of improving and ameliorating the industrial condition. Past and Future found hope and continuity in community.

Finally, the Southern Agrarians saw the present as a threat to inherited traditions, rural identity, and the future of genuine community. The past, with its customs and hereditary wisdom, held the promise for the ideal social order. The only future worth living was one grounded in this past, and it was the duty of present citizens to preserve that communal inheritance. Community was received from the past, and citizens must preserve it for future generations.

These are but three examples of the way in which community constructs past and future in the modern mind to situate the present and call for reparative actions. *In general, community serves as a rhetorical expedient for navigating the travails of modern life, providing compensations and correctives to the perceived failures of mass society.* As a kind of correcting agent, community creates narrative continuity for rhetors dramatizing present circumstances. And since community is by its nature a thing that is lacking (i.e. the 'myth of community), rhetors necessarily propose a program for its reclamation. Community, in this regard, is historically restorative.

Spiritual and Material

Community is also redemptive. It engages in a critical commentary on the materialist orientation of individualism, pointing to where it is morally deficient and offering a corresponding path toward spiritual revitalization. In Chapters One and Two, we saw that community accumulated spiritual overtones as a kind of secularization of the religious impulse, and in practice, functioned as something very much like a civil religion. Broadly speaking,

community meets the modern need for a transcendent value to judge and discipline self-interested and material motives. Common identification with community, supplemented with spiritual and integrative rewards, offers a sufficient motive to compel social change and reformation. Put another way, in modern discourse, community works out the tension between spiritual and material goods by redirecting attention toward the side of spirituality.

This function was most clear in the case of the Oneida, yet, the rhetorics of Jane Addams and the Southern Agrarians were also demonstrably concerned with finding some higher transcendent force that could give value and meaning to modern systems. Noyes united religious and scientific rationalities into a common endorsement of the god-term community. In this role, community condemned the material practices and values of industrial capitalism for lacking moral vigor, gesturing towards an alternative social order that reflected spiritual virtues of individual sacrifice for the common good.

In the case of Addams, community transcended the individualist and familial ethics by articulating a participatory civic ethic of solidarity and extended obligation. Community also transcended national loyalties by endorsing a global-scale civil religion of peace. For the Southern Agrarians, the industrial world was the antithesis of religion and aesthetics, and no spiritual values could be found there. Instead, the only humanistic life was that of the agrarian community, where the culture of the soil provided the perfect balance between labor and leisure, spirituality and materiality. The inherited tradition communal traditions were the guardians of spiritual values against the menace of industrial society.

In socio-political discourse, community redeems or complements material concerns with a transcendent call for more humanistic relationships, beckoning citizens to discover better versions of themselves by embracing a purified motive directed toward the needs of others. The

specific relation between spirituality and materiality will vary depending on the specific philosophical presumptions and political predilections of the rhetor, as they do in the foregoing examples, but in general, community is particularly concerned with modern adjustments of this spiritual-material tension. This fact can go a long way in explaining the persisting "spiritual" resonance of the god-term community as an ideal demanding sacrifice in present day.

Self and Society

This ties to a final and most prominent task of community: the attempt to realize a proper relation between the modern self and larger society. Rhetorics of community are inherently normative discourses that negotiate the place of the individual as a member of the collective, asking what obligations that individual possesses and to whom they are directed. Community advises on what constitutes the best scheme of social relations, where a person can find a life of mutual meaning, and how to secure an ideal world of freedom and belonging.

In the rhetoric of John Noyes, the self finds its ultimate meaning in social relationships modeled on the family, where the self is subsumed by the social organism. Individuals achieve their ultimate happiness and highest moral attainments in submitting their wills to the interests and dictates of an intimately-pledged body. For Jane Addams, the self only knows itself by its relationship to others, and is made whole when in the presence of like-minded persons working together for the collective good. Society should be the scene of action of the individual, where persons of disparate experience and identity meet and collaborate to improve the conditions of all. With the Southern Agrarians, "society," is but an abstraction; the self finds meaningful relation only with the small associations characteristic of local communities. There is no obligation to this thing called '"society," but only the obligation to family and neighbors. The

individual is independent and self-sufficient, but takes a concern for, and finds a home in, the presence of a communal tradition.

The communalist, progressive, and traditional examples noted here are perhaps the most prominent American methods of resolving the relation between self and society, but as with the other dialectics, there can be considerable variation among particular rhetors about what constitutes this ideal relation and what actions must be taken to attain it. *As a general rule, however, rhetorics of community are especially concerned with the modern negotiation of self and social directedness, providing answers to how citizens ought to associate and organize, and what their duties are to the "other."* Such reordering of the relation of self and society is among the foremost rhetorical work accomplished by rhetorics of community.

