

SAY NO TO THE LIBERAL MEDIA:  
CONSERVATIVES AND CRITICISM OF THE NEWS MEDIA IN THE 1970S

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William Gillis

# SAY NO TO THE LIBERAL MEDIA:

## CONSERVATIVES AND CRITICISM OF THE NEWS MEDIA IN THE 1970S

“Say No to the Liberal Media: Conservatives and Criticism of the News Media in the 1970s” examines the significance of news media criticism among conservative opponents of liberalism in the 1970s. Critiques of the mainstream news media were levied by a wide array of conservatives of the 1970s, ranging from Republican party centrists to the racist and anti-Semitic Far Right. Conservatives criticized a wide range of news media organizations, including the three TV news networks; nationally influential publications such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Time*, and *Newsweek*; and local newspapers such as the *Boston Globe*, *Louisville Courier-Journal*, and *Detroit Free Press*. Criticism of the news media was often motivated by anticommunist ideology, class-based resentments of liberal elites, and racially motivated opposition to civil rights. I demonstrate that criticism of the local news media was vital to grassroots conservative movements of the 1970s, particularly in movements against court-ordered busing for school integration in cities such as Boston, Louisville, and Detroit. I also show that criticism of the news media was an integral component of the antiliberal activism of conservatives including white supremacist members of the Citizens’ Councils of America, opponents of feminism and the Equal Rights Amendment, Christian anticommunists of the 1970s, and anti-Semites who argued that the “Jewish news media” were active participants in a communist conspiracy. “Say No to the Liberal Media” also demonstrates that a thriving network of conservative publications was active during the 1970s. Such publications were crucial in disseminating the idea of liberal news media bias, and they often positioned themselves as pro-American, anticommunist truth-telling

alternatives to the allegedly distorted and biased news provided by major newspapers and magazines and the three television news networks.

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## Introduction

In a November 1969 speech before the Chamber of Commerce of Montgomery, Alabama, Vice President Spiro Agnew declared, “The day when the network commentators and even the gentlemen of the *New York Times* enjoyed a form of diplomatic immunity from comment and criticism of what they said is over. . . . And the time for naïve belief in their neutrality is gone.” Agnew’s speech in Montgomery marked the second time that month that he accused the country’s major television and print news media of liberal bias. A week earlier in Des Moines, Iowa, Agnew had launched a scathing attack on the alleged liberal sympathies of network television news producers, commentators, and reporters.<sup>1</sup>

Agnew’s Des Moines and Montgomery speeches were condemned by prominent members of the news media, including some of the news media outlets he singled out for criticism. On the other hand, the vice president’s uncompromising criticism of the “liberal” news media was greeted enthusiastically by conservatives, who agreed that the nation’s most powerful electronic and print news media outlets offered Americans biased, distorted news produced by a small group of East Coast liberals out of touch with the views of the majority of Americans. The vice president was applauded by conservative news media across a broad spectrum of conservative opinion, including influential daily newspapers such as the *Manchester* (N.H.) *Union Leader*; smaller daily and weekly newspapers such as the *Tulsa* (Okla.) *Daily World* and *Peoria* (Ill.) *Journal-Star*; television stations such as WRAL-TV in Raleigh, North Carolina; conservative news digests such as *Human Events*; stridently right-wing monthlies such as *Independent American* and *Free Enterprise*; and newspapers, magazines, and pamphlets produced by the racist and anti-Semitic Far Right including *Thunderbolt* and *Common Sense*.<sup>2</sup>



Spiro Agnew was not the first conservative to accuse the news media of liberal bias. In fact, some conservatives argued that the vice president was an opportunist who had arrived late to the media-criticism game. Indeed, the same wide spectrum of conservative news media that agreed with Agnew's criticisms of the liberal news media had already been voicing the same kind of critiques for at least a decade. And though Agnew's widely publicized comments did much to disseminate the idea of liberal news media bias, his speeches alone do not explain why criticism of the allegedly liberal media became an essential element of the political rhetoric of conservatives of the 1970s, a rhetoric that helped galvanize conservatives who argued that they were victims of a powerful liberal establishment that included the news media.<sup>3</sup>

In this dissertation I seek to understand how and why a wide range of conservatives criticized the allegedly liberal news media in the 1970s. I argue that ideas about liberal news media bias were fundamental to the political and cultural worldview of conservatives in the 1970s. Criticism of the mainstream news media became an essential element of conservative rhetoric during that decade, and the liberal news media critique was important across the broad spectrum of the Right, ranging from Republican party centrists to anti-Semitic white supremacists, and the vast number of conservatives in between. Conservatives who criticized the news media often did so because they believed the majority of the nation's news media provided Americans with biased and distorted news that amounted to liberal propaganda. News media criticism was also used by conservatives tactically, in order to position conservative ideas as credible and truthful.

To date, historians have paid little attention to the news media criticism of conservatives during the Cold War era, while media scholars have focused largely on the contemporary debate about news media bias. This dissertation makes a contribution to the

historiography on postwar conservatism, particularly conservative resistance to liberalism and civil rights, and it offers mass communication scholars an exploration of how and why conservatives criticized the news media in the recent past.

Among the conservatives of the 1970s who criticized national and local news media outlets were Republican party leaders; grassroots conservatives fighting court-ordered busing for school integration in cities such as Boston, Detroit, and Louisville, Kentucky; Christian anticommunists who believed the news media were agents in a communist conspiracy to destroy the Christian United States; “pro-family” activists opposed to the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment; white supremacists who believed the news media unfairly favored African Americans over whites; and anti-Semites who believed that communist Jews controlled the news media. Despite the differences among these conservatives, they agreed that the news media were overwhelmingly liberal and wielded unchecked power to influence the government and the American people.

I demonstrate that conservatives of the 1970s relied on a robust network of conservative alternative news media representing virtually every point on the conservative spectrum. Conservative newspapers, magazines, and even self-published pamphlets served as the primary means of disseminating ideas about liberal news media bias in the 1970s. They were essential to grassroots conservative movements and helped to connect like-minded conservatives throughout the country. Conservative alternative news media often positioned themselves as truth-telling alternatives to the allegedly liberal news media, and conservatives sought out such publications in order to learn the *truth* being denied to them by the supposedly objective mainstream news media.

The allegedly liberal news media were criticized, and criticized often, by virtually every kind of conservative in the 1970s. Their criticisms were made in newspapers,

magazines, pamphlets, and books; on radio and television shows; in speeches; on audio cassettes; and in letters to the editor. Conservatives did more than just complain about the mainstream news media. They took action by writing letters to news media organizations they believed were liberal and to companies that advertised in and on such news media outlets and by boycotting news media outlets and products advertised in and on allegedly liberal news outlets. Conservative critics of the news media even used non-violent direct action by blocking newspaper delivery trucks as well as acts of violence including physical attacks of reporters, the destruction of newspaper vending boxes and the windows of news media offices, and even the firing of gun shots at news media offices. Conservatives also worked to influence the broadcast media by writing letters of complaint about allegedly biased news programming to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and they also participated in the FCC ascertainment processes of local radio and TV stations. Many conservatives argued that both the news and entertainment programming aired by the TV networks were hopelessly liberal and unfit for America's youth. Thus conservatives filed FCC complaints against network TV entertainment programming they found objectionable. Finally, conservatives demanded (and received) air time from local radio and TV shows to air conservative views; read, listened, and viewed alternative conservative news media; and founded their own conservative publications.<sup>4</sup>

The national news media outlets cited by Spiro Agnew in his November 1969 speeches were the ones most often accused of liberal bias by conservatives. These were the eastern establishment, elite news media including the three TV networks, the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, and *Time* and *Newsweek*. Conservatives criticized these nationally influential news media outlets because they wielded immense power, in the view of conservatives, to brainwash Americans with liberal propaganda. Yet conservative news

media critics accused a wide variety of news media outlets of liberal bias, including city newspapers outside the East Coast including the *Los Angeles Times*, *Detroit Free Press*, and *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*; small- and mid-sized city newspapers such as the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, the *Des Moines (Iowa) Register*, *Charleston (W.Va.) Gazette*, and the *Pontiac (Mich.) Press*; and local television and radio stations.<sup>5</sup>

What did the terms conservative and liberal mean in the 1970s? Speaking broadly, liberals believed the government had a duty to provide for the public welfare, check the excesses of capitalism, and ensure that the civil rights of its citizens were protected. On the other hand, the postwar Right opposed government intervention in public welfare and free enterprise. Many conservatives also believed that the United States had strayed from its moral and religious foundations. Postwar conservatives were often skeptical of civil rights and “race-conscious liberalism,” and they saw civil rights initiatives such as affirmative action “as an unconstitutional exercise in social engineering and an unprecedented violation of free-market meritocracy,” according to the historian Matthew D. Lassiter. Lisa McGirr, another historian of postwar conservatism, reminds us that the postwar Right comprised “distinct groups whose priorities, worldviews, and political strategies differed.” Yet it is possible to identify three major interrelated themes that characterized the news media criticism of 1970s conservatives: opposition to liberalism, grassroots anti-elitism, and resistance to civil rights and integration.<sup>6</sup>

The issues most salient to conservatives in the 1970s were the political and sociocultural issues they associated with liberalism. Conservatives of the 1970s said they were concerned with issues related to law and order, such as urban and campus disorder, crime, and the policing of crime; perceived threats to Constitutional freedoms, such as gun ownership rights, property rights, and the right to practice free enterprise; issues connected

with racial integration, such as open housing, busing, and affirmative action; and sociocultural concerns conservatives linked to liberal permissiveness, such as drug use, feminism, sexual promiscuity, and homosexuality. Conservatives believed that the news media nearly always provided the liberal viewpoint on these issues and thus legitimated the politics and behaviors that conservatives saw as contrary to traditional American (and often Christian) moral and political traditions and principles. For conservatives of the 1970s, the allegedly liberal news media threatened traditional sources and sites of information, morality, and authority such as the family, the church, the Bible, and the Constitution. In fact, many conservatives believed the news media had already successfully brainwashed the majority of Americans with the liberal philosophy. Opposition to liberalism and the allegedly liberal media in the 1970s was rooted in Cold War–era anticommunism. Some conservatives of the 1970s said that liberalism was essentially the same as communism; others argued that liberalism was just one step away from communism and socialism; still others mixed and matched such rhetoric. Sometimes anticommunists argued that the news media were active communist conspirators; at other times, they suggested the news media were dupes of “Reds.”

The second central theme that motivated conservative news media critics of the 1970s was populist anti-elitism. During the Populist era of the 1890s, farmers and unionists said they distrusted banks and corporations; by the 1960s, distrust of elites in the government, the courts, academia, and in the news media had become a thriving strain within working-class politics. Working-class Americans in the 1960 and 1970s accused liberal elites of birthing and then enforcing liberal “schemes” such as open housing, busing, and affirmative action that the white working class was expected to shoulder. In cities such as Boston and Louisville, conservative opponents of busing saw the news media as the most

powerful member of the city's liberal establishment. Like other elite liberals, the news media refused to "certify" the antibusing movement. Conservatives who took part in grassroots movements such as opposition to busing and criticized the "liberal" news media often thought of themselves as patriots taking part in a revolt against liberal tyranny that was every bit as legitimate as the one begun by the revolutionaries of 1776. Yet, in their opinion, the news media ignored or marginalized their cause.<sup>7</sup>

Third, racial resentments often lurked above and below the surface of conservative criticism of the news media in the 1970s. Many conservatives believed that the news media had unfairly and unobjectively covered the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s, and, in the 1970s, they believed the news media provided biased coverage of issues such as busing and affirmative action, which were characterized by some conservatives as "civil rights gone too far." Many of the same residents of Louisville's suburbs who rejected efforts to integrate predominantly white neighborhoods in the 1960s blamed the *Louisville Courier-Journal* and *Louisville Times* for supporting integration, and many of the same residents blamed the newspapers for supporting busing in the mid-1970s. The conservative news media critics studied in this dissertation sometimes expressed themselves in racially explicit ways, while more often they employed coded language and color-blind language that stressed rights and freedoms when they critiqued liberalism and the liberal news media. As the historian Jefferson Cowie writes, untangling race and class is always a difficult task in U.S. history, yet I argue that racial resentments were often significant and sometimes salient factors in the criticism of the news media in the 1970s by conservatives.<sup>8</sup>

Finally, though a minority of conservatives who criticized the news media in the 1970s expressed anti-Semitic rhetoric, I argue that anti-Semitic beliefs were important in the creation of the liberal news media idea. I demonstrate that explicitly anti-Semitic and racist

Far Right publications of the 1970s argued that Jews controlled the news consumed by the majority of Americans. The vast majority of anti-Semites of the postwar era were fervent Christian anticommunists who believed that Jews were the secret masterminds behind the international communist conspiracy to destroy the Anglo-Saxon, Christian United States. Most anti-Semites also believed that communist Jews controlled the civil rights movement, a conspiracy designed to promote racial miscegenation and unrest. I suggest that ideas about the “eastern establishment,” “East Coast liberals,” and “New York elites,” terms widely used by conservatives of the 1960s and 1970s (including Spiro Agnew) when they criticized the allegedly liberal news media, were in part seeded by the anti-Semitic Far Right for which such terms meant one thing: powerful Jews, including the Jews who they believed controlled the broadcast and print news media. Such code words were used intentionally by anti-Semites and unintentionally by non-anti-Semites, who had absorbed ideas and rhetoric about East Coast liberals that originated from anti-Semitic beliefs but over time had lost explicit anti-Semitic connotations.

### **The Origins of the Liberal News Media Critique**

Criticisms of the news media have been levied by consumers of American news for nearly as long as there have been news media. Throughout American history violence has also been directed against newspapers and other news media, including partisan political papers in the early republic, abolitionist publications, black newspapers, labor papers, and the mainstream daily press. In the antebellum period, press critics voiced concerns about the press’s influence on the morals and general knowledge of American society, as well as the power of the press to influence public opinion. According to the media historian David Paul Nord, criticism of the news media began to take a new form early in the twentieth century:

“press criticism as cultural politics.” Pressure groups in urban communities used criticism of daily newspapers as a tactic relevant to their activism. For example, in the 1910s daily newspapers in Chicago were flooded with letters of complaint written by Protestants who believed the papers exhibited a pro-Catholic bias. Alternative news media also played roles in the criticism of city dailies. The *Menace*, an anti-Catholic weekly published in Aurora, Missouri, argued that a Catholic conspiracy controlled the American press and urged readers to complain directly to newspapers allegedly under Rome’s rule; many readers did just that. While it surely annoyed most newspaper editors, press criticism often spurred news organizations to “live up to higher standards, ideas, [and] moral behavior,” according to Marion Tuttle Marzolf, author of the 1991 book *Civilizing Voices: American Press Criticism, 1880–1950*. Marzolf argued that criticism of the news media—much of it coming from within the profession—served as a “civilizing agent” that made the press more responsible and professional.<sup>9</sup>

According to the journalism historian David R. Davies, criticism of the press reached a “crescendo” in the late 1940s, particularly after the Commission on Freedom of the Press, also known as the Hutchins Commission, found in a 1947 report that many newspapers provided shallow, sensational reporting. Most newspapers simply ignored the commission’s findings. Beginning in the 1950s anticommunists accused the press of failing to properly recognize the significance of the communist threat. For example, during his 1950s heyday the anticommunist crusader Joseph McCarthy accused newspapers, reporters, and columnists who attacked him of being soft on communism. McCarthy was backed by like-minded anticommunists, including conservatives in the news media. In 1950 *Shreveport* (La.) *Times* editor Charles A. Hazen accused the Associated Press of left-wing bias, especially in its



reporting on McCarthy. Most scholars, however, have found that the U.S. press of the 1950s and 1960s largely did not challenge the prevailing Cold War anticommunist ideology.<sup>10</sup>

In a 2008 article the historian David Greenberg argued that the idea of liberal news media bias derived from resistance to civil rights and integration in the Deep South in the 1950s and 1960s. Segregationists believed—correctly—that the East Coast–based news media helped the civil rights movement in the Deep South win national attention and sympathy. Some southerners used pejorative nicknames for the news networks, including the “Nigger Broadcasting Company,” “Afro Broadcasting Company,” and the “Communist,” “Colored,” or “Coon” Broadcasting Service. On occasion white supporters of racial segregation subjected reporters, wire-service correspondents, and national television newsmen to verbal abuse, physical intimidation, and violence. As Gene Roberts and Hank Klibanoff demonstrated in their 2006 book *The Race Beat: The Press, the Civil Rights Struggle, and the Awakening of a Nation*, many white southerners saw newsmen as outside agitators and vital cogs in the machinery that was requiring the South to integrate. Anticommunism was crucial to resistance to integration and criticism of the news media in the South. Many anticommunists believed that the civil rights movement was a communist conspiracy designed to foment violence and unrest, and they also believed that communists in the news media ensured there would be national and international coverage of that unrest. However, ideas about the liberal news media were not the province of an extremist anticommunist Right in the Deep South. Editors of mainstream southern newspapers often agreed that the reporting of civil rights and racial relations by the “eastern” news media was biased and distorted. In a January 1956 article in *Harper’s* magazine *Charleston (S.C.) News and Courier* editor Thomas Waring wrote that the “metropolitan press without exception has abandoned fair and objective reporting of the race story.” It would be incorrect, however, to think of

the national, East Coast–based news media of the late 1950s and 1960s as overwhelmingly progressive on issues of race. According to Davies, during the civil rights era the “vast majority of daily newspapers” in the United States reflected racial biases in their pages but did speak out against racial violence in the South.<sup>11</sup>