In sum, I submit that community takes up three primary tensions or failures of the modern world to be corrected: the relation of past to future; of spiritual values to material goods; and of self to society. Rhetorics of community aim to rebalance, reorder, and realign the modern social order by way of appeal to society's negative image, community; such rhetorics promise to fix or right the imbalance through a program which compensates, consoles, and/or corrects imbalances in spiritual/material goods, breaks in the continuity of past and future, and the estrangement of self and society. Overall, community acts as a rhetorical device for navigating the travails of modern life, providing both compensations and consolations for losses that seem apparent with the advent of mass society and directing us toward reparative actions. And in this, community is concerned the *failures* alleged to exist in the very structure of the modern world.

The Logic of Community (Community and Failure)

There is an underlying logic to rhetorics of community, in so far as they enact formulaic responses to perceived problems as prescribed by the general constitution of community

discourse. Community rhetorics, we could say, operate in a realm of "failure,"—namely, the failures of modern life—where community works to correct, redeem, or transform the inadequacies off modern society.

David Payne has written that there is a "motivational logic" to discourses of failure, whereby both the identification of failure and the method of its resolution are rhetorical enterprises (*Coping* xi). When a situation is designated as a "failure" it calls for the enactment of a corresponding treatment to mitigate or redeem the inadequacy. Failure is "an agreeable interpretation of particular circumstances" because it frames the situation in such a way that there are symbolic remedies at our disposal for redeeming the failure (Payne 5). That is, while a failure is not a "good" thing, constructing and naming a situation a failure makes possible a program of restoration that can bring us back to health. Such discourses draw upon a set of "topoi" or recurring motifs which attributes blame, and therefore pinpoints the source of restorative action as resting on, one of the three dialectical pairs mentioned earlier: self-society, past-future, spiritual-material. By making amends for the imbalances among these dialectical pairs, the failure is then said to be turned into profit.

I contend that the rhetoric of community follows a logic of failure, whereby the very invocation of "community" implies the existence of some sort of failure of the modern world to be righted by following the dictates of communal piety. Since community is defined by its lack or absence, its summons implies a failure—and in the logic of community, that failure exists within its dialectical opposite: society.

The menace of the three case studies analyzed in this dissertation was "industrialism," but it would be more accurate to say the discursive rage was directed at industrial "society." As shown in the introductory chapter, and borne out through the analytical chapters, community and

society function as a dialectical pair. Historically, they were defined in symmetry, the one possessing the attributes the other lacked, and in the Western mythic account, the destruction of community by society became the standard interpretation of the modern condition. Accordingly, in rhetorics of community, society is constructed as the "failing" organism in need of remedy, and community is positioned as the curative.

Following the logic of modern failure, any existing or symbolically created inadequacy highlighted by the rhetor can be chalked up to a "failure" of "modern society," to be corrected by the adoption of community values. The point can be drawn out by reflecting on the way individuals in informal conversations, newspaper editorials, and graduate seminars attribute blame for some perceived ill or undesirable entity to "society." We hear people lament how "society has failed its workers," "society is undermining the family," and "society refuses to accept me for who I am." Anyone who has taught an undergraduate course knows the first response of students to a question of why individuals act as they do is that "society teaches them to." Functionally, "society" serves as a catchall term for the attribution of guilt and blame, so that when something goes wrong, we locate this failure in the fabric of society itself. Any particular instance of failure may be generalized out to a larger modern "social" condition in need of a universalized rhetorical curative (Payne).

Of course, such appeals explain very little about the direct cause of the particular actions or failures, but they do point to the nature of "society" as a shorthand term for encapsulating a situation of failure. In the modern lexicon, society becomes the failing agent, and the corresponding agent of repair is another generality: the universal solvent of "community." Community and society form a dialectical couple, whereby the faults of the one are mitigated by the potentialities of the other. Thus, we could say that to submit "community" as the remedy of

"social" ills, is to act in pious conformity with our inherited symbolic linkages, as captured by the representative cases of John Noyes, Jane Addams, and the Southern Agrarians. The logic of community involves a rhetorical maneuver of discovering or creating a social failure and fixing it with an appeal to identification with a program of remedy dressed in the communal garb.

Generally, the failure is located as belonging to a social dimension captured under one of the *topoi* of spiritual-material, self-society, past-future. In the first instance, a failure in the material order calls for a corrective of community as spiritual virtue; in the second, a failure in the relation of the self to society demands a communitarian reordering of obligations of self to others; and in the last, a break in continuity between past and future requires community to establish a sense of meaning and redemptive history. Coincidently, the organization of this dissertation has reflected these three topoi. While all the case studies dealt in some manner with each dialectic, John Humphrey Noyes was especially concerned with spiritual-material, Addams with self-society, the Agrarians with past-future. But perhaps this is not merely a coincidence; there may be inclinations within the three philosophies analyzed in this dissertation which direct attention to certain topoi of social failures. This is a possibility that can be explored by considering my theses on the nature of communalist, progressive, and traditionalist community.