Both the historian Nicole Hemmer and I agree with Greenberg’s thesis that opposition to the civil rights movement helped to create the idea of liberal news media bias, but the belief that the news media was largely liberal was a long-standing conviction among committed conservative anticommunists in and outside the Deep South. Hemmer argues that conservative publications outside the South in the early and mid-1960s were crucial in building the idea of liberal media bias. She points to the 1964 presidential campaign that pitted the arch conservative Barry Goldwater against Lyndon Baines Johnson as a critical moment in the origins of the conservative news media and the idea of liberal news media bias. Conservatives argued in the mid-1960s, and continue to argue today, that the news media blatantly betrayed the principles of objectivity to ensure Goldwater’s defeat in 1964. According to Hemmer, after 1964 conservative periodicals such as *Manion Forum Newsletter* and *Human Events* worked to convince a wider audience of the existence of liberal news media bias.<sup>12</sup>

### **News Media Criticism in the 1970s**

Why was media criticism so pervasive in the 1970s? Ideas about the liberal news media already existed by the late 1960s, but the news media’s coverage of issues and events in the tumultuous years of the late 1960s and early 1970s were significant in creating greater skepticism among conservatives of the mainstream news media, especially television news. For instance, conservatives believed that television news coverage of the violence and

disorder at the August 1968 Democratic party national convention in Chicago provided sensationalistic coverage of conflict between protestors and police outside the convention. By the end of the 1960s, more and more Americans identified law and order as a national priority, and conservatives accused the news media of fomenting disorder in American cities and on college campuses. Anticommunists argued that urban disorder, campus unrest, racial conflict, and the antiwar movement were clear examples of communist subversion—and they also argued that the news media failed to report the truth about communist agitation.<sup>13</sup>

The news media's coverage of the Vietnam War in the late 1960s and the 1970s also did much to convince conservatives that the press was liberal and even un-American. Whether news media coverage of the conflict in Vietnam aided the communist enemy, parroted the official U.S. government and military line, or was in fact fair and objective is still debated today. Reed J. Irvine of Accuracy in Media, a conservative news media watchdog organization founded in 1969, said in a 1989 speech that the news media had portrayed Viet Cong and North Vietnamese leaders and troops as “noble, dedicated, fearless, honest patriots who deserved to win.” Irvine argued that CBS, NBC, and the *New York Times* had sapped “the resolve of the American people to fight for freedom.” The same kind of accusations were levied by conservatives of the late 1960s and 1970s. In 1970 and 1971 conservatives said that the press had provided extensive reports and commentary about the My Lai massacre, in which U.S. troops massacred at least three hundred South Vietnamese civilians in 1969, but had little to say about communist atrocities, such as those committed by communist troops at Hue in Vietnam in 1968. A January 1970 cartoon in the conservative newspaper *Manchester (N.H.) Union Leader* depicted a newsman with a sinister grin reading a script titled “Alleged atrocities at Song My [My Lai].” The camera was labeled “Liberal TV News Media.” Two years later, the *Union Leader* coined the phrase “Surrender

Now' News Media'' to describe news media outlets that it argued did not support the U.S. effort in Vietnam.<sup>14</sup> President Nixon and other administration officials agreed with conservatives who argued that the news media focused on failures rather than successes in Vietnam and actively hoped that the United States would fail in Vietnam. The views of Nixon and White House officials about the news media's coverage of Vietnam provided the impetus for an administration campaign to convince the public that TV network news and other powerful news media were biased and disloyal. Vice President Agnew's November 1969 attacks on the news media marked the first major act in that campaign.<sup>15</sup>

In 1971 the Pentagon Papers controversy gave conservatives further fuel for the argument that the "liberal" news media thought little of publishing government secrets that aided America's communist enemies and put American lives in danger. That year the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *Boston Globe* printed secret documents about U.S. policy in Vietnam stolen by the former Pentagon analyst Daniel Ellsberg. The publication of the documents prompted the Nixon administration to take the *New York Times* to court to halt publication, a case the government eventually lost. Beginning in 1972, the news media's aggressive reporting on the Watergate scandal and the prominent role played by "liberal" papers such as the *Times*, *Post*, and *Globe* and TV news networks such as CBS also did little to endear conservatives, some of whom interpreted the Watergate coverage as an effort to "get" Nixon. Mr. and Mrs. Edwin A. Morrison of Dallas, Texas, wrote to the *New York Times* in May 1974 and said they supported the president but had "lost all confidence in the national news media, printed and electronic, which for diabolical reasons wish to destroy the United States of America." *Tactics*, a conservative journal and a strident news media critic, called Nixon's resignation in August 1974 a "coup" at the hands of the "press, especially television."<sup>16</sup>

The press criticism of conservatives in the 1970s was also surely motivated by the economic recession of that decade and the national mood that characterized the decade. The commentator David Frum describes the 1970s as years of “unease and despair,” and historians have largely agreed that Americans of the 1970s were less optimistic about their future as well as the country’s. Many Americans also were, to borrow the title of the historian Dominic Sandbrook’s 2011 book on the populist Right of the 1970s, “mad as hell.” White opponents of liberalism were “mad as hell” and fed up with civil rights, urban unrest, violent crime, youth culture, and the antiwar movement. A white Boston busing opponent said in 1976 that he and his fellow whites had been battered “by riot, raping and revolution over the last decade.”<sup>17</sup>

Feelings of resentment and powerlessness motivated the activism of antibusers and other grassroots conservatives, who were some of the most passionate critics of the allegedly liberal news media during the 1970s. In his 2007 book *In Search of another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution*, the historian Joseph Crespino writes that white Mississippians of the 1960s and 1970s saw their opposition to civil rights and liberalism not just as a regional struggle but also as a “national battle to preserve fundamental American freedoms.” Thus white Mississippians “made common cause” with anticommunists, Christian conservatives, working-class and middle-class busing protestors, and other conservatives opposed to liberalism throughout the country. What united those conservatives? They shared concerns about socialism and communism, threats to property rights, government “encroachment” on private and business affairs, and “permissive” moral and ethical behavior that they believed threatened traditional Christian values and family life. As the historian Matthew D. Lassiter writes, for many grassroots conservatives, in particular whites who fought busing in the 1970s, party identification was less important than their

“populist identifications . . . as homeowners, taxpayers, and schoolparents.” Indeed, “homeowners, taxpayers, and schoolparents” aptly describe many of the grassroots conservatives I study in this dissertation. Though Lassiter argues that party affiliation was not as important for such conservatives as their locally oriented concerns, these were the Americans who helped Ronald Reagan win the presidency in 1980.<sup>18</sup>

Were conservatives correct when they said the news media of the 1970s were overwhelmingly liberal? Conservative media-watch organizations such as Accuracy in Media and books such as Edith Efron’s best-selling *The News Twisters* (1971) tried to prove through qualitative and quantitative analysis that the news networks and the most powerful daily papers provided news and analysis biased toward liberalism. In 1972 the journalist Ben H. Bagdikian argued that the vast majority of daily newspapers were actually conservative. Bagdikian argued that Agnew’s 1969 attacks on the allegedly liberal news media helped legitimate what was actually a conservative bias in most daily newspapers and allowed publishers of conservative newspapers to believe that it was “perfectly normal, in fact good, for a newspaper to be conservatively biased, because that isn’t bias at all, only true-blue Americanism.” Some contemporary scholars have seemed to accept the idea that the news media landscape of the 1970s was dominated by liberalism, save for newspapers such as the *Wall Street Journal* and magazines such as William F. Buckley’s *National Review*. But I have found that conservatives of the 1970s were able to turn to hundreds of daily and weekly conservative newspapers, as well as hundreds of conservative alternative news media. Conservative newspapers of the 1970s were well aware that there were other newspapers who shared the conservative ideology. In 1974 the *Gainesville (Ga.) Times* reminded readers that the American press was not just “The New York Times or The Washington Post or Walter Cronkite or David Brinkley. . . . It is also The New York Daily News, The Chicago

Tribune, The Richmond News Leader, The Wall Street Journal, The State in Columbia, S.C., The San Diego Union and other newspapers of conservative bent, far too numerous to list.” Conservative newspaper chains such as Freedom Newspapers also ensured that dozens of daily newspaper provided a conservative editorial voice. The U.S. press of the 1970s, then, was diversified rather than liberal or conservative.<sup>19</sup>

However, conservative daily newspapers and alternative conservative news media such as *NAPF*, *Northeast Detroiter*, and *Citizens Informer* could not match the power wielded by the eastern establishment media, in particular television. TV news and entertainment programming reached millions of Americans during a decade in which the mass media had more power than ever before in American society. In a 1976 study Harvard University researcher Samuel Huntington wrote that the media had become “the most important new source of national power in 1970s as opposed to 1950.” The media scholar James L. Baughman echoed that finding when he wrote that in the 1970s the three networks “dominated the nation’s culture and politics.” For many conservatives, TV news and entertainment had the power to brainwash Americans with not only liberalism but also sex and violence that endangered American youth.<sup>20</sup>

## Objectivity

How could conservatives accuse the news media of bias when the practices of the mainstream news media were supposedly grounded in the professional codes of objectivity and fairness? News media organizations often trumpeted their commitment to objectivity and fairness when they were accused of bias. After Vice President Agnew attacked the electronic and print news media in November 1969, publishers, editors, and news media organizations such as the American Society of Newspaper Editors vigorously denied that

they were biased. Such denials infuriated conservatives, who believed that the mainstream news media brazenly and wantonly betrayed these principles and instead published and aired grossly slanted news.<sup>21</sup>

Where did the principles that the allegedly liberal news media allegedly betray come from? In 1731 Ben Franklin, the editor of the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, articulated the idea that “both Sides” should have a voice in the news media when he wrote in *An Apology for Printers*, “Printers are educated in the Belief, that when Men differ in Opinion, both Sides ought equally to have the Advantage of being heard by the Publick.” Yet most newspaper editors of the eighteenth century printed “the truth as he saw it,” according to the journalism historian Si Sheppard. The news media, then, was understood as a “partisan instrument, rather than [an] impartial bearer of information.”<sup>22</sup>

By the 1890s words such as independence, accuracy, and fair play were being used by journalists to build the public’s trust and legitimize their profession. As the twentieth century progressed objectivity came to be the “chief occupational value of American journalism,” according to the sociologist and media historian Michael Schudson. Objectivity as a principle was articulated and promoted by journalists as “moral norms” designed to “endow their occupation with an identity they can count as worthy.” According to the media scholar Todd Gitlin, the authority and legitimacy of “hegemonic news”—news that readers believe is true—rests on objectivity. More recently, those inside and outside of the journalism profession have characterized the objectivity ideal as a myth; objectivity, in the words of the philosopher Richard Rorty, cannot be a “mirror” of nature.<sup>23</sup>

In the 1970s academic researchers such as Gaye Tuchman, Herbert Gans, and Mark Fishman focused on the practices of journalists and news organizations and undertook what essentially were newsroom ethnographies. Such researchers largely agreed that news was a



product primarily based on organizational needs and constraints. News, then, is a “constructed reality” based on the influence of news organizations, news work, and news staffers. Tuchman described objectivity in a 1972 study as a “strategic ritual protecting newspapermen from the risks of their trade.” Gans, in his study of CBS News, NBC News, *Newsweek*, and *Time*, found that news values were based less on objectivity than they were standards necessary for journalists to do their work. The conservative Edward Jay Epstein, author of *News from Nowhere: Television and the News* (1973), also concluded that TV news was “largely—though not entirely . . . shaped by organizational considerations.” Linda and S. Robert Lichter and Stanley Rothman produced a number of studies of journalists in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and eventually the 1986 book *The Media Elite: America’s New Powerbrokers*. They found that the typical journalist at a powerful, nationally influential news media organization is “the very model of the modern eastern urbanite”—liberal, upper-middle-class, and not a churchgoer. They argued that the overwhelmingly liberal attitudes of journalists *do* affect newsmaking, and concluded that “journalistic objectivity is unattainable.”<sup>24</sup>

In the 1970s conservative critics outside the academy regularly claimed that the mainstream, allegedly liberal news media frequently and flagrantly failed to meet the objective standards that they claimed to uphold. For example, conservatives alleged that news media outlets combined news reporting and commentary in supposedly objective news stories. A number of conservative news media critics also claimed that reporters for the “liberal” news media embraced the philosophy of advocacy reporting, in which reporters believed they should be an agent for progressive social change—for conservatives, a clear betrayal of the objectivity standard.<sup>25</sup>

The reality is that many conservatives, especially Christian conservatives and the ideological Far Right, likely would not have been satisfied by news that did meet the standards of objectivity. What many conservatives actually wanted from the print and electronic news media was *truth*, something that objective news of the 1970s could not provide. During the antibusing crisis in Boston, graffiti that read “Print the Truth”—clearly directed at the *Boston Globe*—could be seen around the city. Readers who wrote letters of complaint to the *Chicago Herald* and *Chicago Tribune* in the 1910s demanded that the newspapers tell the truth, but, more specifically, as David Paul Nord writes, “*their* truth. And their hunger for truth was not sated by the modern journalistic diet of impartiality, balance, fairness, and factual accuracy.”<sup>26</sup>

The facts that journalism professionals of the 1970s believed they provided Americans rested on providing balance: a relativistic approach that, for conservatives, gave prominence and credence to the viewpoints of communists, radicals, hippies, secular humanists, and atheists. In fact, conservatives believed the news media’s liberalism was so pervasive that the press actually paid more attention to flag-burning protestors, filthy hippies, radical feminists, and welfare recipients than they did the “good guy” Americans who worked, paid taxes, raised children, obeyed the law, and attended church. The truths valued by many conservatives of the 1970s were often based on moral binaries: right versus wrong, freedom versus communist slavery, God versus Satan. Conservatives, on the other hand, saw liberals, secular humanists, and atheists as inhabiting a relativistic world in which everyone was entitled to their opinion, and every story had two (or more) sides. In 1976 the *Louisville Courier-Journal* and *Louisville Times* won Pulitzer Prizes and other journalistic awards for their coverage of busing. These were the very same newspapers that Louisville busing opponents accused of unfair, distorted, and dishonest reporting. Perhaps the very values

prized by the journalism profession—objectivity and balance—were incompatible with the expectations of Louisville antibusers, who only saw one side of the busing story: the *truth* that busing was wrong and antibusers were right.<sup>27</sup>

### **Truth-Telling Alternative News Media for Conservatives**

Every evening during the 1970s *CBS Evening News* anchor Walter Cronkite ended his nightly broadcasts with the words, “And that’s the way it is.” Among the conservatives who doubted that Cronkite actually provided the truth that his catchphrase suggested were publishers of conservative alternative news media, which often positioned themselves as truth-telling alternatives to the mainstream news media by claiming that they, not CBS News or any other liberal news media outlet, were the ones that “tell it like it is.” The truth-telling theme was stressed by both established conservative newspapers and newspapers founded in the midst of busing crises to counter the alleged distortions, biases, and lies of the local and national “liberal” news media. Readers wrote to conservative newspapers and echoed the newspapers’ truth-telling claims by using words such as honesty and courage to praise the papers. Newspapers on the Far Right also claimed that they provided the truth that the communist-controlled news media intentionally covered up, and *Common Sense* and other anti-Semitic newspapers of the 1960s and 1970s often claimed that they were truth-tellers that printed the facts that the “Jewish” news media refused to print and broadcast.<sup>28</sup>

Alternative news media are most often associated with progressive social and political movements on the left, but right-wing alternative news media outlets existed in abundance in the 1970s. I argue that alternative conservative news media were vital to local grassroots conservative social movements, helped to link conservatives nationwide, and were some of the principal disseminators of the liberal news media critique. Conservatives have

recognized the importance of alternative media to conservative social movements. Richard A. Viguerie and David Franke stressed the role of alternative news media in their 2004 book *America's Right Turn: How Conservatives Used New and Alternative Media to Take Power*, and credited Phyllis Schlafly for successfully using her publication *Phyllis Schlafly Report* to mobilize opposition to the ERA and eventually emerge victorious. Viguerie and Franke argued that *Phyllis Schlafly Report* was essential to the anti-ERA movement because, according to the authors, the feminist supporters of the ERA had “all—all—the nation’s media on their side.” Of course, there were limits on the power of conservative alternative media. They could not match the power of the mainstream news media they so regularly criticized: during the Vietnam era twenty million Americans watched Cronkite’s *CBS Evening News* each evening, while sixty million Americans bought daily newspapers that relied primarily on wire services for international news. Yet the immense power wielded by the mainstream news media fueled the conservative backlash against it and perhaps inspired conservative activists to work even harder to get their conservative message out via alternative conservative news media.<sup>29</sup>

### **Local Communities and Certification**

This dissertation focuses closely on the criticism of local news media outlets by conservatives. Conservatives who criticized and boycotted city newspapers such as the *Louisville Courier-Journal* often believed that such papers had turned their back on their communities. What role, then, did news media play in their communities in the 1970s? What role did they try to play? And what role did conservatives think they *should* play? In her 1991 book *Making Local News*, Phyllis Kaniss explained that local newspapers have worked “to link their audiences in a common bond of local identity” since the nineteenth century. Local

news media often played key roles in creating and reifying the idea of a shared community. In the postwar years, as millions of Americans left cities for the suburbs, newspapers struggled to make the city a “symbolic bond” for a metropolitan, suburbanized audience.<sup>30</sup>

City newspapers and other news media were often seen by conservatives as representative of a powerful, liberal, and elite city establishment that put the interests of the city’s business class before the interests of its citizens. For antibusers, the liberal establishment and the news media were “virtually the same thing,” according to Ronald P. Formisano, author of *Boston against Busing* (1991). The thousands of working-class residents who led and participated in antibusing movements in cities such as Boston and Louisville resented rich and powerful elites such as media professionals, business leaders, professors, bureaucrats, and so-called intellectuals. Antibusers complained that newspapers such as the *Boston Globe* and *Louisville Courier-Journal* were published and edited by an unelected elite who hypocritically told the community what it should do but did not have to bear the burden of the liberal “schemes” they insisted were good for the city.<sup>31</sup>

Antibusers saw the *Globe* and *Courier-Journal* not as newspapers providing fair, objective coverage of busing and the antibusing movement, but instead as clearly biased *participants* in ensuring integration in a way that invalidated their claims of objectivity and fairness. City newspapers have often acted as boosters for the community, and during crises, serve as “instrument[s] for tension management,” in the words of James L. Baughman. City newspapers and local TV stations in Charlotte; Pontiac, Detroit, Louisville, and Boston—all cities that experienced busing in the 1970s—performed the kind of community peacemaking role described by Baughman. Antibusers believed that the end result was that local news media did not provide honest coverage of the antibusing movement and did not provide the

truth about violence in schools affected by busing because they wanted busing to appear successful.<sup>32</sup>

Antibusing protestors also believed that local media did not portray them as they saw themselves: peaceful citizens rallying and marching for civil rights and freedom. Yet the media would not “certify” them, to use the media scholar Todd Gitlin’s term for the media’s power to frame a social movement as legitimate. Busing protestors in Louisville and Boston used a rhetoric of freedom and rights, and rallied, marched, and boycotted just as civil rights protestors did in the 1960s—but antibusers said the news media depicted them as racists. In contrast, newspapers such as the *Globe* seemed to, in the eyes of its critics, certify blacks, radicals, hippies, and traitors—everyone except the working-class residents of neighborhoods such as South Boston.<sup>33</sup>

Social and political scientists have examined why theoretically objective news coverage is seen as biased by news consumers. Hostile media perception, also known as the hostile media effect, suggests that those who have a strong position on a particular issue will likely interpret news media coverage of that issue as biased against their point of view. In other words, activists and partisans—the conservatives who fought against busing in the 1970s come to mind—will perceive theoretically neutral, objective news as one-sided and unfair. Other scholars, including Gitlin, argue that the ways powerful, mainstream news media frame social movements can inhibit the success of such movements.<sup>34</sup>

### **Race and 1970s Grassroots Conservatism**

I argue that racial resentments were critical in the conservative backlash against the allegedly liberal news media, particularly local news media, in the 1970s. White conservatives in Detroit, Boston, Baltimore, Pontiac, Charlotte, and Louisville saw the local media as

perhaps the most essential cogs in the machinery of the liberal establishment that they believed was enforcing racial integration against “the people’s” will. Newspapers subjected to the fiercest criticism and even violence in the 1970s—the *Globe* and the *Courier-Journal* and *Times*—were also newspapers that had established a demonstrated commitment to integration and civil rights by the 1970s. For example, in the 1950s and 1960s the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* praised civil rights legislation, helped broker local civil rights agreements, and called on the community to support integration. As a result, Jefferson County whites who opposed integration of schools and neighborhoods resented the newspaper’s support of it; and they further believed that the newspapers actually pulled the strings to ensure the implementation of integration. In cities such as Louisville and Detroit, white homeowners were often at the heart of resistance to integration and “race-conscious liberalism.” The same predominantly white neighborhoods that resisted neighborhood integration and open housing legislation in the 1950s and 1960s also provided the bases for the antibusing movements of the 1970s, and it was these conservatives who turned to alternative conservative news media that they believed represented their concerns.<sup>35</sup>

Historians have argued that racial resentments were at the heart of grassroots conservative activism of the 1970s. As the historian Thomas J. Sugrue writes, “The ‘silent majority’ did not emerge de novo from the alleged failures of liberalism in the 1960s. . . . Instead it was the combination of more than two decades of simmering white discontent and extreme antiliberal political organization.” However, other historians have argued that race was less salient for conservatives of the 1970s. For example, the historian Kenneth D. Durr argues that race-based protest had largely disappeared by the 1970s in the white-working class politics of Baltimore. He warns that working-class politics of the late 1960s and 1970s cannot be “explained by invocations of whiteness or racism in disguise.”<sup>36</sup>

A number of historians have also pointed to the importance of “color-blind” conservative rhetoric. The historian Jacquelyn Dowd Hall wrote in 2005 that many conservatives of the 1970s who resisted civil rights and integration rarely employed explicitly racist language—the “discredited rhetoric of massive resistance”—but instead used “a language of color blindness that resonated nationwide.” That kind of color-blind language emphasized American rights and freedoms as guaranteed in the Constitution, and was the primary rhetoric of antibusers of the 1970s. As one Boston antibuser put it, busing was a “red, white, and blue issue” rather than a “black and white one.” Yet if we focus too much on rhetoric emphasizing rights, patriotism, and color-blindness, we run the risk of absolving grassroots conservatives and news media critics of the 1970s of racism. I tend to agree with the historian Jason Sokol, who suggested that color-blind language was invented by white southerners in order to characterize themselves as victims at the mercy of the federal government, communists, and civil rights groups. Antibusers of the 1970s, like segregationists of the 1960s, used color-blind language to frame themselves as victims of powerful liberal forces, including the news media. Busing opponents complained that the news media would not portray them as they saw themselves—patriotic Americans waging a battle against injustice and tyranny. Color-blind language allowed conservatives and conservative media to take some measure of control of the conversation about busing, integration, and race. Yet color-blind language did not mean that racial resentments were not salient motivations for antibusers and their criticisms of the “liberal” news media. In my examination of more than fifty conservative publications that criticized the news media in the 1970s, I found that conservatives used a variety of rhetoric when they expressed their opposition to liberalism, busing, and the news media. That rhetoric included color-blind language, coded racist and anti-Semitic language, and explicitly racist and anti-Semitic



language. At times individual publications mixed and matched such rhetoric so that color-blind rhetoric co-existed with virulently racist rhetoric. Thus I believe that color-blind language used by conservatives of the 1970s often co-existed with, rather than masked, racial resentments.<sup>37</sup>

## The Chapters

The dissertation begins with two chapters focusing on the criticism of local news media outlets by grassroots conservatives and the role of alternative conservative publications for urban conservatives. Following those chapters I broaden the focus beyond the locally focused, class- and race-based criticisms of conservative media critics in Louisville and Detroit by examining the role of conservative publications in connecting conservative critics of the news media in different parts of the country, considering the criticism of the national news and entertainment media by pro-family conservatives and Christian anticommunists, and, finally, analyzing the role of anti-Semitism in the creation of the liberal news media idea.

The dissertation's first chapter analyzes the criticism of the *Louisville Courier-Journal* and *Louisville Times* by citizens of Jefferson County, Kentucky, protesting court-ordered busing for school integration in the mid-1970s. Antibusers accused the Louisville daily newspapers of biased and distorted reporting on busing and the antibusing movement, and they organized a boycott of both newspapers. Just like antibusers in Boston who resented the *Boston Globe*, antibusers in Louisville resented the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* because the newspapers represented the city's liberal elite establishment and also because, just as they had done throughout the postwar years, supported racial integration. To combat the alleged liberal bias of the *Courier-Journal* and *Times*, an antibusing group began publishing the widely

read antibusing newspaper *NAPF* as a truth-telling alternative to Louisville's daily newspapers.

Chapter 2 focuses on another conservative alternative news media outlet: *Northeast Detroit*, a weekly newspaper that represented the views of conservative white homeowners in northeast Detroit and the adjoining suburbs. *Northeast Detroit* focused on the local issues salient to its readers: crime, taxes, property values, and court-ordered busing. *Northeast Detroit* also served as a forum for its readers by printing their letters, which often praised the newspaper's conservative views. *Northeast Detroit* was also essential to Detroit's antibusing movement; it publicized antibusing activities and backed antibusing efforts in editorials and news stories. The newspaper's role as a truth-telling alternative news source that offered the facts that the liberal news media would not provide was evident in *Northeast Detroit*'s racially explicit coverage of school violence. The newspaper mirrored the racially conservative views of its readers, and its articles and the letters it printed contained a mix of color-blind language of rights and freedoms, coded language, and explicitly racial language.

Chapter 3 focuses on the *Citizens' Informer*, a newspaper produced by the St. Louis-area Citizens' Councils of America. The Citizens' Councils were organized in the Deep South to offer organized resistance to integration in the aftermath of the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954. Though the Citizens' Councils eschewed the extremism and violence of the Ku Klux Klan, its members and its publications were committed to white supremacy. In the 1970s the *Citizens Informer* was a strident critic of the local and national news media, which it accused of having pronounced liberal and antiwhite biases. The *Citizens Informer* supported white conservatives in Boston who were fighting court-ordered busing and the alleged liberal bias of the *Boston Globe*. The chapter demonstrates the key role that alternative conservative news media can play in linking

conservatives and also shows that the explicit racial conservatism found in the *Citizens Informer* found an appreciative and enthusiastic audience among some antibusers in Boston.

Chapter 4 considers the “pro-family” activism of conservatives fighting the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) in the 1970s and the importance of news media criticism in that movement. ERA opponents in Detroit and other cities contested the signing of agreements struck between the feminist group National Organization for Women (NOW) and TV stations that provided NOW a say in programming and hiring decisions. Pro-family activists considered such agreements as “extortion” and complained to the Federal Communications Commission in unsuccessful attempts to strike down the agreements. The chapter also demonstrates the key role played by *Phyllis Schlafly Report*, a monthly newsletter that spearheaded opposition to the ERA and regularly accused newspapers, TV news, and women’s magazines of being biased in favor of the proposed amendment. Antifeminists also argued that the entertainment media, especially TV entertainment, endangered American youth and threatened the authority of parents.

Christian anticommunists were among the most strident critics of the allegedly liberal news media in the 1970s, and chapter 5 examines *Christian Crusade Weekly*, a weekly newspaper published by Billy James Hargis’s Christian Crusade. *Christian Crusade Weekly* accused the news media and the entertainment media of misinforming the American public about the realities of international communism, domestic communist subversion, liberal permissiveness, and dangers to American youth. *Christian Crusade Weekly* saw communism as literally evil, and it believed the news media brainwashed Americans with un-American lies and distortions. I argue that Hargis’s racial conservatism influenced *Christian Crusade Weekly*’s anticommunist worldview and its criticism of the news media.

Chapter 6 examines the role of anti-Semitism in news media criticism. Anti-Semites have linked Jews with “control” of the news media since the nineteenth century. During the Cold War, an anti-Semitic Far Right argued that the civil rights movement was the work of communist Jews and that the “Jewish” news media called attention to racial conflict in order to brainwash Americans. In the 1970s, Far Right newspapers often employed a coded kind of anti-Semitism that hinted at international conspiracies by bankers and the news media. The chapter argues that anti-Semitic beliefs that associated Jews, especially New York Jews, with the news media helped create the idea of a liberal news media.

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<sup>1</sup> Spiro Agnew quoted in John R. Coyne Jr., *The Impudent Snobs: Agnew vs. the Intellectual Establishment* (New Rochelle, 1972), 274.

<sup>2</sup> On Agnew's Des Moines speech, see Tim Kiska, "Nixon and the Media," in *A Companion to Richard M. Nixon*, ed. Melvin Small (Malden, 2011), 292–310, esp. 298. Thurzal Q. Terry, author of the 1970 book *The Silent Majority*, argued that Agnew spoke for the silent majority, "the silently suffering American," but was "maligned and ridiculed by the leftist-controlled news media." See Thurzal Q. Terry, *The Silent Majority* (New York, 1970), 27. On conservatives and Agnew's criticisms of the news media, see Coyne, *Impudent Snobs*, 7–171; and Ben H. Bagdikian, *The Effete Conspiracy: And Other Crimes by the Press* (New York, 1972), 143–44. Opinion polls indicated that a majority of Americans sided with Agnew's denunciations of the press. See James L. Baughman, *The Republic of Mass Culture: Journalism, Filmmaking, and Broadcasting in America since 1941*, 3rd ed. (Baltimore, 2006), 116. On conservative news media support of Agnew, see Justin P. Coffey, "Nixon and Agnew," in *Companion to Richard M. Nixon*, ed. Small, 328–42, esp. 332; "Litany of Grievances; Slanted TV," reprint of undated *Manchester Union Leader* editorial, *Independent American*, Jan. 1970 (including Nov.–Dec. 1969), p. 5; Cong. Richard L. Roudebush, "Misleading Press and TV Coverage of Moratorium March," *ibid.*, p. 1; Billy James Hargis, "In Spite of Spiro Agnew Network TV News Worsens," *Christian Crusade Weekly*, Feb. 8, 1970, p. 1; "Spiro Spells It Out," reprint of undated *Peoria* (Ill.) *Journal-Star* editorial, *Militant Truth*, 25 (no. 11, [probably 1970]), p. 1; "WRAL-TV Viewpoint," Dec. 12, 1969; "1970—Time to Tell the Truth," *Free Enterprise*, Jan. 1970, p. 1; "Agnew Draws Right-Wing Applause," *Group Research Report*, Dec. 18, 1969, p. 85; and Frank Mankiewicz and Tom Braden, "Agnew Unintentionally Triggers Renewed Round of Anti-Semitism," *Washington Post*, Dec. 30, 1969, p. A15. On conservative publications that printed the full text of Agnew's Des Moines speech, see Spiro T. Agnew, "Public Should Demand TV Fairness: Network News Biased," *Human Events*, Nov. 22, 1969, pp. 1, 12; and "Full Text of Agnew's Speech on TV Bias," *Neighbor-to-Neighbor News/Free Enterprise*, Dec. 1, 1969, pp. 1, 8.

<sup>3</sup> On conservatives who believed that Agnew was an opportunist, see "The People Speak: Vice President's Speech Seen as Political Ploy," *Louisiana Freedom Review*, March, April, and May 1970, p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> News media critics of the 1970s ranged from Republican party officials; organizations founded to combat news media bias such as Accuracy in Media; Christian anticommunists such as Billy James Hargis, Carl McIntire, and Fred Schwarz; "pro-family" activists such as Phyllis Schlafly

and Anita Bryant; community activists opposed to busing, sex education, and “liberal” textbooks; white homeowners in cities such as Detroit opposed to racial integration; city politicians such as Minneapolis mayor Charles Stenvig; law-enforcement officials such as Los Angeles Police Department chief Edward M. Davis; white supremacist members of the Citizens’ Council and the Ku Klux Klan; and members of the anti-Semitic Far Right who believed that Jews were in control of world finance and the news media. On Agnew, Richard M. Nixon, and Patrick J. Buchanan, see Coffey, “Nixon and Agnew”; and Kiska, “Nixon and the Media.” On Jesse Helms, see Bryan Hardin Thrift, “Jesse Helms’s Politics of Pious Incitement: Race, Conservatism, and Southern Realignment in the 1950s,” *Journal of Southern History*, 74 (Nov. 2008), 887–926; and Jesse Helms, “The Myopic Media,” *Human Events*, April 27, 1974, p. 15. On Accuracy in Media, see Arthur S. Hayes, *Press Critics Are the Fifth Estate: Media Watchdogs in America* (Westport, 2008), 21–34. On Billy James Hargis, Carl McIntire, and Fred Schwarz, see Chapter 5; Heather Hendershot, *What’s Fair on the Air? Cold War Right-Wing Broadcasting and the Public Interest* (Chicago, 2011), 102–260; and Ronald Lora and William Henry Longton, eds. *The Conservative Press in Twentieth-Century America* (Westport, 1999), 489–99. On Phyllis Schlafly and Anita Bryant, see Chapter 4. On white conservatives in Detroit, see Chapter 2. On Charles Stenvig, see Jeffrey T. Manuel and Andrew Urban, “‘You Can’t Legislate the Heart’: Minneapolis Mayor Charles Stenvig and the Politics of Law and Order,” *American Studies*, 49 (Fall–Winter 2008), 195–219. On Edward M. Davis, see “Meanest Police Chief Flays Gun Bill, Press,” *National Spotlight*, Dec. 1, 1975, p. 9. On the Citizens’ Council and the Ku Klux Klan, see “Black Crime Concealed,” *The Citizen*, April 1975, p. 2; and “National Media Concentrating Attacks on Invisible Empire,” *The Klansman*, May 1979, p. 6. On the anti-Semitic Far Right, see Chapter 6.