Three Ideals of Community

My second set of theses pertain to the major political and philosophical ideals of community in the American context, namely the communalist, progressivist and traditionalist perspectives. While they share a common acceptance of community as god-term, they display different "social recipes" or "pieties" of what constitutes that ideal. Hence, at the onset of this project, I offered three theses concerning the major tenets of their programs: communalist rhetorics take community as an abstract/spiritual value to be rationally applied to social

institutions; progressive rhetorics frame community as a vehicle for adjusting and improving the living conditions of citizens; traditionalist rhetorics portray community as an autonomous and ordered way of life which provides a home for individuals.

The "communist" or "utopian communalist" conception of community as I have articulated it is especially concerned with securing spiritual and moral values in a material world perceived to discourage or inhibit their attainment. In this pious formulation, the "self-directed" orientation of modernity operates in violation of the higher principles of communal equality, justice and self-sacrifice. The best way to resolve the discrepancy of transcendent value and material practice, then, is through the reform of institutions, remaking the social order in accordance with communal principles so as to infuse it with spiritual vitality and secure conditions where moral action is possible. In this pious formula, community is a kind of universal solvent for the problems of the economic world, a correction to the individualist and capitalist assumptions portrayed as breeding socially harmful behavior. Community performs the role of organizing concept, promising to initiate a superior scene of action, and by extension, a superior individual motivation. This utopic template, in taking an extreme concern for spiritual and transcendent principles, aims toward the purification of motives by installing an other-oriented ethic which takes sacrifice and submission to the collective good as the pinnacle of moral action.

The progressive formula is not altogether different, though it departs in numerous and substantial ways. As I have interpreted it, the progressivist ideal of community stresses pragmatic adjustments and reforms in order to make society a more humane place, with community serving as the vehicle for democratic social change. The progressivist emphasizes universality and inclusion, hoping to foster a sense of interdependence or shared solidarity and

obligation among citizens through joint action. Community, as voluntary association, mobilizes the people into an active and acquainted body, where citizens co-labor to make a positive difference in the lives of their fellows. And though the progressivist community seeks to correct the individualist and economic paradigms, unlike the communalists, they do not wish to overthrow or withdraw from it; rather, progressivist community actually preserves and enables the reign of the economic orientation by making it more tolerable and temporizing its excesses. In actuality, the progressive advocacy of community as method of democratic reform has as its aim the humanization of the *existing* social order.

What constitutes the traditionalist communal recipe is an ordered an autonomous way of life lived out in a definite social tradition. A community is an inheritance, a tried and tested organism and set of discriminations to be conserved against the outside forces which threaten it. In a community, freedom and order are unified, and individuals act autonomously according to their own volition in the midst of a robust provincialism. The particularity of communal life grants the tradition its identity and aesthetic richness, and citizens can find a balance between labor and leisure, spiritual and material concerns. The resultant sense of rootedness and admiration for the past enables continuity through the maintenance of identity amid changing circumstances. In such a scheme, the essential heart of individualism is embraced—not the individualism to live isolated lives, but a social-bond individualism where persons seek first the welfare of the self and kin, but find their home in the life and customs of the community.

In their own way, each of these templates or "social recipes" of community were assembled as attempts to grapple with the perceived failings of modern life, and the consequences of the individualist orientation's triumphs over communal virtues. Each perspective may be goaded by their own contradictions, but the problems they identify and the

manner in which they attempt to answer them speak to the battles we still wage today. Rhetorics of community are about nothing less than the eternal quarrels over democratic theory, ethics, human nature, how to live and what constitutes the good life, how the individual can find meaning, the ideal state of human relationships, and the proper role of voluntary and state action in these aspirations. The various platforms I have articulated come to disparate conclusions on these matters, and such differences will have implications for the way we order and act upon the modern world; nevertheless, it is worth first recognizing their commonality in voicing a similar set of concerns about the relation of past-future, spiritual-material, self-society.

Yet for whatever they share in common, "community" must also be taken as a site of contestation, with a hidden conflict brewing beneath the shared endorsement of the god-term. The more cosmopolitan and provincial templates clash over what constitutes ethical action and the ideal social order. For example, in Addams' progressive rhetoric, government action was the fulfillment and *culmination* of community; yet for the Agrarian traditionalists, state action was the very *violation* of it. With the Oneida communists, community meant sacrificing the will and possessions of the individual on behalf of the *collective interest*; yet community for the Agrarians meant respecting and protecting the autonomy of *individuals* to seek their own welfare. As Noyes considered community as a spiritual principle from which to remake society by the way of sectarian *withdrawal*, Addams understood it as a practical means for improving and *engaging* with society as it was. For Addams, the heart of community was a move toward ultimate *inclusion* of all persons; but for Agrarianism, community was only meaningful in small-scale settings when the unit was defined by its *difference* from the outside world.