<sup>5</sup> On the *Los Angeles Times*, see “The Public Forum: Slanted Editorials,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, May 4, 1974, p. 22. On *Detroit Free Press*, see Chapter 2. On the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, see “Correction, Please!,” *Review of the News*, Sept. 6, 1972, pp. 29–30. On the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, see Chapter 1. On the *Des Moines Register*, see “Letters: Accuses Us of Hypocrisy,” *Des Moines Register*, June 30, 1975, p. 6. On the *Charleston (W.Va.) Gazette*, see Martha Smith, “Gazette-Hater Won’t Fade; Bill Blake,” reprint of Oct. 21, 1974, *Charleston Gazette* article, *Kanawha Valley Leader* (Nitro, W.Va.), Oct. 24, 1974, p. 2. On the *Pontiac (Mich.) Press*, see “More Mail on Busing,” *Pontiac Press*, Sept. 4, 1971, p. A-6.

<sup>6</sup> On conservatism and liberalism, see Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton, 2001), 2–3, esp. 10; Matthew D. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton, 2006) 2; Jonathan Rieder, *Canarsie: The Jews and Italians of Brooklyn against*

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*Liberalism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1985), 3, 6, 78–79; Jonathan Rieder, “The Rise of the ‘Silent Majority,’” in *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order*, eds. Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle (Princeton, 1989), 244; and Alan Brinkley, “The New Deal and the Idea of the State,” in *ibid.*, 87.

<sup>7</sup> On resentment of liberal elites and news media certification, see Ronald P. Formisano, *Boston against Busing: Race, Class, and Ethnicity in the 1960s and 1970s* (Chapel Hill, 1991), 150–58; and Todd Gitlin, *The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left* (Berkeley, 1980).

<sup>8</sup> On “civil rights gone too far,” see Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 236. On the difficulty of untangling race and class, see Jefferson Cowie, *Stayin’ Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class* (New York, 2010), 4.

<sup>9</sup> On criticism of the news media, see Hayes, *Press Critics Are the Fifth Estate*, esp. 3. On violence against the news media, see John Nerone, *Violence against the Press: Policing the Public Sphere in U.S. History* (New York, 1994). On press criticism of the antebellum period, see Hazel Dicken-Garcia, *Journalistic Standards in Nineteenth-Century America* (Madison, 1989), 136–43. On press criticism in the early twentieth century, see David Paul Nord, “Accuracy or Fair Play? Complaining about the Newspaper in Early Twentieth-Century New York,” in *New Directions in Reception Study*, eds. Philip Goldstein and James L. Machor (New York, 2008), 233–53, esp. 245; and David Paul Nord, *Communities of Journalism: A History of American Newspapers and Their Readers* (Urbana, 2001), 261–24. On press criticism and its role as a “civilizing agent,” see Marion Tuttle Marzolf, *Civilizing Voices: American Press Criticism, 1880–1950* (New York, 1991), 5.

<sup>10</sup> On postwar press criticism, the Hutchins Commission, and Joseph McCarthy, see David R. Davies, *The Postwar Decline of American Newspapers, 1945–1965* (Westport, 2006), 15–16, 23–24, 45–47, esp. 15. On the news media of the 1950s and 1960s and acceptance of Cold War ideology, see *ibid.*, 40; and James Aronson, *The Press and the Cold War* (New York, 1970).

<sup>11</sup> On white southerners and beliefs about the news media and journalists covering the civil rights movement, see David Greenberg, “The Idea of ‘the Liberal Media’ and Its Roots in the Civil Rights Movement,” *The Sixties: A Journal of History, Politics, and Culture*, 1 (Dec. 2008), 167–86, esp. 176; and Gene Roberts and Hank Klibanoff, *The Race Beat: The Press, the Civil Rights Struggle, and the Awakening of a Nation* (New York, 2006). In a 2006 review of *The Race Beat*, the journalist Eric Alterman also suggested that the origins of “Southern Republican hatred of the national media” can be found in press coverage of the civil rights movement. See Eric Alterman, “And the Beat Goes

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On,” *The Nation*, Dec. 20, 2006, <http://www.thenation.com/doc/20070108/alterman>. On resistance to integration and anticommunism, see Jeff Woods, *Black Struggle, Red Scare: Segregation and Anti-communism in the South, 1948–1968* (Baton Rouge, 2004); and Clive Webb, *Rabble Rousers: The American Far Right in the Civil Rights Era* (Athens, Ga., 2010). On Thomas Waring and the racial biases of newspapers, see Davies, *Postwar Decline of American Newspapers*, 73, 67.

<sup>12</sup> On conservatives of the early and mid-1960s and efforts to build the idea of the liberal news media, see Nicole Hemmer, “The Dealers and the Darling: Conservative Media and the Candidacy of Barry Goldwater,” in *Barry Goldwater and the Remaking of the American Political Landscape*, ed. Elizabeth Tandy Shermer (Tucson, 2013), 114–43, esp. 142n48. On the 1964 presidential campaign as a critical moment, see *ibid.*, 133; and Sidney Blumenthal, introduction to James Brian McPherson, *The Conservative Resurgence and the Press: The Media’s Role in the Rise of the Right* (Chicago, 2008), ix. Tom Wicker of the *New York Times* recalled in a 1978 book that at the July 1964 Republican party convention in San Francisco, Dwight D. Eisenhower criticized “sensation-seeking columnists and commentators.” The convention attendees responded with enthusiasm and then directed angry boos and shaking fists at TV commentators. See Tom Wicker, *On Press* (New York, 1978), 1–2. The 1964 election marked the first time that more daily newspapers endorsed a Democrat than they did a Republican, a fact that some scholars and journalists have suggested marked the end of the domination of Republican editorial opinion in the daily press. See Hemmer, “Dealers and the Darling,” 133; and Si Sheppard, *A History of Media Bias in the United States* (Jefferson, 2008), 300–304, esp. 302. On the belief that the news media betrayed principles of objectivity in coverage of the 1964 presidential election, see Richard A. Viguerie and David Franke, *America’s Right Turn: How Conservatives Used New and Alternative Media to Take Power* (Chicago, 2004), 75–85, esp. 75. On the efforts of conservative news media to spread the liberal news media idea, see Hemmer, “Dealers and the Darling,” 115, 126–27, 133. Also see Nicole Hemmer, “Messengers of the Right: Media and the Modern Conservative Movement” (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2010). Conservatives of the 1970s also urged supporters to convince a wide audience of the existence of news media bias. The Christian anticommunist preacher Billy James Hargis argued in 1970 that conservatives had to stop complaining about news media bias “at our little anti-communist study groups” and take decisive action to fight back against that bias by writing letters to liberal and non-liberal newspapers, demanding equal time from local television stations, and boycotting businesses and products that advertised in liberal papers and during liberal television news and entertainment programming. See Hargis, “In Spite of Spiro Agnew, Network TV Worsens,” 2.



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<sup>13</sup> On news media coverage of the 1968 Democratic party national convention in Chicago, see Baughman, *Republic of Mass Culture*, 115.

<sup>14</sup> Reed Irvine, "Reflections on the 20th Anniversary of AIM," speech before the National Press Club, Sept. 22, 1989, transcript, pp. 1, 2, untitled folder, box 113, MSS 2194, Accuracy in Media Papers, 1969–2001 (L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah). Reprint of undated *Manchester (N.H.) Union-Leader* cartoon, *Independent American*, Jan. 1970 (including Nov.–Dec. 1969), p. 5. On "Surrender Now" news media, see Kevin Cash, *Who the Hell Is William Loeb?* (Manchester, N.H., 1975), 328. For other examples of conservative complaints about the news media and coverage of Vietnam, see "WRAL-TV Viewpoint," May 12, 1970; and "36,000 More Americans Have Given Their Lives to Save Our Country from Communism! Killed in the War They Were Not Allowed to Win," *Free Enterprise*, July 1969, p. 1. On examinations of the role of the press in Vietnam, see Peter Braestrup, *Big Story: How the American Press and Television Reported and Interpreted the Crisis of Tet 1968 in Vietnam and Washington* (Garden City, 1978); Daniel C. Hallin, "The Media, the War in Vietnam, and Political Support: A Critique of the Thesis of an Oppositional Media," *Journal of Politics*, 46 (Feb. 1984), 2–24; Daniel C. Hallin, *The "Uncensored War": The Media and Vietnam* (Berkeley, 2006); William M. Hammond, "The Press in Vietnam as Agent of Defeat: A Critical Examination," *Reviews in American History*, 17 (June 1989), 312–23; William M. Hammond, *Reporting Vietnam: Media and Military at War* (Lawrence, 1998); Chester Pach, "'Our Worst Enemy Seems to Be the Press': TV News, the Nixon Administration, and U.S. Troop Withdrawal from Vietnam, 1969–1973," *Diplomatic History*, 34 (June 2010), 555–65; and Clarence R. Wyatt, *Paper Soldiers: The American Press and the Vietnam War* (New York, 1993).

<sup>15</sup> Pach, "'Our Worst Enemy Seems to Be the Press,'" esp. 555. Edith Efron's 1971 book *The News Twisters*, which the historian Chester Pach claims used a "dubious" methodology, was backed by White House officials, who made targeted purchases at bookstores used by publications that compiled best-seller lists; in addition, White House aide Chuck Colson helped Efron arrange appearances on the *Today* show and *Firing Line*. See *ibid.*, 562. In 1971 CBS's Walter Cronkite accused the Nixon administration of engaging in "a grand conspiracy to destroy the credibility of the press." See *ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> On the Pentagon Papers, see Sanford J. Ungar, *The Papers and the Papers: An Account of the Legal and Political Battle over the Pentagon Papers* (New York, 1972); and Baughman, *Republic of Mass Culture*, 176. Mrs. and Mr. Edwin A. Morrison quoted in Kirkpatrick Sale, *Power Shift: The Rise of the Southern Rim and Its Challenge to the Eastern Establishment* (New York, 1975), 289. On *Tactics*, see

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“Eastern Establishment Wins; Major Problem in U.S. Is Unethical Press, TV,” *Tactics*, Sept. 20, 1974, pp. 3–5, esp. 3.

<sup>17</sup> David Frum, *How We Got Here: The 70's; The Decade That Brought You Modern Life (for Better or Worse)* (New York, 2000), xxiii; Dominic Sandbrook, *Mad as Hell: The Crisis of the 1970s and the Rise of the Populist Right* (New York, 2011), 2011. On “riot, raping and revolution,” see “Letters to the Editor: ‘Afro’ DiGrazia,” *Citizens Informer*, June 1976, p. 10.

<sup>18</sup> Joseph Crespino, *In Search of another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution* (Princeton, 2007), 4; Lassiter, *Silent Majority*, 7. On postwar conservatism, see Rieder, *Canarsie*; Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, 1996); McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*; Kenneth D. Durr, *Behind the Backlash: White Working-Class Politics in Baltimore, 1940–1980* (Chapel Hill, 2003); Kevin M. Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism* (Princeton, 2005); and Jason Sokol, *There Goes My Everything: White Southerners in the Age of Civil Rights* (New York: Vintage, 2006).

<sup>19</sup> On Accuracy in Media, see Hayes, *Press Critics Are the Fifth Estate*, 21–34. On Edith Efron, see Edith Efron, *The News Twisters* (Los Angeles, 1971); and Edith Efron with Clytia Chambers, *How CBS Tried to Kill a Book* (Los Angeles, 1972). On editors and reporters of the 1970, see Baughman, *Republic of Mass Culture*, 182. Bagdikian, *Effete Conspiracy*, xi–xii, esp. xii. On a diversified press, see “American Press Is Diversified: Views of Others,” reprint of undated *Gainesville* (Ga.) *Times* editorial, *Blytheville* (Ark.) *Courier News*, March 18, 1974, p. 6. On conservative newspapers and conservative newspaper chains of the 1970s, see Bagdikian, *Effete Conspiracy*, 69–92, 148; and McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*, 109–10.

<sup>20</sup> On the 1976 Harvard University study, see Dan Hallin, “The Media Go to War—From Vietnam to Central America,” *NACLA Report on the Americas*, 17 (July–Aug. 1983), 2–36, esp. 3. On the three television networks in the 1970s, see Baughman, *Republic of Mass Culture*, 143. On TV’s dangers to American youth, see Billy James Hargis, “Continuing Violence on TV and Movies,” *Christian Crusade Weekly*, June 4, 1972, pp. 1, 8; and Chapters 4 and 5.

<sup>21</sup> On news media rebuttals of Agnew’s 1969 accusations, see Mankiewicz and Braden, “Agnew Unintentionally Triggers Renewed Round of Anti-Semitism.”

<sup>22</sup> On *An Apology for Printers*, see Nord, *Communities of Journalism*, 53. On editors, truth, and partisanship, see Sheppard, *Partisan Press*, 2, 21.

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<sup>23</sup> On independence, accuracy, and fair play, see David T. Z. Mindich, *Just the Facts: How "Objectivity" Came to Define American Journalism* (New York, 1998), 11; and Nord, "Accuracy or Fair Play?," 234. On objectivity, see Michael Schudson, "The Objectivity Norm in American Journalism," *Journalism*, 2 (no. 2, 2001), 149, 165; Hallin, "Uncensored War," 63; Mindich, *Just the Facts*, 1; and Gitlin, *Whole World Is Watching*, 52. Richard Rorty quoted in Stephen J. A. Ward, *Ethics and the Media: An Introduction* (New York, 2011), 302.

<sup>24</sup> On newsroom ethnographies of the 1970s, see Barbie Zelizer, *Taking Journalism Seriously: News and the Academy* (Thousand Oaks, 2004), 65–66; Gaye Tuchman, *Making News: A Study in the Construction of Reality* (New York, 1978), 182, 2; Gaye Tuchman, "Objectivity as Strategic Ritual: An Examination of Newsmen's Notions of Objectivity," *American Journal of Sociology*, 77 (Jan. 1972), 660–79, esp. 660; Barrie Gunter, *Measuring Bias on Television* (Luton, England, 1997), 63; Herbert Gans, *Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek, and Time* (New York, 1979); and Edward Jay Epstein, *News from Nowhere: Television and the News* (New York, 1973), 258. S. Robert Lichter, Stanley Rothman, and Linda S. Lichter, *The Media Elite: America's New Powerbrokers* (1986; New York, 1990), 294, 296.

<sup>25</sup> On popular books of the late 1960s and early 1970s about news media bias, see Herman H. Dinsmore, *All the News That Fits: A Critical Analysis of the News and Editorial Contents of the New York Times* (New Rochelle, 1969); Efron, *News Twisters*. On concerns about the separation of objective news and editorial opinion, see Hallin, "Uncensored War," 68; "Reporters Who Refuse to Report; Can't, or Won't, Recognize True News," reprint of undated *Arizona Republic* editorial, *Tactics*, Oct. 20, 1971, front cover, inside cover, 2; On advocacy journalism, see Karin Wahl-Jorgensen and Thomas Hanitzsch, *The Handbook of Journalism Studies* (New York, 2009), 375; and "Peril in 'Advocacy Reporting,'" *Tactics*, May 20, 1972, inside cover; and cartoon, *ibid.*, 1.

<sup>26</sup> On anti-*Boston Globe* graffiti, see J. Anthony Lukas, *Common Ground: A Turbulent Decade in the Lives of Three American Families* (New York, 1985), 505. On demands for newspapers to tell the truth, see Nord, *Communities of Journalism*, 260.

<sup>27</sup> On the awards received by the *Louisville Courier-Journal* and *Louisville Times* for its reporting on busing, see "C-J to Be Honored for Its Busing Coverage," *Louisville Times*, March 31, 1976; "WHAS Wins Award for Integration Reporting," *ibid.*, April 15, 1976; and "Photographers for C-J&T Win Pulitzer," *Louisville Courier-Journal*, May 4, 1976.

<sup>28</sup> On Walter Cronkite, see Mindich, *Just the Facts*, 5.

<sup>29</sup> On conservative alternative news media, see Chip Berlet, “Who Is Mediating the Storm? Right-wing Alternative Information Networks,” in Linda Kintz and Julia Lesage, eds., *Media, Culture, and the Religious Right* (Minneapolis, 1998), 249–73, esp. 249–50. On *Phyllis Schlafly Report*, see Viguerie and Franke, *America’s Right Turn*, 137–44, esp. 138–39. On the power of the mainstream news media in the 1970s, see Gitlin, *Whole World Is Watching*, 2, 3.

<sup>30</sup> On local news media and metropolitan communities, see Phyllis Kaniss, *Making Local News* (Chicago, 1991), 3, 64. On newspaper and suburbanization, see Davies, *Postwar Decline of American Newspapers*, 90–93. Davies writes that suburban newspapers prospered in the 1960s. See Davies, x–xi, 114. On the belief that newspapers are biased in favor of the central city, see Kaniss, *Making Local News*, 54, 55, 64.

<sup>31</sup> On local news media outlets as powerful members of the local liberal establishment, see Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 5, 157. On local elites, see Cowie, *Stayin’ Alive*, 227–28. On local news media outlets as an unelected elite, see Lukas, *Common Ground*, 499; and Bob Hill interview, March 28, 1988, School Desegregation, Tape 1991-73-3, University of Louisville Oral History Center (University Archives and Records Center, Louisville, Ky.)

<sup>32</sup> On city news media as boosters and as peacemakers during crises, see Baughman, *Republic of Mass Culture*, 184; Kaniss, *Making Local News*, 57–58; Lassiter, *Silent Majority*, 164, 167; “Pontiac Message,” *Pontiac Press*, Sept. 4, 1971, p. 1; “Pontiac’s First Day of School Could Be a Happy Omen,” *ibid.*, Sept. 10, 1971, p. B-10; “Pontiac Busing Going Peacefully; One Minor Incident Yesterday,” *ibid.*, Sept. 14, 1971, p. A-3; “More Mail on Busing,” *ibid.*, Sept. 4, 1971, p. A-6; “Voice of the People: More Viewpoints on Busing Issue,” *ibid.*, Sept. 10, 1971, p. 6; “Voice of the People,” *ibid.*, p. 7; “Voice of the People: Press ‘Makes Me Sick,’” *ibid.*, Oct. 9, 1971, p. A-5; Lukas, *Common Ground*, 501; and Chapters 1, 2, and 3.

<sup>33</sup> On news media certification, see Gitlin, *Whole World Is Watching*, 290–91; and Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 151–52.

<sup>34</sup> On the hostile media effect, see Olga Doty, “The Hostile Media Effect: A State of the Art Review” (Master’s thesis, Johns Hopkins University, 2005). On media framing, see Gitlin, *Whole World Is Watching*; and Robert M. Entman and Andrew Rojecki, “Freezing Out the Public: Elite and Media Framing of the U.S. Anti-nuclear Movement,” *Political Communication*, 10 (1993), 155–73. Social scientists have also attempted to determine and predict opinions about media bias and credibility

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with contemporary media. See Guy J. Golan, “New Perspectives on Media Credibility Research,” *American Behavioral Scientist*, 54 (no. 3, 2010), 3–7.

<sup>35</sup> On white southerners and the news media, see Davies, *Postwar Decline of American Newspapers*, 73; and Greenberg, “The Idea of ‘the Liberal Media’ and Its Roots in the Civil Rights Movement.” On the *Louisville Courier-Journal* and *Louisville Times* in the 1950s and 1960s, see Anne Braden, *The Wall Between* (New York, 1958), 43, 78. On “race-conscious liberalism,” see Lassiter, *Silent Majority*, 2. On predominantly white neighborhoods and resistance to open housing and busing, see Tracy E. K’Meyer, *Civil Rights in the Gateway to the South: Louisville, Kentucky, 1945–1980* (Lexington, Ky., 2009), 258; and Chapters 1 and 2.

<sup>36</sup> Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis*, 268; Durr, *Behind the Backlash*, 2, 3, 205, esp. 2.

<sup>37</sup> On color-blind conservative rhetoric, see Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, “The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past,” *Journal of American History*, 91 (March 2005), 1233–63, esp. 1255; Lassiter, *Silent Majority*, 4–5, 153–59; and Kruse, *White Flight*, 245. On busing as a “red, white, and blue issue,” see Simon Hall, *American Patriotism, American Protest: Social Movements since the Sixties* (Philadelphia, 2011), 81. Sokol, *There Goes My Everything*, 226–27.

## Chapter 1

### Antibusing Activists and Backlash against Louisville's Daily Newspapers

"I feel that three-fourths of this country are against forced busing. I will not support a business that does not support the people." So wrote Mrs. James Hill of Louisville, Kentucky, in a 1975 letter to the *Louisville Courier-Journal* explaining why she was canceling her subscription. Between August 8 and September 8, 1975, more than one thousand readers canceled their subscriptions to the *Courier-Journal* and the *Louisville Times*. The *Courier-Journal*, the city's morning paper, and the *Times*, the evening paper, were both published by the powerful Bingham family, and together reached nearly four hundred thousand readers.<sup>1</sup>

Why were Louisville-area residents canceling their subscriptions? They were doing so because the newspapers supported court-ordered busing for the racial integration of public schools in Louisville and surrounding Jefferson County. Mrs. Hill's letter appeared in the September 1, 1975, *Courier-Journal*, just three days before the controversial order took effect and buses began transporting more than ten thousand white students to schools in Louisville and an equal number of black students to Jefferson County schools. The mass cancellation of subscriptions to the city's two daily newspapers was part of a larger campaign by activists and groups protesting what they called "forced" busing. Jefferson County residents opposed to busing organized themselves into an array of protest organizations—the memberships of which were overwhelmingly white—that held protest rallies and marches that attracted as many as twelve thousand protestors. By mid-September, the busing controversy had brought the city unwanted national news media coverage of incidents of disorder and violence connected with the antibusing movement.<sup>2</sup>

The editorial position of the *Courier-Journal* and the *Times* toward busing and the antibusing movement was clear. The newspapers strongly supported school desegregation and called on county residents to obey the busing order. Both newspapers covered the antibusing movement extensively, but antibusers were unhappy with that coverage, which they believed intentionally marginalized their efforts and distorted their views. Antibusing leaders also accused the newspapers of intentionally downplaying or ignoring incidents of violence in the schools. Antibusing partisans wrote letters to the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* that accused the newspaper of biased coverage, canceled subscriptions, and participated in boycotts of the newspapers and the Bingham-owned WHAS television and radio stations. Reporters for the newspapers and WHAS-TV were harassed and evicted at several antibusing events and on a few occasions were physically attacked. Angry busing opponents also smashed the first-floor windows of the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* building in downtown Louisville and destroyed *Courier-Journal* and *Times* newspaper vending boxes.<sup>3</sup>

This chapter argues that the rhetoric, canceled subscriptions, boycotts, and violence directed at the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* in 1975 and 1976 were emblematic of the Jefferson County antibusing movement's resentment of liberalism, powerful elites, and civil rights. It analyzes how and why busing opponents resented Louisville's daily newspapers and the so-called "liberal" news media generally. The campaign against the *Courier-Journal* and *Times*, and the Jefferson County antibusing movement as a whole, were vehement rejections of racial liberalism by white grassroots conservatives.

I argue that two major interrelated themes were at the heart of the Jefferson County backlash against liberalism and Louisville's daily newspapers. First, antibusers saw the Bingham family and their newspapers, TV stations, and radio stations as not just representative of the city's powerful liberal establishment—they *were* that establishment. The

*Courier-Journal* and *Times* enjoyed a monopoly on the city's daily newspaper market, and no media outlet could hope to rival their power and influence. Conservatives in Jefferson County resented the power wielded by the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* and felt that their concerns and grievances were not taken seriously by the Bingham papers. Antibusers believed the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* were more concerned about the city's image, the downtown business community, and the local African American population than they were the people who comprised much of the county's antibusing movement: the white homeowners, taxpayers, and school parents who lived in Jefferson County's suburbs. The Bingham family also wielded influence through the company's charitable giving: antibusers complained that the Louisville Courier-Journal and Times Foundation directed its charitable giving to liberal and civil rights organizations such as the Kentucky Civil Liberties Union and the Legal Aid Society of Louisville that were involved in the lawsuit that led to the busing order.<sup>4</sup>

Antibusing leaders also accused the Bingham newspapers of hypocrisy, complaining that the newspapers represented an unelected communications monopoly that felt it had the right to tell the city and the county what was best, yet did not shoulder the burdens of the liberal "schemes" it advocated. Busing opponents noted that Barry Bingham Jr., the publisher of the *Courier-Journal* and *Times*, had inherited his father's wealth rather than earned it himself and sent his children to elite private schools unaffected by the busing order. The backlash against the Bingham newspapers, then, was a populist, anti-elitist expression of frustration by working-class whites who felt they had been ignored and victimized by a liberal establishment. Only the man who ordered the busing plan, Judge James F. Gordon, sparked more anger and resentment among Jefferson County busing opponents.<sup>5</sup>



Second, the backlash against the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* was fueled not only by class-based resentments of liberal elites, but also by resentment of the newspapers' commitment to racial integration and civil rights. The Jefferson County antibusing movement of 1975–1976 should be thought of as part of the long history of resistance to racial integration in Louisville and Jefferson County. According to the historian Tracy K'Meyer, the author of the 2009 book *Civil Rights in the Gateway to the South: Louisville, Kentucky, 1945–1980*, the newspapers' editorials and coverage of civil rights and race in the 1950s and 1960s “helped to create an atmosphere in which a change in race relations was seen as acceptable, desirable, and for the good of the city.” As a result, the newspapers became “objects of fury,” in the words of Louisville civil rights activist Anne Braden, among conservative whites in Jefferson County as well as throughout the state of Kentucky. The Bingham newspapers supported campaigns for school integration, open accommodations, and open housing during the 1950s and 1960s, movements that were met with organized resistance by whites. Just as many whites in the Deep South came to see the East Coast–based news media as one of the liberal actors enforcing racial integration against their wishes, so too did Jefferson County racial conservatives see the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* as not just advocating racial integration, but actually pulling the strings that ensured its implementation.<sup>6</sup>

In the 1970s busing was implemented in cities including Pontiac, Detroit, Charlotte, Denver, Memphis, Nashville, Buffalo, and Cleveland. Yet no city's busing implementation attracted more media attention and subsequent scholarly attention than Boston. Beginning in 1974, Boston was beset by massive protests by citizens opposed to busing, violence in and outside of schools, and ugly racist rhetoric. The similarities between the antibusing movements in Boston and Louisville are striking, especially the campaigns against the local

news media waged by antibusers in both cities. In Boston, the target was the liberal *Boston Globe*. Antibusing activists canceled subscriptions, placed “Boycott the *Boston Globe*” bumper stickers on their cars, and blocked newspaper delivery trucks by lying down in the street. Violence was also directed at the *Globe*: vigilantes fired gunshots into the *Globe* office building, called in bomb threats, hijacked a delivery truck and pushed it into the Fort Point Channel, and told news dealers they would be firebombed if they continued to sell the newspaper. Like Jefferson County antibusers, Boston busing opponents saw the *Globe* as representative of the elite liberal establishment, resented its support of civil rights, and argued that it failed to report the truth about violence in the schools.<sup>7</sup>

In his 1991 book *Boston against Busing*, Ronald P. Formisano argued that Boston’s busing opponents also resented the *Globe* because the newspaper refused to *certify* their campaign as a legitimate social movement. Certification was coined by the media scholar Todd Gitlin, who argued in his 1980 book *The Whole World Is Watching* that the news media have the ability to frame social movements as legitimate, and whether they do or do not is integral to a movement’s success or failure. The certification concept also applies to Louisville-area antibusers, who argued that the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* did not depict them as they saw themselves: patriotic citizens who were the victims of a tyrannical court order. The passionate belief in the righteousness of their antibusing cause was a major reason antibusers could not accept the Bingham newspapers’ coverage of their movement as fair, balanced, or objective. If the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* were not willing to state clearly that busing was wrong and antibusers were right, then they were not telling the truth as busing opponents saw it. The antibusing movement thus turned to other news media outlets that they believed told the truth. In October 1975 the antibusing organization National Organization to Restore and Preserve Our Freedom began publishing its own newspaper,

*NAPF*, devoted to busing opposition and criticism of liberalism, which by November 1975 claimed more than one hundred thousand readers. *NAPF* positioned itself as a truth-telling alternative to the alleged lies and distortions of the *Courier-Journal* and *Times*. *NAPF*, like conservative alternative news media in other cities such as Boston and Detroit, played an important role in providing a voice for the grassroots conservative movement against busing.<sup>8</sup>

### **“Busing Is a Product of Extreme Liberalism”**

Louisville, located in the “border” state of Kentucky, was in 1975 a city that enjoyed a national reputation for progressive race relations yet had a long history of white resistance to racial integration in public schools, public accommodations, and city and suburban neighborhoods. Efforts to integrate predominantly white neighborhoods in Louisville and Jefferson County in the 1950s and 1960s were met with organized resistance and, at times, violence. In 1967, activists marching for open, integrated housing in Louisville were bombarded with objects by an angry white mob.<sup>9</sup>

Yet in 1956 Louisville had voluntarily ended *de jure* racial segregation in its public schools and peacefully implemented an integration plan at a time when cities throughout the Deep South were taking a “massive resistance” approach to school integration after the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education* that found that segregated, “separate but equal” schools were unconstitutional. Initially, *Brown* appeared only to apply to public schools in the Deep South, where racially segregated schools were often mandated by law. By the late 1960s school systems in schools outside the South came under scrutiny by courts weighing lawsuits filed by civil rights groups. Many U.S. cities, including Louisville, Boston, and Detroit, were made up of neighborhoods rigidly segregated by race, and such

segregation was reflected in the racial makeup of “neighborhood” public schools.

Furthermore, judges found that in some cities school boards had intentionally maintained segregated schools by steering white students to historically white schools and black students to historically black schools.<sup>10</sup>

In 1971 civil rights activists and the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights went to the federal courts to argue for a desegregation plan encompassing all of Jefferson County, in which schools outside Louisville were about 95 percent white, while schools in Louisville were more than 50 percent black. In July 1975 James F. Gordon, a Louisville federal judge, ordered the Louisville/Jefferson County school system to integrate its schools through a busing plan by the beginning of the 1975–1976 school year. (Though in 1974 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Milliken v. Bradley* that suburbs were exempt from “metro” busing plans involving cities and surrounding municipalities, all of Jefferson County came under Gordon’s busing order because the city and county school systems had merged in April 1975.) The plan developed by the Jefferson County school administration called for the busing of 22,000 students, beginning on September 4, 1975.<sup>11</sup>

Backlash against Gordon’s busing order was immediate. Activists formed a bewildering number of antibusing groups, the names of which identified opposition to busing and a larger sense of their conservative and antiliberal political beliefs. Jefferson County antibusing organizations included Citizens against Busing, Union Labor against Busing, Save Our Community Schools, Stop Tyranny and Busing, Parents for Freedom, Catholics against Busing, People United to Restore Our Constitution, Spirit of ’76, Mothers for Children’s Freedom, Taxpayers and Property Owners, and many others. At antibusing marches and rallies protestors employed patriotic rhetoric and symbolism that carried special meaning one year short of the nation’s bicentennial. Anticommunist and Christian rhetoric

was also voiced by protestors. A September 27, 1975, antibusing march in downtown Louisville that attracted about eight thousand people included marchers wielding dozens of U.S. and Confederate flags and thousands of signs with slogans such as “Stop Busing,” “Save My Future Children from Communism,” “Forced Busing Is against God’s Will,” “We Won’t Allow Communists to Rule Our Schools,” “Land of the What?” and “The First Continental Congress Just Turned Over in Their Graves.” At a march in southern Jefferson County earlier in September, the signs included “Hang Judge Gordon,” “Freedom Is Dead,” “Hitler Is Alive,” and “God Help Us.” As a tie-in to the contemporary hit movie *Jaws*, Jefferson County protestors wore T-shirts that depicted a shark devouring a school child, accompanied by the slogan “Jaws of Judicial Tyranny.”<sup>12</sup>

The T-shirts, flags, signs, organization names, and rhetoric of Jefferson County’s antibusing protestors demonstrated that they considered themselves champions of liberty and individual rights, much like their antibusing counterparts in Pontiac, Detroit, and especially Boston. The most prominent antibusing group in Boston was called Restore Our Alienated Rights (ROAR), many Boston antibusers wore buttons that declared “Don’t Tread on Me,” and an East Boston group called itself One if by Land and Two if by Sea, recalling the midnight ride of patriot Paul Revere in 1775. The embrace of patriotic symbols had rich connotations in Boston, the symbolic birthplace of the American Revolution. The use of color-blind rhetoric that emphasized freedom, rights, and patriotism by grassroots conservatives was also common—and powerful—outside of New England.<sup>13</sup>

Antibusing organizers in Jefferson County, Boston, Detroit, and Pontiac as well as leaders of the movement against “dirty” textbooks in Kanawha County, West Virginia—who also saw their campaign as a patriotic revolt against the tyranny of a liberal, secular-humanist establishment—maintained close ties. Prominent Boston antibusing leader and ROAR

national director Louise Day Hicks visited Jefferson County in August 1975 to speak at an antibusing rally, while more than one hundred members of ROAR traveled to Louisville three months later to show their support for the local antibusing movement. In turn, about twenty Jefferson County antibusers, including *NAPF* editor Bob DePrez, took part in a May 1976 South Boston antibusing rally, where the Louisville contingent staged a “Second Boston Tea Party” by dumping a gallon of red liquid (representing the blood of children spilled because of busing) into Boston Harbor. Louisville-area antibusers also took part in antibusing events in metropolitan Detroit and textbook protests in Kanawha County.<sup>14</sup>

Like their counterparts in Boston, Jefferson County antibusing activists employed methods of direct action protest learned from African American civil rights protests of the 1960s. Antibusing activists held rallies and marches throughout Jefferson County, called for boycotts of businesses that did not demonstrate support, wrote letters of protest to the city dailies and suburban newspapers, and walked off the job to demonstrate solidarity with the movement. Dozens of letters to the *Courier-Journal* written by Jefferson County busing opponents touched on the themes of freedom and rights emphasized by antibusers. A Louisville resident wrote, “Forced busing may be enforced by law, but it cannot be acceptable to those who want to protect our freedom. . . . We must insure freedom of choice to every individual and respect for all men’s rights if we are to live without fear of tyranny.” Antibusing groups also ran advertisements in the hated *Courier-Journal* and *Times*; a November 1975 full-page advertisement in the *Courier-Journal* declared, “Busing is a product of extreme liberalism.”<sup>15</sup>