A critical understanding of community appeals must involve an awareness of the incompatible elements of these competing doctrines falling under the same linguistic heading.

Robert Bellah and his associates argued that the vocabulary of community or "collectivity" serves as a "second language" to Americans, pushing them to reconsider and mitigate the predominate language of "individualism" (*Habits*). Bellah was undoubtedly right in his contention that community is our second tongue, but he steers wrong in supposing that it constitutes one coherent or unified language; rather, this study shows us that there are numerous communitarian tongues simultaneously vying for our adherence.

Yet alertness to the implicitly contested nature of community ought not place us on a partisan path toward discrediting those formulas with which we find ourselves skeptical. While individuals may hold a preference for a "traditionalist" or "progressivist" ideal, few of us retain enough consistency to avoid falling into the discursive trap of "slipping" in our referents. And from my perspective, definitional consistency is not the purpose of appeals to community anyway; for whatever conflicts it masks or differences it conceals, community also unites, and in so doing enables human cooperation and the coordination of joint enterprises. No single ideal of community is intrinsically bad, and we should recognize the inclinations of community discourse without developing a cynical "trained incapacity" against such appeals. Or put another way, it would be irresponsible for the critic of "community" to dismiss all appeals in its name simply because we have identified certain patterns of discourse and found they are at a crossroads of purpose. Community operates at the level of grand discursive schemes for working out modern identity, but it also functions at the localized level of pragmatic necessity, and any particular enactment of community must be judged on its own merits for the causes/values/actions it endorses in the specific instance under scrutiny.

Rhetorical Posturings and Ad Hoc Appeals

This reality leads to a necessary distinction between the general recurring ideals or templates of community in socio-political discourse, and what might be called more pragmatic "ad hoc" appeals. One participates in a "grand scheme" for navigating the dialectics of modern life, while the other is more or less contingent to localized aims. The "philosophies of community," as captured by communalist rationalism, progressive cosmopolitanism, and traditionalist provincialism, are refined suppositions about what it means to be modern and the nature of the good life; they speak to which values citizens should aspire and how society should be corrected so as to attain a moral ordering of human relationships. Meanwhile, ad hoc appeals, which we might call "Rhetorical posturings," are more informal pious ways of constructing community in the moment to guide human action in specific crises. Framing community as something to be attained, mobilized, or preserved need not reflect a consistent or general worldview; rather, appeals to community may be little more than offhand namings meant to enact certain attitudes and strategies of resolution. In such cases, community is an improvisationally named motive for sizing up the situation and our relation to it.

I think it fair to suggest that, in general, the three distinct ideals of community loosely correspond to three related "rhetorical posturings." John Noyes, in putting forth a rationalist and communist conception of community, postures community as a call to *live up transcendent principles*; Jane Addams and her progressive cosmopolitanism posture community as a call to *mobilize for a social change*; and the Southern Agrarians, with their traditionalist provincialism, posture community as a call to *preserve an inherited good.* These three posturings could be taken as not only representing the general thrust of the communalist, progressive, and traditionalist

philosophies, but as capturing the primary maneuvers and identifications available to citizens for navigating their own particular circumstances by way of communal petition.

While a predilection for one rhetorical posturing may and often does indicate a general philosophical alignment with the corresponding philosophy of community, in practical use these posturings can be functionally interchangeable. That is, community is malleable, and the manner in which it is framed changes due to the particular purposes at hand. Nothing prevents the same individual from drawing upon the vocabulary of community to defend a particular way of life in one instance, and then switching to an appeal toward community where citizens associate for the improvement of their collective lot in another.

Such discrepancy is not simply a bait-and-switch on behalf of the rhetor, but an honest attempt to use the linguistic equipment available for making sense of and resolving everyday events. Among a vast set of symbolic resources, the choice of the "community" frame composes the "situation" in such a way so as to accent certain scenic failures and call forth a corresponding remedy of *living up to, mobilizing for,* or *preserving* community. As it stands, in our day to day lives, most of us do not have refined philosophies of community as do the rhetoricians in the foregoing case studies. Rather, we invoke community in an ad hoc manner to tackle the issues pertaining to our immediate circumstances without concerning ourselves for the larger socio-political implications of our selection of a particular "grand scheme" communitarian formula.

The point might be made by taking a micro-rhetorical illustration from the author's own participation in a small organization called *The Graduate Communication Association* (GCA). GCA is a body dedicated to enhancing the "community" among graduate students in Communication Studies at the University of South Florida. As an active member who has served as treasurer and co-president of the organization, I have witnessed each of the communitarian

"posturings" over the past few years. During association meetings while I was co-president, GCA members spent considerable time discussing the perception of a growing "lack of community" amid the organization and department. Accordingly, we expended significant effort brainstorming ideas and policies which could be implemented to help us again feel that the organization attained a semblance of community. In so doing, GCA appealed to the "rationalist" posturing of community, where our organizational order needed to be strategically remade so that it could *live up to* the image of community.

At another point, the members of GCA wanted to support the efforts of the labor union representing graduate students on assistantship. GCA members started speaking of "our duty as a community" to improve the working conditions of all graduate students, and students began assembling through meetings, protests, and socials to garner support for the union. What these appeals to community amounted to was a "progressive" posturing of community as an *associative vehicle for democratic change*.

In a final instance, when the department conducted interviews for a number of open faculty positions, GCA members met privately to discuss each candidate's "fit" with the department. Throughout the discussion, the conversation revolved around whether prospective candidates were compatible with our "USF community" and the way "we do things here." The possible addition of "outsiders" to our community was a kind of threat to established customs and identities which forced us GCA members to define who we were as a body. It made us acutely aware of our boundaries, and we sought to protect the essential heart of our community from dissolution. This was a "traditionalist" posturing, where community was appealed to in order to *preserve an inherited good*.

While the preceding examples are admittedly small-scale, they draw attention to the spontaneous manner in which community appeals are internalized and deployed daily in the vernacular talk of citizens. Us members of GCA were not conducting anything as grand as a negotiation of "what it means to be modern," but we were drawing upon the available language of community to deliberate about who we wanted to be, the values we held dear, and how we should act in response to specific events.

The example of GCA is telling because it is in many ways unremarkable—it simply involves persons working together to solve mutual problems by recourse to a privileged vocabulary amenable to our purposes. The fact that the nature of community is imprecise and ambiguous makes it all the more useful; pragmatically, the slippage between "philosophies" of community in these instances is of little consequence, as the various "posturings" serve effectively enough to foster identification and collaborative action.

A refined critical perspective, then, must be careful to distinguish between the general "philosophies of community" from the more ad hoc "rhetorical posturings of community" loosely associated with them. There is, I have tried to show, a correlation between the two—the progressive philosophy of cosmopolitanism naturally extends to the posturing of democratic mobilization, while the traditionalist philosophy of provincialism correlates to the posturing of protection and preservation. Yet they are non-exclusive, and can be unlinked from each other by any individual. Since language is essentially social, and our symbolic resources evolve and arise from the history of group relationships, any individual enactment of community rhetoric must invariably draw upon the pieties or inherited "group weightings" of the historical cases, even as the individual may aim to "transcend" that group weighting.

Therefore, in so far as we look at these as "rhetorical posturings" we might see community as a rhetorical resource or toolkit available for rhetors of any social or political commitment who benefit from the ambiguity, slippages, and utopic legacy of the term. They may switch seamlessly between appeals to "preserve a good" such as local autonomy, while immediately shifting to a demand for civic association and collaboration to make a positive change in the national community. From this perspective, community is about finding the appropriate symbolic equipment and deploying it as needed for particular and contingent purposes. When seen this way, none of these posturings, are intrinsically bad or undesirable, but they are all intrinsically normative, as to make a claim to community is to make a claim of who we want to be and how we should act.

Yet, in so far as we highlight the "philosophies of community," we are led to a certain set of conclusions about American attitudes toward modern economic and individualist rationalities, and we can contrast competing views of what constitutes desirable social relations and moral activity. Community, at this "grand schematic level," reveals the formative attempts of differing schools of thought to negotiate modern identity by seeking a proper relation between self and society, spiritual and material values, past and future orientations.

The Universal and Particular

If we take Jane Addams and the Southern Agrarians as "representative anecdotes" for a certain kind of progressivism and traditionalism, we can see a fissure in their shared endorsement of community with implications for contemporary politics. This fissure, I submit, is primarily a confrontation between logics of universality and particularity.

The progressive commitments are particularly concerned with improving modern conditions and attaining a superior degree of justice. Community functions as a participatory and

associativee means of adjustment and reform, ultimately resulting in State action. But the moral core of progressivism is cosmopolitan and *universalist*—the community of all people despite their difference. It embraces a modernist logic of universality where community is essentially a sense of imagined solidarity and social obligation spurred by voluntary association, where the ethical mandate is the extension of this obligation to larger and larger realms.

The traditionalist perspective is incompatible with these aims as it is founded in a logic of particularity. The problem with modernity is that it is *too* universalist, as it colonizes and blankets the world in bland massification, stomping out the traditions and differences which give life meaning and order. Community, in this scheme, is essentially a limited solidarity and obligation circulating around a sense of locale. The rhetorical utility of community is in articulating a provincial identity and protecting it from dilution. Accordingly, the moral core of traditionalism is *particularity,* the obligation to protect one's people and way of life, because it is the only place where an individual can find a life of meaning and vitality. The abstractions of "society" or "world community" are nonsensical and lack substance, as the only feasible community is among a people who do life together and share a tradition in common.