When busing finally arrived on September 4, 1975, there were many protests outside of the schools but little violence. More than half of white Jefferson County students stayed home on the first day of school; some did so as a form of protest, while some parents kept

their kids at home because of fears of violence. On Friday night, September 5, violent protests-turned-riots took place in Okolona and Valley Station in southern Jefferson County. Protestors clashed with police, who used tear gas to suppress the disorder, while windows were broken at various schools and forty school buses were vandalized. In total, 192 people were arrested and fifty injured. On Monday, September 8, the school buses continued to roll, with armed national guardsmen stationed at schools and on some buses. News about the disorder in Jefferson County made the front pages of newspapers throughout the country and even the covers of national magazines such as *Time*.<sup>16</sup>

### **“Only Believe What You’ve Heard Here”**

On September 3, the evening before the school year began, an antibusing rally at Louisville’s Kentucky State Fair and Exposition Center attracted more than ten thousand people. Concerned Parents president Sue Connor told the crowd to boycott all businesses that supported busing and to drop subscriptions to the *Courier-Journal* and *Times*. “Ladies and gentlemen,” Connor told the crowd, “the word is boycott, boycott, BOYCOTT!” Connor, who was probably the most vocal and visible Jefferson County antibusing leader, accused the *Courier-Journal*, the *Times*, and WHAS-TV of underestimating the size of crowds at antibusing rallies and marches, downplaying the extent of the boycott of public schools by children, and failing to cover alleged acts of violence committed by black students against white students in recently integrated schools. At a rally later that month, Connor told a crowd of six thousand, “Only believe what you’ve heard here tonight and what you’ve seen. Don’t always believe what you read in the papers and see on local TV.” Antibusing activists constantly criticized the Bingham newspapers and urged busing opponents to stop buying and reading the *Courier-Journal* and *Times*. At an August 25 Save Our Community Schools rally, a speaker

urged a boycott of both papers. “[T]he whole world’s eyes have been gouged out by the super liberal press we’ve become addicted to,” he said.<sup>17</sup>

In September and October 1975 *Times* reporter Bob Hill covered little else but the activities of antibusing organizations such as Concerned Parents. In a 1988 interview Hill recalled that antibusers “didn’t ever agree with what we wrote. They always thought we underestimated the size of the crowds. We’d say three hundred marched, they’d say three thousand.” Indeed, antibusers in Jefferson County constantly claimed that the newspapers grossly undercounted attendance at antibusing events; Boston antibusers accused the *Globe* of the same kind of undercounting. A *Courier-Journal* reporter covering an antibusing march in late October on Dixie Highway in southern Jefferson County was accosted by a pair of marchers. “We don’t need you here,” a woman told the reporter. “What are you going to say, that there were 25 of us?”<sup>18</sup>

Bob Hill recalled that though he got along with most antibusing activists, the atmosphere at many antibusing meetings was intimidating because the attendees made no secret of their antipathy for reporters, photographers, and cameramen representing the Bingham news media outlets. “The whole two months the air was charged,” Hill remembered. “It was just a tense time all the way around, very tense. Anytime you were in a room full of people, most of whom, 99 percent didn’t agree with you, didn’t particularly want you there other than to use you for coverage, things could happen.” Reporters and cameramen covering antibusing events in 1975 and 1976 were evicted from antibusing meetings and rallies, harassed, and even physically attacked. In one incident, Hill and United Press International reporter Richard Walker were sitting on the hood of a car in the parking lot of the Kentucky State Fair and Exposition Center, waiting for an antibusing rally to begin. The men were asked to leave by two members of Concerned Parents. When Hill told



the members that he had a legal right to stay, one of the busing opponents began punching the reporters. Hill was left with a bloody nose; Walker, a bruised cheek and mouth.

Afterward, several antibusing activists apologized to Hill and Walker for the incident.<sup>19</sup>

The situation was also tense for those reporters who covered area meetings of the Ku Klux Klan where both busing and the media were castigated by Klansmen. Far Right, explicitly racist organizations such as the Klan, the Citizens' Council, the National States' Rights Party, and Posse Comitatus were active in the Jefferson County antibusing movement but attracted a relatively small number of local whites. At a Klan rally in early September, attendees made threatening remarks to an ABC television film crew and accused the network of biased coverage. At the same meeting, Klan members hung effigies of Judge Gordon and Barry Bingham Jr. A week later in Bullitt County, immediately south of Jefferson County, Klansmen forcibly evicted a *Courier-Journal* photographer and confiscated his film, roughed up a *Courier-Journal* reporter, and smashed the back window of the newsmen's car as they made a hurried getaway.<sup>20</sup>

Three different marches by antibusing demonstrators in downtown Louisville in September 1975 made stops in front of the *Courier-Journal* and Times Company offices, where protestors vented their anger by chanting "Stop your paper!," "Down with the news!," and "Cancel, cancel!" On November 22, several thousand antibusers marched downtown, where they scuffled with police and demonstrated in front of the *Courier-Journal* and Times building. The crowd chanted "Communist Journal, Communist Journal," and protestors broke seven of the building's windows, resulting in \$3,000 in damage. The *Courier-Journal* did not make an editorial response to the incident, but the *Louisville Defender*, the city's weekly black newspaper and a supporter of busing, blasted the "stupidity" of those antibusing marchers who broke the windows as well as those who called black bystanders slurs such as

“boy” and “nigger.” Those actions, the *Defender* wrote, brought out the “true colors” of some of the antibusing protestors: “their capabilities of violence and vandalism.”<sup>21</sup>

Elsewhere in downtown Louisville on November 22, *Courier-Journal* and *Times* vending boxes were vandalized and three WHAS-TV newsmen were forcibly evicted by a crowd in front of the Federal Building. The eviction of the television news reporters demonstrates that the local print media were not the only news outlets criticized and harassed by busing opponents. The Bingham-owned WHAS-TV was regularly subjected to criticism; Louisville resident Raymond Warren wrote in a letter to the *Courier-Journal* that he was disturbed to find that local TV stations “do not report the news as it is,” so he called WHAS to tell them to report the news accurately. Both WHAS and WAVE television stations were flooded with calls complaining about their coverage. Comments leveled at WHAS included “You’re a Communist” and “Your station is a liar.”<sup>22</sup>

### **“Nobody Wins When You Lose Your Cool”**

Both the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* enjoyed excellent national reputations. In 1964 and again in 1974 *Time* magazine named the *Courier-Journal* in its list of the ten best American daily newspapers. In a 1988 interview *Courier-Journal* and *Times* publisher Barry Bingham Jr. said that his newspapers had established a strong liberal position on race relations by the mid-1970s; thus, there was no question that the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* would support the busing order. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s the newspapers signaled their support for racial equality by hailing court decisions striking down segregation and backing the city’s integration of public schools following the 1954 *Brown* decision. The Bingham newspapers’ position on civil rights made them enemies of whites who resisted integration and believed

the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* played an active role in forcing integration on the white citizens of Louisville and Jefferson County.<sup>23</sup>

Racial conservatives also linked the Bingham newspapers with communism, which many proponents of racial segregation believed was at the heart of the civil rights movement. The newspapers' associations with the former communist and local civil rights activist Carl Braden contributed to the belief that the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* were "Red" newspapers. In the mid-1950s Braden purchased a home on behalf of a black family in the predominantly white suburban neighborhood of Okolona because a restrictive covenant prohibited the sale of the home to non-whites. At the time, Braden was a *Courier-Journal* and *Times* Company employee. Despite the fact that the *Courier-Journal* distanced itself from Braden by blaming him for inciting racial trouble in a page-one editorial, the connection was stamped fairly permanently in the minds of anticommunist racial conservatives in Jefferson County.<sup>24</sup>

As the front-page editorial about Braden demonstrates, the Bingham newspapers' stance on racial integration had limits. The *Courier-Journal* and *Times* tended to credit "white city fathers" more so than African American community activists for civil rights gains. During the open housing struggles in Jefferson County in the mid- and late 1960s, the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* called for compromise and voiced concerns about protecting the city's positive image. Thus, the newspapers tended to counsel patience and calm—a role that many city newspapers of the postwar era played during local crises. For example, during the busing controversy in Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, in the early 1970s, the *Charlotte Observer* and the Charlotte business community pushed for a compromise on busing to avoid incidents of unrest and violence that might damage the city's reputation and frighten off industry and investment. Busing opponents in Charlotte disputed the *Observer's* coverage, boycotted the newspaper, and, according to the historian Matthew D.

Lassiter, alleged “a conspiracy by the news media and the downtown elite to cover up the success” of the antibusing movement.<sup>25</sup>

In the eyes of white conservatives in Jefferson County, however, the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* were unabashed, radical supporters of civil rights. Bingham himself had strong personal convictions about civil rights, and during the 1970s he was a regular participant in editorial page meetings and wrote at least one editorial a week for either or both newspapers. Thus, there was no question that the newspapers would support busing, but the busing-related violence and upheaval beginning in 1974 and still plaguing Boston in 1975, and the backlash by Boston antibusers against the *Globe*, concerned Bingham. He and about a dozen *Courier-Journal* and *Times* editors traveled to Boston to spend a day talking to *Globe* publisher Bill Taylor, editor Tom Winship, and other *Globe* staff (as well as Boston mayor Kevin White) in the summer of 1975. Bingham and his editors surely learned that the *Globe* and other Boston news media outlets had met with city and school officials two weeks before busing began in Boston and pledged support of the busing order and agreed to downplay violence. After the Boston trip, representatives from the *Courier-Journal*, *Times*, the Bingham-owned TV and radio stations, and other local media outlets met and agreed to a set of guidelines for reporting of the busing implementation. The guidelines called for no reporters, photographers, and TV cameras inside schools, designated press areas outside of schools, and promised unobtrusive reporting designed to avoid inflaming conflict. The text of the guidelines was printed in both the *Courier-Journal* and the *Times*. Representatives of local media outlets then met with Judge Gordon, who publicly backed the guidelines.<sup>26</sup>

The Bingham newspapers also participated in a campaign calling for the peaceful implementation of the busing order that used the slogan “Nobody Wins When You Lose Your Cool” that included print advertisements and TV and radio spots. The *Courier-Journal*

provided free advertising space for the campaign, which was also advertised on city and county billboards. The city's weekly black newspaper, the *Louisville Defender*, also participated. The news media agreements and the "Nobody Wins When You Lose Your Cool" campaign did little to assuage the resentments of antibusers who believed that the Bingham newspapers *were* the city liberal establishment, working in cahoots with city officials, civil rights groups, and the despised Judge Gordon. The agreement and the "Cool" campaign also provided ammunition for antibusers to accuse the newspapers of printing probusing propaganda and to argue that the newspapers were unable to provide fair, objective coverage of busing or the antibusing movement.<sup>27</sup>

One day before the school year kicked off and buses began transporting thousands of Jefferson County students to new schools, the *Courier-Journal* called on the community's citizens to peacefully obey the law. While busing opponents were calling Judge Gordon a tyrant, the *Courier-Journal* called Gordon a "pillar of strength," even in an editorial that took issue with Gordon's ban on large protests in Jefferson County in early September—an edict interpreted by antibusers as yet another unconstitutional, tyrannical act by the powerful liberal establishment. The newspapers also criticized the tactics of antibusing organizations. A *Times* editorial called the picketing of a gas station that serviced school buses by the Sue Connor-led Concerned Parents a "spectacle." There were many more examples of editorials that for antibusers proved that the Bingham newspapers never had and never would print a positive word about their efforts.<sup>28</sup>

Yet the newspapers did make an effort to provide a forum for busing supporters and opponents alike. In the summer of 1975 the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* began receiving a deluge of letters on the busing issue, the majority of which expressed opposition to the busing plan. On October 4, 1975, the *Courier-Journal* said that it had carried 425 letters on the

busing issue since early August and had devoted fifteen additional pages to accommodate the volume. Bingham recalled in a 1988 interview, “[A] newspaper is responsible to let the community see what people think and we published virtually every letter we got and it took pages. It really did.” In the same interview, Bingham also recalled that he invited antibusing leaders to the newsroom to discuss their views, but the results were frustrating for both sides: “They were arguing a case which they knew they were not likely to win. I mean, it was very unlikely the newspapers [were] going to turn around and say, ‘Well, we’ve been wrong all along and all those black kids ought to go to black schools and the white kids always just be in the white schools.’”<sup>29</sup>

One of the reasons that antibusers in Boston and Louisville could not accept the editorial positions of the *Globe* and the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* was that the newspapers told community members that they should obey the law and put their children on buses headed for integrated schools—yet the children of the publishers, executives, and editors of the newspapers were often unaffected by the busing orders. In Boston, busing opponents were quick to note that eighteen of the top twenty editors at the *Globe* lived in the suburbs and were thus outside the jurisdiction of the busing order. A Boston elected official who opposed busing recalled the anger working-class activists felt toward such elites at the *Globe*: “Those that editorialize go home to their suburban house. It’s very easy for the elite, or those that had more means to tell us how to live our life.” For blue-collar Jefferson County residents, it was difficult to accept editorials supporting integration from a publisher who had inherited his father’s newspaper empire and wealth. Even more galling, Barry Bingham Jr. sent his children to private schools.<sup>30</sup>

To borrow Todd Gitlin’s idea, antibusers resented the local news media because they would not *certify* the antibusing movement as legitimate. Antibusers saw themselves as

victims whose grievances were every bit as legitimate as those of civil rights protestors, who busing opponents believed had been backed enthusiastically by the news media. Formisano distilled these frustrations in *Boston against Busing*: “The liberals who in their view controlled the media would never anoint them, as it were, with victim status, never allow them to be draped in a mantle of morality.” Antibusers in Boston neighborhoods such as South Boston and Charlestown and in Jefferson County working-class suburban towns such as Okolona and Valley Station believed that they were the forgotten people—the silent majority, the good guys who paid their taxes, worked hard, obeyed the law, and wanted to send their kids to good, safe schools. Barry Bingham Jr. characterized blue-collar Jefferson County resentment against the newspapers in a 1988 interview:

Well, I think the media get a lot of blame from people who for one reason or another think that their side of the story just really doesn’t get adequate coverage, and in this community, and I don’t think this will be any surprise to anyone, people who live in southwest [Jefferson County] have figured that everybody’s against them. The government is against them, the media is against them—they’re the last to get anything good and the first to get anything bad.

Antibusers throughout the country had also absorbed tactical lessons from the civil rights movement, including non-violent direct action, civil disobedience, and, especially, the role the news media can play in publicizing their cause. When *Times* reporter Bob Hill covered the antibusing movement, he noted that despite their anger toward the news media, antibusers recognized they needed coverage and publicity from the very news media outlets they disparaged: “They were out there protesting, and if nobody knew about it, what good is it? So they understood that.”<sup>31</sup>

### ***NAPF*: “Say No to Binghamism”**

The fact that the Bingham newspapers enjoyed a monopoly on daily news in Jefferson County was noted by antibusers. In a 1977 letter to the suburban weekly newspaper *Shively Newsweek* that complained about the bias of the Bingham-owned print and electronic news media, an antibuser wrote, “A news monopoly can protect, promote or kill.” Antibusers sought a local news source that reflected their concerns, supported their cause, and told the *truth* about busing. October 1975 saw the debut of *NAPF*, a tabloid-sized newspaper devoted to the antibusing cause. *NAPF* was a nonprofit publication published by the National Organization to Restore and Preserve Our Freedom, a Jefferson County organization led by the prominent antibusing leader Bob DePrez. *NAPF*’s primary enemy was busing, and it was the central theme of each issue. The front page of the November 23, 1975, edition featured the declaration “STOP BUSING” printed in large letters, and readers were encouraged to cut out the slogan so they could display it prominently on the windows of cars, businesses, and homes.<sup>32</sup>

*NAPF* promised readers that it would provide an alternative to “Binghamism,” which was the term used by antibusers to describe the powerful city elites that they believed ruled Louisville and Jefferson County. Of course, the most prominent representatives of Binghamism were the *Courier-Journal* and *Times*—and according to *NAPF*, those newspapers intentionally distorted and suppressed the news. For example, *NAPF* accused the Bingham newspapers of failing to report that communist and socialist literature was distributed at an October 1975 probusing rally. The article declared, “You deserve the truth, you need the truth to maintain your freedom.”<sup>33</sup>

“The truth” was precisely what *NAPF* promised its readers. Bob DePrez told a crowd of 150 people gathered for an antibusing rally in October 1975 that *NAPF* was



“going to tear the [Courier] Journal down, block by block, brick by brick, with the truth.”

The truth-telling theme as stressed by *NAPF* was best exemplified in a front-page cartoon in its November 23, 1975, edition that depicted a smiling man wearing a jacket and tie reading *NAPF*, the cover of which read, “Telling it like it is.” Next to the *NAPF* reader stood a pipe-smoking, bespectacled older man, perhaps a member of the city elite, reading the *Courier-Journal and Times* but looking over the shoulder of the *NAPF* reader. On the front page of the *Courier-Journal and Times* were such “headlines” as: “Everythings Fine,” “Busing’s Good,” “Only 10 out of School,” and “Why Fight It?” In other words, *NAPF* could be trusted to provide factual news, while the Bingham newspapers were more interested in portraying busing as successful and maintaining the city’s good image. *NAPF* also provided news about violence in the schools, which antibusers in Jefferson County, Detroit, and Boston agreed that local daily newspapers and TV stations intentionally suppressed because they wanted to downplay violence. In Detroit, the newspaper *Northeast Detroiter* ran front-page stories about violence in the schools; readers wrote to the newspaper to thank it for providing the “truth” about what was really happening in their children’s schools (see chapter 2).<sup>34</sup>

*NAPF* appealed to antibusers because it appeared to be everything that the *Courier-Journal and Times* were not: a truth-telling source of news that antibusers could think of as *our paper*. *NAPF* instilled the idea that it represented the community and its people by calling on readers to support the paper through sales, advertising, and volunteer work. A notice that ran in several issues declared:

This is your Free Press. It belongs to you, please support it with donations, subscriptions, and volunteer work. We need a lot of office help and delivery boys to sell papers. Reporters, you are our reporters. Stores willing to sell our publication, this is your paper, support it, work for it, it’s our freedom and the Freedom of our children.

Business Men—Advertising is a vital supporter of a paper. Support a paper like NAPF that supports the free system that allows your business to exist. Our fight is for freedom. Support the people's freedom and free people can support your business.

Advertisers and readers responded to *NAPF's* call. The twelve-page February 20, 1976, issue contained no fewer than 106 advertisements placed by local businesses, antibusing groups, and private citizens.<sup>35</sup>

Like a large number of antibusers in Louisville, Boston, and other cities, *NAPF* employed patriotic rhetoric and imagery to describe the busing movement and a wider conservative backlash against liberalism. *NAPF* articles paraphrased the Declaration of Independence and Gettysburg Address, quoted Ben Franklin, and made references to the upcoming bicentennial. *NAPF's* commitment to telling the truth extended beyond the busing issue to a critique of all things liberal: it blamed liberals and communists for gun control, affirmative action, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), permissiveness, illegal drug use, secular humanism, social engineering, and constraints on free enterprise and property rights.<sup>36</sup>

*NAPF* was not the only newspaper devoted to antibusing in Jefferson County. In September and October 1975, at least three different antibusing publications began what were likely short-lived publishing runs. One such publication, an antibusing newsletter published by the owner of a printing company, contained “strong attacks against the media and against the Courier-Journal and Louisville Times specifically” and called for boycotts of both newspapers, according to the *Courier-Journal*. The co-chairman of the newsletter group said the boycott was aimed only at the newspapers, and not radio and TV stations, because “they are the only newspapers in town, and the impact they have is greater than any office in the Commonwealth.” Another antibusing publication, *The Issue*, appeared in early October and distributed ten thousand copies of its debut edition, according to the *Times*. An editor of

*The Issue* said the publication was necessary because the city's daily newspapers were not providing enough information on "school attendance, incidents at schools and at protest rallies."<sup>37</sup>

Conservative alternative news media were also important for conservative working-class residents in Boston, Detroit, Charlotte, Baltimore, Milwaukee, and Kanawha County, West Virginia. In Boston and Detroit, publications produced by the antibusing organization ROAR as well as weekly neighborhood and suburban newspapers such as *South Boston Marshal* and *Northeast Detroiter* were essential to local antibusing movements—they provided news about meetings and rallies, carried antibusing columns, and printed letters written by antibusers. They also reported, in sometimes sensationalistic fashion, the "truth" about school violence and made explicit references to black-on-white violence. Talk radio was also important; Boston's Avi Nelson became one of the voices of the local antibusing movement because of his popular local radio program. Another alternative to the *Globe* was the South Boston Information Center, founded by Boston antibusers to tell people "what's really happening," because Boston's busing opponents felt they could not trust information from either City Hall or the *Globe*.<sup>38</sup>

Conservative alternative news media were vital to grassroots conservative movements and helped connect conservative activists across the country. *NAPF* reminded its readers that antibusing was not just a local movement by running news about antibusing organizations in Boston, Detroit, Pontiac, and other cities, and also kept readers abreast of the activities of West Virginia's textbook opponents. *NAPF* maintained contact with antibusers in Detroit and Boston and ran reprints from newspapers friendly to the antibusing movement such as the *Macomb (Mich.) Daily* and the *Boston News Digest*. In addition, Detroit antibusing leaders saved clippings of *NAPF* articles in their files.<sup>39</sup>

Though the figure cannot be confirmed, *NAPF* claimed in February 1976 it was reaching more than “100,000 Kentuckiana readers.” As a point of comparison, in September 1975 the *Courier-Journal* had a daily Monday-through-Saturday circulation of 211,348. *NAPF* was not a daily, and printed irregularly in 1975 and 1976, and the “100,000” figure was likely exaggerated. Yet the evidence suggests that *NAPF* received robust support from Jefferson County advertisers, volunteers, and readers. *NAPF*’s presence and popularity reflected the extent of antibusing sentiment in Jefferson County in 1975 and 1976, and the demand for news from a source other than the *Courier-Journal* and the *Times*. Yet the reality was that neither *NAPF* nor antibusing-friendly suburban newspapers such as *Shively Newsweek* could hope to rival the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* in any serious way. Still, *NAPF* had hope for the future of conservative news media. A 1976 *NAPF* article declared, “A lot of little papers like ours getting the truth out to the people will eventually overpower the suppressed news media that now serves our nation.”<sup>40</sup>

### **“It’s Time for the White People to Have Their Civil Rights”**

Busing opponents in Boston and Louisville believed that their local newspapers smeared them by portraying them as bigots and racists. Antibusers denied that their cause was motivated by racism; as a *NAPF* article argued, the issue was “freedom, not racism.” Antibusers conceived of themselves not as segregationists employing methods of massive resistance to protect a racial order, but instead as victimized, righteous citizens participating in a revolt against tyranny, a revolt that was every bit as legitimate as the one waged by the revolutionaries of 1776. Like many conservatives of the 1970s, antibusers and the publications that supported them rarely employed explicitly racist language—the “discredited rhetoric of massive resistance”—but instead used “a language of color blindness that

resonated nationwide,” as the historian Jacquelyn Dowd Hall wrote in 2005. This kind of color-blind language emphasized American rights and freedoms as guaranteed in the Constitution.<sup>41</sup>

Anticommunist rhetoric was also regularly used by busing opponents in Jefferson County and Boston. In letters to the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* and in remarks at rallies and marches, antibusing partisans argued that busing signaled that the United States had abandoned principles of freedom for the un-American political systems of socialism and communism. For example, in a 1975 letter to the *Courier-Journal* Jefferson County resident Norma Howard urged Americans to “stamp out forced busing” and “wake up, lest you wait to be awakened by the sound of the hammer and sickle falling for then it will be too late.” Some antibusers implicated the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* in the communist conspiracy. At a September 4 march in southern Jefferson County, an antibuser accosted a *Times* reporter and asked, “You work for Barry Bingham, the thirty-third most powerful Communist in the United States?” Strident anticommunism was also rampant in *NAPF*, which argued that busing was a communist conspiracy to enslave America and that the Bingham newspapers wanted to brainwash its readers with communist ideology. *NAPF* ran reprints of articles from Far Right anticommunist publications and printed a widely disseminated set of rules supposedly followed by communists titled “Communist Rules for Revolution.” Like many integration opponents during the civil rights era, *NAPF* suggested that communists were secretly fanning the flames of conflict over integration. The newspaper speculated that it was actually communists who set off an explosion of dynamite in March 1976 that damaged the same Okolona home that Carl Braden purchased in the 1950s for the Colemans, an African American family, who still lived there in the mid-1970s. The *NAPF* article, “Communist

Dynamite,” argued that communists, not white racists, had also been behind the violence in 1954 connected with integration of predominantly white neighborhoods.<sup>42</sup>

There is a danger in focusing too closely on the role of color-blind language and anticommunism when analyzing grassroots conservative movements of the 1970s such as busing: it is tempting to conclude that antibusers *were* far more concerned about their rights and freedoms and opposition to liberalism and communism than they were racial integration. Yet anticommunism and opposition to liberalism expressed in color-blind ways should not be considered as something distinct from resistance to integration and racial resentments. As Tracy K’Meyer writes, the kind of anticommunism found in *NAPF* “illustrated the ideological connections made between opposition to integration through busing and the resistance to federal government authority.” By insisting that busing was not a racial issue, by using color-blind rhetoric stressing constitutional rights, by characterizing their movement as a patriotic movement in the tradition of the Minutemen, and by using the term *forced* busing rather than court-ordered busing, antibusers worked to legitimize their cause by distancing it from race.<sup>43</sup>

During the conflict over open housing in Jefferson County in the mid- and late 1960s, southern Jefferson County provided the base for resistance to open housing legislation, just as it would provide the base for much of the opposition to busing in the mid-1970s. Though letters to the *Courier-Journal* in the late 1960s that opposed open housing usually employed color-blind language, racist rhetoric, signs, and symbols were employed by whites during the resistance to open housing in Jefferson County in the mid- and late 1960s. Racism was also evident in the Jefferson County antibusing movement of the 1970s. Indeed, racial slurs and epithets were used against black bystanders by some antibusing protestors at various rallies and marches in Jefferson County in 1975 and 1976; at a 1975 downtown

antibusing march, some marchers chanted “Kill these niggers.” Racist language and signs were also used by white young people outside of schools affected by busing.<sup>44</sup>

Many of the same antibusing leaders who vehemently denied that the antibusing movement was racist referred explicitly to race by arguing that whites had to demand *their* civil rights. For example, State Representative Robert F. Hughes of Louisville, a busing opponent and frequent critic of the local and national news media, said at an August 1975 rally, “The black people had their civil rights in the ’60s. Now it’s time for the white people to have their civil rights in the ’70s.” At another rally a few days later, antibusing leader Sue Connor shouted, “If Martin Luther King were here tonight, I’d say move over, buddy, here come Sue Connor and her people.” *NAPF* also claimed that busing was not a racial issue, but that claim was belied by other content published by the newspaper. For example, it reprinted an article titled “Truth about M. L. King” (written by future John Birch Society president John F. McManus) that linked the late civil rights leader with communism. The article was originally published by the John Birch Society and was also reprinted by the *Citizen*, the official newspaper of the Citizens’ Councils of America, a white-supremacist, anti-integration organization. In at least two issues *NAPF* also chose to run advertisements for a local Ku Klux Klan chapter.<sup>45</sup>

It is important to remember, however, that *NAPF* was not *the* voice of the antibusing movement in Jefferson County. Some of *NAPF*’s readers probably focused on the newspaper’s articles on busing and the antibusing movement and ignored the newspaper’s Far Right content. Neither the Boston nor the Jefferson County antibusing movements were monolithic. Some Jefferson County antibusing groups, such as the militant Stop Tyranny and Busing (STAB), rejected anything less than a full repeal of the busing order, while Joyce Spond’s Save Our Community Schools (SOCS) was an organization

comprising mostly middle-class residents who were open to compromise. In Boston, ROAR split into two factions: a more moderate wing led by Louise Day Hicks and a militant wing that supported George Wallace, made coded and explicit racist statements, and developed ties with the white supremacists in metropolitan St. Louis who published *Citizens' Informer* (see chapter 3). However, it would also be a mistake, I argue, to suggest that racial resentment was the province of a minority of antibusing extremists.<sup>46</sup>

How does this discussion of race factor into my analysis of criticism of the news media? Determining to what degree race mattered to antibusers illuminates the role of race in the backlash against the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* as well as the backlash against the *Globe* and the so-called liberal news media generally. Some historians, including Kenneth D. Durr, who studied white working-class politics in Baltimore, have concluded that by the 1970s race-based resentments were no longer salient in the white working-class backlash against liberalism. Other historians, such as Thomas J. Sugrue and Heather Ann Thompson, suggest that race was at the heart of resistance to integration throughout the postwar era and into the 1970s. In this chapter and in this dissertation I find that racial resentments and resistance to integration often co-existed with color-blind rhetoric that articulated actual beliefs. In other words, explicit racists and non-racist conservatives, as well as the conservatives who existed somewhere in between those poles, did believe that they were patriots whose rights and freedoms were being threatened by liberal tyranny. Color-blind conservatism did not mask racism—it co-existed with it.<sup>47</sup>

## Conclusion

Jefferson County busing foes remained active in 1976 and 1977, but the frequency and size of the protests diminished. *Times* reporter Bob Hill recalled in 1988 that after the



1975–1976 school year the antibusing movement “just kind of wore down. They had these things a year later, those anniversary marches and so forth. . . . The anger was still there, but I think the sense of being able to do anything about it was just about gone. They were just kind of stuck with it, like it or not.” Some groups, such as United Labor against Busing, abandoned demonstrations and concentrated on lobbying and legal strategies. Though Judge Gordon’s original busing order was modified over the years, it was not until 2007 that the U.S. Supreme Court struck down Jefferson County’s student-assignment plan, ruling that it placed undue emphasis on race.<sup>48</sup>

The *Courier-Journal* and the *Times* were hit hard by the antibusing boycott. Between September 1974 and September 1976 the newspapers’ circulation fell by 24,708, a drop of more than 6 percent. Between September 1970 and September 1980 the *Courier-Journal*’s circulation dropped from 233,383 to 186,308, a 20 percent decline; during the same period, the *Times* lost 13 percent of its circulation. Nationwide, afternoon papers such as the *Times* lost circulation during the 1970s, but the *Courier-Journal*’s circulation drop of more than 47,000 occurred during a decade when nationwide morning newspaper circulation increased nationwide by a little more than 13 percent. Those circulation losses, especially those of the *Courier-Journal*, suggest that the Jefferson County boycott had a significant economic impact on the Bingham media outlets.<sup>49</sup>

While the Bingham newspapers continued to lose readers, they were honored with awards for their busing coverage. In 1976, the *Courier-Journal* and WHAS-TV each captured a Sigma Delta Chi Distinguished Service Award for coverage of busing, while the *Courier-Journal* and the *Times* won the Pulitzer Prize for feature photography, also for their busing coverage. For the *Courier-Journal*, *Times*, and WHAS, the awards likely represented vindication for a job well done. For Jefferson County’s busing opponents, such awards “honored” two

newspapers and a television station that had turned their backs on a majority of their community's people and opinions by failing to tell the truth about busing and the antibusing movement. For three decades the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* had supported civil rights and racial integration in Louisville and Jefferson County, and that support *mattered*. The newspaper wielded great power to legitimate the grievances of Jefferson County's African American population as well as legislation and court orders designed to ameliorate discrimination. By 1975 white conservatives could no longer abide the Bingham newspapers' commitment to liberalism and busing, which antibusers believed was an example of civil rights gone too far—reverse discrimination that infringed on white rights. In the next chapter, I examine the role played by the neighborhood weekly newspaper *Northeast Detroiter* as a voice and a forum for Detroit-area white conservatives who believed that liberalism and civil rights gone too far were to blame for the decline of their once-mighty city.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “Readers’ Views,” *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Sept. 1, 1975. The *Louisville Courier-Journal* and *Louisville Times* had a combined Monday-through-Saturday circulation of more than 375,000. See 1976 *Editor and Publisher International Yearbook* (New York, 1976), 107.

<sup>2</sup> On the numbers of students affected by busing, see Timothy J. Minchin, *From Rights to Economics: The Ongoing Struggle for Black Equality in the United States South* (Gainesville, 2007), 138. *Time* reported in September 1975 that the consolidated school district’s enrollment was 130,000. See “Busing and Strikes: Schools in Turmoil,” *Time*, Sept. 15, 1975. On the mass cancellation of subscriptions by antibusers, see “Firms Report Greater Pressure from Groups against Busing,” *Louisville Times*, Sept. 8, 1975. For national news coverage of disorder and violence in Jefferson County, see front cover, *Time*, Sept. 22, 1975.

<sup>3</sup> On accusations by antibusers that the newspapers distorted the truth about busing and the antibusing movement, see “Both Sides Now: ‘Grace under Pressure’ on Busing versus the Demagoguery of the Few,” *Louisville Times*, Aug. 29, 1975; Dick Kaukas, “Busing Protestors Stage Dixie Highway March,” *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Oct. 31, 1975; “Readers’ Views,” *ibid.*, Sept. 1, 1975; “Firms Report Greater Pressure from Groups Against Busing”; “Busing Foes Hear Plans for Marches,” *ibid.*, Sept. 4, 1975; and “Antibusing Demonstration Ends in Standoff with Police at Hall,” *Sunday Louisville Courier-Journal and Times*, Nov. 23, 1975. On violence against reporters and newspaper property, see Kyle Vance, “The Busing Protest: Rally Ends Abruptly after Radio Report of Confrontation,” *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Sept. 5, 1975; and “Antibusing Demonstration Ends in Standoff with Police at Hall.”

<sup>4</sup> On antibusers and criticism of the Bingham newspapers, see “Bus Ride to Slavery,” *NAPF*, Nov. 23, 1975, p. 2; Joe Williams, “Local Daily Once again Showing True Colors,” *ibid.*, Feb. 20, 1976, p. 8; and “Bureaucrats Busy Promoting County Metro Government,” *ibid.*, Feb. 5, 1976, p. 1. Antibusing protestors were not the only Jefferson County residents to complain about the coverage of the busing issue by the Bingham newspapers. Mrs. Marie P. Green wrote in an October 1975 letter to the *Courier-Journal* that she felt the newspaper had “overdone” stories about white families adjusting to busing. She wrote that many black families were also dealing with the same problems, “and must deal with them four times as long as white families.” She argued that the *Courier-Journal*’s stories were convincing Jefferson County residents “that busing is an unnatural situation.” See “Readers’ Views,” *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Oct. 27, 1975.