The fissure between progressivism and traditionalism thus appears to be a rivalry of moral claims between universality and particularity, inclusion and exclusion, cosmopolitanism and provincialism. Their conflict comes down to a question of which ethic and identification is a preferable aspiration for ordering acting in the world. The choice among them will have repercussions for the political views and policies one supports. For example, it is unsurprising when a traditionalist warns against state encroachment upon the activity of "local communities" or grows weary when an international body such as the United Nations purports to represent the "world community." It is likewise unsurprising when a progressivist praises these same events as

fulfilling the spirit of community, because these contrasting evaluations flow naturally from their respective universalist and particularist logics. Their notions of community are at a crossroads, and we must expect their politics to be similarly conflicting.

And yet, the charismatic nature of community involves a strange comingling of progressive and conservative causes—liberals too value local community and conservatives surely support extended solidarities such as the national community. So, while we must highlight their diverging ideals in principle, we can also appreciate community as a device for bridging their perspectives and enabling transformation. Both formulations of community are concerned with the consequences of individualism and economic rationality, and both essentially work to preserve that system by humanizing it. Surely there are as many cosmopolitanisms and provincialisms as there are rhetorics of community, and like appeals to community, the responsible critic must inquire into the specifics before an evaluation can be rendered. There may be numerous collaborative enterprises that those typically adhering to opposing ethics may find appealing. And it is equally likely that there are rhetorics which borrow elements from both philosophies. Overall, however, it is useful to generalize and conclude that the diverging logics of progressivism and traditionalism are aligned with universalist and particularist logics, understanding that those opposing ethics are at the core of political disagreement about social ordering, state intervention, civic identity, and the nature of the good.

Contemporary Manifestations

With these conclusions in mind, we might extend our analysis and tangentially survey other seminal American rhetorics of community chronologically following those analyzed in this dissertation to contextualize the present moment. For example, we could consider the 1960s and the Civil Rights Movement as a rhetoric of community. In seeking justice and racial integration

for African Americans through non-violent protest, Martin Luther King Jr. continually appealed

to an ideal image of the "beloved community":

> the aftermath of non-violence is the creation of the beloved community; the aftermath of non-violence is redemption and reconciliation. This is a method that seeks to transform and to redeem, and win the friendship of the opponent, and make it possible for men to live together as brothers in a community, and not continually live with bitterness and friction ("Justice Without Violence," April 3, 1957)

King's portrait of the redemptive powers of community drew upon elements of utopic-

spiritualization and progressive reform while transforming those ideals to be especially

concerned with questions of racial justice and reconciliation. "Community" functioned in King's

appeals to justify non-violent civic mobilization petitioning the state for legislative redress, and

to provide a utopic visualization of what ethical human relationships could look like when all

persons were identified as "brothers in community."

The renaissance of conservatism following World War II and culminating with the

presidency of Ronald Reagan likewise found the concept of community amenable to the creation

of a powerful political alliance. In the first half of the twentieth century, the conservative

movement was fractured between disparate groups, especially libertarians and traditionalists,

who shared little more than a dissatisfaction with the pieties of mainline liberalism. As efforts

were made to bring these factions together in a program aptly called "fusionism," community

offered traditionalist and libertarians a realm of common ground; both could agree that American

society needed to protect self-governing "communities" from state interference (Nash,

Conservative). Writers such as Richard Weaver explicitly brought the Agrarian philosophy of

community into the movement, while coterminous thinkers as Russel Kirk and Robert Nisbet

further advocated a traditionalist support of local difference (Weaver, *Ideas;* Kirk, *Conservative*

Mind; Nisbet, *Quest*). When mixed with the market sensibilities of William Buckley, Frank

Meyer, and other libertarian thinkers, the new conservatism formed a mighty political bloc held together in large part by a concern over the dissolution of community, with community understood as the vigorous life of associative action and local autonomy—an autonomy that was undermined by state intervention and economic meddling in municipal affairs. The rhetoric of the New Conservatism amended the traditionalist perspective, which was originally skeptical of free market logic, by making the cause of community an ally of economic liberty.

The outburst of political communitarianism in the 1970s and 1980s was largely a response to the economic and social doctrines of Reaganism. Sociologists such as Robert Bellah, Amatai Etzioni, and even Robert Putnam worked to reclaim a more "progressive" vision of community to contest a renewed deference the individualist and economic paradigm (Bellah et. al, *Habits;* Etzioni, *Spirit;* Putnam, *Bowling*). For the communitarians, the decreasing participation in local clubs, political organizations, and other forms of voluntary association was a sign of a decaying public culture. Accordingly, they pleaded with Americans to fight this brand of individualism by joining local organizations and recovering the communitarian sensibilities of civic virtue and obligation.

The list of other contemporary examples could be extended almost endlessly—appeals to internet communities as a new form of belonging and democratic citizenship; defenses of indigenous peoples and the freedom of their communities to live their own way of life; social movements on behalf of the gay community and their right to marriage; laments over the decline of manufacturing and coal mining communities and the call for their revitalization; environmentalist petitions to the world community to take a shared responsibility for protecting the planet's resources; concerns over gentrification and its effect on local communities; alarm at the lessening autonomy of national communities and the outcry to withdrawal from international

pacts; popular culture and the endless portrayals of disaster that result in the formation of utopic apocalyptic communities; and so on.

These historical moments, and others not mentioned, require more in-depth analyses than can be given here. Further investigation into such discourses might attain something of a rhetorical genealogy that shows critical moments of "community's" history in the American context, and draw out more implications for its role as a discursive phenomenon in relation to modern society. I have aimed to stay clear of claims to causality or continuity, opting instead to work out a vocabulary for situating and analyzing community rhetoric; nevertheless, language is a social phenomenon, and a rhetor must draw upon the wealth of accumulated associations, linkages and "pieties" that have come before. I therefore believe such a rhetorical genealogy would be possible and insightful. This dissertation, and the vocabulary it has refined and conclusions it has drawn, can aid in such a project because it offers a theory of the general functions, philosophies, and characteristics of community as a god-term in American life.

Before closing, it is worth considering where John Noyes and the ideal of utopian communism stand in all of this. It may initially appear that the radical program of the Oneida Community has no direct contemporary correlative. The utopian movement of which Noyes was a part flourished in a unique historical moment where many citizens saw communes as the best path for securing a life of order and value. Directly, there are few examples of contemporary individuals holding such a position, although the continued existence of Mennonite communities may be offered as a somewhat sustained and parallel case. Furthermore, Communism and Socialism more generally, including that stemming from Marxist logics, no longer holds a central place in the modern mind, and few consider communism a robust or desirable political

alternative. Nevertheless, I submit that traces of the Noyesian variant of community persist in a variety of locations, some of them unexpected.

As for the surviving threads of socialism, although typically flowing from a different source, they display a similar logic to that of Noyes' Bible Communism. Marxists and neo-Marxists, for example, are particularly concerned with the injustices perpetuated by capitalist systems and institutions of private property, and likewise believe true "moral" values can only be secured in an alternative system characterized by an ethic sharing or "communism." Like Noyes, they aim to contest the ethic of individualism and endorse one emphasizing responsibility for the welfare of others, and they assert that this can be attained by rationally designing and implementing apparatuses more aligned with communal precepts. There is certainly a utopic or "religious" element to such philosophies—explicitly in Marx who promises a "withering of the nation state," but also implicitly in the spiritual vigor with which the communist perspective reduces all to a knowable and inevitable purpose of history in a struggle between good and evil (see, Niebuhr, *Irony*). Yet there are substantial differences, as Marxists and socialists purport to be "secularly" minded, and consider the institution of social redemption to be the nation state rather than the voluntary communal withdrawal. Similarly, in such philosophies the communist principle is limited primarily to the economic realm, whereas Noyes rationally extended communism or "communalism" into the private familial realms. In some ways, Marx was less radical, and less rationally consistent, then Noyes.

But perhaps the more prominent legacy of the Noyesian perspective is the civic-spiritual overtones of community that endure in American discourse until this day. Roughly contemporary with Noyes and the larger utopian movement were philosophical and secular attempts to derive meaning and value from the community impulse, without some of the religious doctrinal

apparatus connected to it, in what I have called a secularization of the religious impulse. Ralph

Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Mary Baker Eddy, William James, Josiah Royce, and

even John Dewey could be taken as participating in the formulation of a secularized civil religion

of community as a democratic virtue, and this holds true in my analyses of pragmatist Jane

Addams and conservative humanist Southern Agrarians (Emerson, *Transcendentalist;* Thoreau,

Walden; James, *Varieties;* Royce, *Philosophy of Loyalty;* Dewey, *A Common Faith*). Such civic-

religious elements are clear in the explicitly religious rhetorics of Reinhold Niebuhr and Martin

Luther King, and surely the reoccurring sociological laments for the loss of community in the

discourses of Richard Sennett, Robert Nisbet, Robert Bellah, Robert Putnam, Amati Etzioni

reflect the religious-like piety of community as a higher virtue meant to redeem and correct

society (and here we can see the spiritual resonance of community clearly hitting upon the

"progressive" rhetoric of community, which I have considered separate for purposes of

analysis).[7] The Noyesian "communalist' image of community was a kind of embodiment of both

the progressivist and traditionalist orientations in that it displayed elements of preserving

traditional values and aligning individuals with progress. In this, community served as the god-

term and organizational concept. The lingering association of community as an intrinsic good

and sacrificial motive is present in both progressive and traditionalist perspectives, and that

perhaps is the greatest legacy of the utopian "spiritual" uses of community. Community unites all

parties by offering a transcendent value beyond the superficialities of economic relationships,

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[7] See Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society: A Study in Ethics and Politics;* King Jr., *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community*; Sennet, *Fall of Public Man;* Nisbet, *The Quest for Community*; Bellah, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*; Etzioni, *The Spirit of Community: Rights, Responsibilities and the Communitarian Age.*

connecting conservative and liberal alike in its spiritual call to serve one's fellows and find a life of meaning, harmony, and order in civic identification.

The Rhetoric of Community

This dissertation began by remarking on the commonplace trope of lamenting the "loss" of community in modern life. We can now see that such lamentations have been occurring continuously for at least the past one hundred and fifty years, and likely for a long time preceding. The reason appears to be that the idea of loss (and therefore failure) is constitutive of the concept of community itself, as modern society's failure to obtain an adequate degree of "community" demands political motivation to recover it. The seeming ubiquity of the term community and its status as an ambiguous and inherently positive idea indicates, that in the realm of community, we are dealing with a spiritualized god-term for ordering and evaluating actions. Community is morally normative, and it endorses of an ethic of sacrifice to the greater good as an offset to more atomistic ways of ordering lives.

While I have attempted to investigate what kind of work gets done with "community" and discover what the concept reveals about modern practices of sense-making, I have strived to avoid a cynical or "debunking" perspective. My analysis and commentary has followed a principle of charity, whereby the aim was to come to an understanding of community appeals that is both critical and appreciative. I therefore caution against a sentiment that suggests we resist community rhetorics wherever they appear. While one can imagine a host of undesirable causes to which the term can be lent, there is also quite a bit of good done in its name. As citizens, we must use language to plead our case and coordinate action among our fellows, and I see no reason why "community" should be omitted from our terminology of motives. I only

suggest that we attain a level of alertness as to the inclinations of such discourse and develop a more refined critical sensibility for evaluating contemporary claims to community.

In this vein, I advocate that the three ideals of community analyzed in this dissertation be approached with a degree of moral agnosticism. Community invites identification with a common identity, and it is in the construction of these identifications and their normative implications that community is contested. All three perspectives are goaded by their own contradictions, and when examined closely, "slip" into unearned territory and bleed into other schools of thought—the process whereby progressives find themselves in unexpected cahoots with traditionalists, and vice verses. While their communal formulas differ substantially, and this is not without consequence, no single template should be denounced or censored as such; critics may find themselves in greater sympathy with a particular perspective, but praise or blame is best designated only to its enactment in particular cases. Nevertheless, I believe my treatments of the universalist and particularist ethics align with the underlying presumption of contemporary American liberalism and conservatism *in principle,* and can therefore say something meaningful about the conflict of our own political moment. This is yet to be demonstrated in critical research and should be pursued it in future works.

My analysis of community might also bring a sense of contrition to communication researchers and other persons advocating community as a democratic ideal. While I have cautioned against the extreme cynicism of dismissing or debunking appeals to community, I have also given reason for restraining optimism towards community's compensatory promise, since it is goaded by a certain irony which goes beyond observations of its contested and ambiguous character. The dialectical sense of community as coming together and coming apart, as negotiating inherent contradictions in our interpretive worlds, I submit, is ongoing and never

resolved. This is the "rhetorical situation" of community. The progressivists who strive for community without exclusion, and the traditionalists who only find community meaningful when it is curtailed and limited, ultimately find their efforts undermined by the irony that every merger involves a division, every unity beckons another "apart-ness," and every transcendent must "come down" and be muddled in the contingencies of history. Order implies disorder, covenant-making suggests covenant-breaking, congregation demands segregation, and inclusion seemingly necessitates exclusion (Burke, Grammar; Butchart).

Cosmopolitan globalism may be an empty and meaningless promise, and provincialism may involve euphemizing violences and exclusions, but the attempt to escape either fate inevitably falls back upon itself and begins the cycle anew. An attentiveness to these ironies should lead to a humble awareness of how community is undone by the very sources which give it value. The rhetorical and Burkean approach I have suggested acknowledges this irony, and seeks to identify when community's moral claims tear at the seams, not to censor community, but to understand its functions and dialectics more clearly so that citizens may pursue their visions of the good with a critical, humble, and knowing glance.

From an awareness of community's contested and ironic nature, we might begin rethinking our own uses of community and what they reveal about how we formulate the ideal relationship between self-society, spiritual-material, past-future. We might see questions of participation, inclusion, identification, collectivity, and political organization as reoccurring topics a democratic people must debate to determine their political identity. And amid much uncertainty and turmoil, we might even find cause for a tempered optimism in knowing that the idea of community persists as a possible restorative measure for redeeming a fallen social world.

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