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<sup>5</sup> On resentment of Barry Bingham Jr., see Williams, “Local Daily Once again Showing True Colors”; and Bob Hill interview, March 28, 1988, School Desegregation, Tape 1991-73-3, University of Louisville Oral History Center (University Archives and Records Center, Louisville, Ky.). On resentment of Judge James F. Gordon, see “Readers’ Views,” *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Sept. 24, 1975.

<sup>6</sup> Tracy E. K’Meyer, *Civil Rights in the Gateway to the South: Louisville, Kentucky, 1945–1980* (Lexington, Ky., 2009), 103; Anne Braden, *The Wall Between* (New York, 1957), 43, 78. On whites in the Deep South who resisted racial integration and criticized the news media, see David Greenberg, “The Idea of ‘the Liberal Media’ and Its Roots in the Civil Rights Movement,” *The Sixties: A Journal of History, Politics, and Culture*, 1 (Dec. 2008), 167–86.

<sup>7</sup> On busing in other cities, see David Riddle, “Race and Reaction in Warren, Michigan, 1971–1974: *Bradley v. Milliken* and the Cross-District Busing Controversy,” *Michigan Historical Review*, 26 (no. 2, 2000), 1–49; Matthew D. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton, 2006), 122–221; Anthony Ripley, “Denver Blasts Destroy 24 School Buses,” *New York Times*, Feb. 7, 1970, p. 11; John Egerton, *Promise of Progress: Memphis School Desegregation, 1972–1973* (Atlanta, 1973); Reginald Stuart, “Busing and the Media in Nashville,” *New South: A Quarterly Review of Southern Affairs*, 28 (Spring 1973), 79–87; Steven J. L. Taylor, *Desegregation in Boston and Buffalo: The Influence of Local Leaders* (Albany, 1998); and Iver Peterson, “First Phase of Court-Ordered Busing in Cleveland Begins Peacefully,” *New York Times*, Sept. 11, 1979, p. A18. On Boston’s antibusing movement, see Ronald P. Formisano, *Boston against Busing: Race, Class, and Ethnicity in the 1960s and 1970s* (Chapel Hill, 1991); J. Anthony Lukas, *Common Ground: A Turbulent Decade in the Lives of Three American Families* (New York, 1985); and Taylor, *Desegregation in Boston and Buffalo*. On criticism, activism, and violence directed at the *Boston Globe*, see Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 152–58; Lukas, *Common Ground*, 473–508; and Taylor, *Desegregation in Boston and Buffalo*, 83–85, 168–80. J. Anthony Lukas estimated that the boycott by antibusing partisans in Boston “cost the *Globe* 7,000 readers.” See Lukas, *Common Ground*, 505.

<sup>8</sup> On media certification, see Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 150–58; and Todd Gitlin, *The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making of the New Left* (Berkeley, 1980).

<sup>9</sup> K’Meyer, *Civil Rights in the Gateway to the South*, 1, 112, 189–90; Braden, *Wall Between*, 63, 67, 128–39.

<sup>10</sup> On Louisville’s experiences and struggles with integration in the 1950s and early 1960s, see K’Meyer, *Civil Rights in the Gateway to the South*, 1–177; Hunter S. Thompson, “A Southern City with Northern Problems,” in Hunter S. Thompson, *The Great Shark Hunt: Gonzo Papers*, vol. 1: *Strange Tales*

*from a Strange Time* (New York, 1979), 38–45; and Keith Runyon, “Louisville Integration Began with ‘Silence’ in ’56,” *Sunday Louisville Courier-Journal and Times*, Aug. 24, 1975. On residential racial segregation in Boston and Detroit, see Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 13; and Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, 1996), 181–258. On city school boards intentionally steering white and black students to historically white and historically black schools, see Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 68–69.

<sup>11</sup> On the lawsuit and ruling that led to busing in Jefferson County and the Jefferson County busing plan, see K’Meyer, *Civil Rights in the Gateway to the South*, 256–57; Minchin, *From Rights to Economics*, 138; and “A Chronology of Major Steps in Busing Case,” *Louisville Times*, June 17, 1978. On *Milliken v. Bradley*, see Joyce A. Baugh, *The Detroit School Busing Case: Milliken v. Bradley and the Controversy over Desegregation* (Lawrence, 2011).

<sup>12</sup> The author compiled the names of the Jefferson County antibusing organizations in his analysis of the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, *Louisville Times*, and *NAPF*. On antibusing marches, flags, signs, and T-shirts, see antibusing march photograph, *Sunday Louisville Courier-Journal and Times*, Sept. 28, 1975; John Flynn, “In the Aftermath of Court Orders and Riot Squads What about . . . Southern Jefferson County,” *ibid.*, Sept. 14, 1975; and front cover, *Time*, Sept. 22, 1975.

<sup>13</sup> J. Anthony Lukas, “Who Owns 1776? The Battle in Boston for Control of the American Past,” *New York Times Magazine*, May 18, 1975. The Tea Party of the twenty-first century also employs patriotic imagery and rhetoric. See Jill Lepore, *The Whites of Their Eyes: The Tea Party’s Revolution and the Battle over American History* (Princeton, 2010).

<sup>14</sup> “School Busing Opponents to Hold 3 Rallies in Jefferson County to Protest Order,” *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Aug. 4, 1975; Jim Adams, “Anti-busing Party: South Boston Busing Protestors Given Warm Welcome by Their Okolona Hosts,” *Sunday Louisville Courier-Journal and Times*, Nov. 23, 1975; “Louisvillians Join Antibusing Rally in Boston,” *Louisville Courier-Journal*, May 23, 1976; “Mrs. Connor Going to Charleston Rally,” *Louisville Times*, Aug. 22, 1975; Kay Michael, “Text Protest Gets New Life at City Rally,” *Charleston (W.Va.) Sunday Gazette-Mail*, Feb. 1, 1976; “Charlestown March Draws Local Group,” *NAPF*, Feb. 5, 1976, p. 12; “Kentuckians March on W. Virginia,” photos and caption, *ibid.*, Feb. 20, 1976, p. 4; “‘The Lord Is with You’—The Rev. Avis Hill of West Virginia,” photo and caption, *ibid.*, Feb. 5, 1976, p. 12; “Rev. Avis Hill at Party in His Honor at N.A.P.F.,” photo and caption, *ibid.*, March 9, 1976, p. 11. On the April 1976 visit of members of Louisville’s Union Labor against Busing to a Warren, Michigan, antibusing rally, see James Thomas, “Suburbs Urged to Continue Anti-busing Fight; Not Working in Detroit, Foes Say,” *Community News*,

April 15, 1976, clipping, "Clippings Jan–May 1976" folder, Carmen A. Roberts Papers, 1972–1981 (Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.).

<sup>15</sup> On antibusers and protest methods, see Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 141. On Jefferson County antibusers and boycotts, letters, and job walkouts, see "Both Sides Now"; "Readers' Views: More Pros and Cons Are Heard on Topic of Desegregation by Busing," *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Aug. 30, 1975; and Jim Thompson, "Off the Job: Two Plants Close, Others Cut Their Operations as Workers Protest Busing," *ibid.*, Sept. 5, 1975. Two local plants were forced to close for the day because too many unionized workers were absent on the first day of the 1975–1976 school year. See *ibid.* On the quoted letter to the *Courier-Journal*, see "Readers' Views: More Pros and Cons Are Heard on Topic of Desegregation by Busing," *ibid.*, Aug. 30, 1975. On the November 1975 antibusing advertisement, see "Color All of Them American!," advertisement, *ibid.*, Nov. 7, 1975.

<sup>16</sup> On children who stayed home on the first day of school, see Minchin, *From Rights to Economics*, 138. A September 15, 1975, story in *Time* reported that more than half of the county's 130,000 students stayed at home during the first two days of the school year. See "Busing and Strikes." Later in the month, Jefferson County officials estimated 15,000 children were not attending school. Citizens against Busing president Bill Kellerman said the number was closer to 24,000. See "Protestors Drive through Western Part of Louisville," *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Sept. 22, 1975. On the September 5, 1975, violence in Jefferson County, see "Busing and Strikes"; "Clashes at Protests Bring Injuries, Arrests: Tear Gas Used on Anti-busing Demonstration," *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Sept. 6, 1975; Larry Werner, "Tight Security Put on Louisville Area: Guard Called In," *ibid.*, Sept. 7, 1975; and "Detective Injured in Riot Will Lose Sight in One Eye," *ibid.*, Sept. 10, 1975. Police used tear gas to disperse an antibusing protest on Preston Highway in Jefferson County in November 1975. See "Tear Gas Breaks Up Bus Protest; Fire Blocks Preston," *Louisville Times*, Nov. 4, 1975. On the presence of the National Guard, see Ken Loomis, "Jefferson County School Buses to Carry Armed Guards: Judge Gordon Tightens Security after Violence," *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Sept. 8, 1975.

<sup>17</sup> On Sue Connor's criticism of the Bingham newspapers, see "Busing Foes Hear Plans for Marches," *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Sep. 4, 1975. Oddly, Connor later defended the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* in a telephone interview with a *Times* editor in November 1975. She said the Bingham newspapers had been "unduly ridiculed," and claimed, "I have encouraged people to take the newspaper." However, she denied making these remarks at a November 10, 1975, Concerned Parents meeting. See Bob Hill, "Sue Connor Urges Continued Busing Pressure on Carroll and Legislature," *Louisville Times*, Nov. 11, 1975. On Jefferson County antibusing rallies at which the news media was criticized, see Vance, "Busing Protest"; Robert T. Garrett and Jim Adams, "Antibusing

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Rally Draws Several Hundred,” *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Sept. 8, 1975; Dick Kaukas, “Meeting Takes Steps to Form New Antibusing Group,” *ibid.*, Sept. 12, 1975; Ken Loomis, “Antibusing Groups Urge More School Boycotts,” *ibid.*, Sept. 15, 1975; John Filiatreau, “Rally Speakers Promote Mass Antibusing March Downtown,” *ibid.*, Sept. 23, 1975; Keith Runyon, “Antibusing Group Gives Spending Report,” *ibid.*, Oct. 13, 1975; and “Antibusing Labor Group Vows to Go On,” *ibid.*, Dec. 5, 1975. On Sue Connor and “Only believe what you’ve heard here tonight” quotation, see Filiatreau, “Rally Speakers Promote Mass Antibusing March Downtown.” On the August 25, 1975, Save Our Community Schools rally, see Dianne Aprile, “National Anti-busing Leader Doesn’t Think Boycott Will Work,” *Louisville Times*, Aug. 26, 1975.

<sup>18</sup> Bob Hill interview, March 28, 1988. On the claims of Boston busing opponents that the *Boston Globe* undercounted attendance at antibusing events, see Scott Kaufer, “What Makes Avi Nelson Talk? You’ve Heard the Voice; Now Meet the Man,” *Boston Magazine*, Feb. 1975, pp. 56–59, 81–89. On the *Courier-Journal* reporter accosted by Jefferson County antibusers, see Kaukas, “Busing Protestors Stage Dixie Highway March.”

<sup>19</sup> Bob Hill interview, March 28, 1988; Runyon, “Antibusing Group Gives Spending Report”; Vance, “Busing Protest.”

<sup>20</sup> On the racist Far Right and the antibusing movement in Jefferson County, see K’Meyer, *Civil Rights in the Gateway to the South*, 260, 270–71, 280–81. On the September and October 1975 Ku Klux Klan rallies, see “Busing Foes Peaceful at 2 Klan Rallies,” *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Sept. 7, 1975; David Creed and Larry Werner, “Large Crowd Attends Klan Rally in Bullitt County,” *Sunday Louisville Courier-Journal and Times*, Sept. 14, 1975; and Mike Brown, “Klansmen Make Newsmen Leave Rally: Film Taken; Reporter Roughed Up,” *ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> On the downtown Louisville antibusing marches and demonstrations in front of the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* building, see “Over 2,500 Protest Busing Order in Louisville,” *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Sept. 5, 1975; Mike Brown and Sheldon Shafer, “Antibusing Protestors Hold Peaceful Marches Downtown,” *Sunday Louisville Courier-Journal and Times*, Sept. 21, 1975; and “Thousands Peacefully Protest Busing in Louisville,” *ibid.* Sept. 28, 1975; “Antibusing Demonstration Ends in Standoff with Police at Hall”; “Anti-busers Wrong in Knocking Out Windows at Courier Journal,” *Louisville Defender*, Nov. 27, 1975; and Barry Bingham Jr. interview, March 17, 1988, School Desegregation, Tape 1991-73-1, University of Louisville Oral History Center (University Archives and Records Center, Louisville, Ky.).

<sup>22</sup> “Antibusing Demonstration Ends in Standoff with Police at Hall”; “Readers’ Views: More Pros and Cons Are Heard on the Topic of Desegregation by Busing,” *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Aug. 30, 1975; Howard Rosenberg, “Looking at TV: The Coverage of Desegregation Has Been a Very Guttery Effort, but There Have Been Some Slipups,” *Louisville Times*, Sept. 8, 1975.

<sup>23</sup> On the Bingham family and the *Courier-Journal* and *Times*, see Susan E. Tifft and Alex S. Jones, *The Patriarch: The Rise and Fall of the Bingham Dynasty* (New York, 1991), 79; and Samuel W. Thomas, ed., *Barry Bingham: A Man of His Word* (Lexington, 1993), 3. On Barry Bingham Jr. and the newspapers’ stance on race relations and busing, see Barry Bingham, Jr. interview, March 17, 1988. On the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* and racial integration in the 1950s and 1960s, see Braden, *Wall Between*, 43, 78; and K’Meyer, *Civil Rights in the Gateway to the South*, 32, 65.

<sup>24</sup> Braden, *Wall Between*, 77–81; “Bus Ride to Slavery.”

<sup>25</sup> On the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* and calls for compromise on civil rights issues, see K’Meyer, *Civil Rights in the Gateway to the South*, 108, 128, 103. On city newspapers and their tendency to counsel calm during crises, see Phyllis Kaniss, *Making Local News* (Chicago, 1991), 57–59. On the *Charlotte Observer* and the Charlotte business community during the local busing controversy, see Lassiter, *Silent Majority*, 121–97; Frye Gaillard, *The Dream Long Deferred: The Landmark Struggle for Desegregation in Charlotte, North Carolina*, 3rd ed. (Columbia, 2006), 79–81; and Davison M. Douglas, *Reading, Writing, and Race: The Desegregation of the Charlotte Schools* (Chapel Hill, 1995), 59, 147–50, 182–83, 250–51.

<sup>26</sup> On Barry Bingham Jr., civil rights, and the visit to Boston, see Barry Bingham Jr. interview, March 17, 1988. On Boston media outlets and the 1974 agreement on coverage of busing, see Lukas, *Common Ground*, 155; and Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 155. On Louisville media outlets and the 1975 guidelines on coverage of busing, see “Text of Media Principles Drawn Up for Handling Desegregation,” *Louisville Times*, Aug. 21, 1975; “Text of Media’s Guidelines on Desegregation Coverage,” *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Aug. 22, 1975; Dick Kaukas, “Gordon, News Executives to Discuss ‘Guidelines,’” *ibid.*, Aug. 20, 1975; David Creed, “News Media Adopt Plans for Coverage of Schools,” *ibid.*, Aug. 21, 1975; Tom Van Howe, “Gordon Backs Media Guidelines Covering Busing: Self-Imposed Principles,” *Louisville Times*, Aug. 21, 1975; and Barry Bingham Jr. interview, March 17, 1988.

<sup>27</sup> On “Nobody Wins When You Lose Your Cool,” see Bill Hendrick, “The Desegregation Message from CALM Is ‘Stay Cool’ in Louisville Area,” *Daily News* (Bowling Green, Ky.), Aug. 29, 1975, p. 5; and “We’ll Be Making History This Fall,” advertisement, *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Sept. 2,



1975. The city's weekly black newspaper, the *Louisville Defender*, also participated in the campaign. See "Play by the Rules," advertisement, *Louisville Defender*, Sept. 4, 1975.

<sup>28</sup> "We'll All Worry When the Buses Roll, But . . .," *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Sept. 3, 1975; "Restrictions on Busing Protests Go Too Far," *ibid.*, Sept. 4, 1975; "Both Sides Now."

<sup>29</sup> In October 1975 the *Courier-Journal* declared that it believed that the 425 letters figure "to be the most *The Courier-Journal* has ever carried on any subject in such a short period of time." See "About Busing Letters," *ibid.*, Oct. 4, 1975. The author found that in September and October 1975 the *Courier-Journal* ran a total of 287 letters on the busing issue, 160 of which stated an antibusing position; during the same period, the *Times* ran 182 letters on busing, 126 of which opposed busing. During that period the *Courier-Journal* devoted a total of eight full pages to busing letters in five separate editions, while the *Times* devoted five and a half pages to busing letters in four separate editions. For both newspapers, those letters that did not contain an antibusing viewpoint were not necessarily pro-busing; some letters decried the violent scenes in southern Jefferson County on September 5 but did not equivocally state their opinion on the busing order. The *Sunday Courier-Journal and Times* printed very few letters on any topic during the September–October 1975 period. In that two-month period it printed ten letters on the busing issue; five of those letters appeared in a special Monday, September 1, Labor Day edition of the combined *Courier-Journal and Times*.

On Barry Bingham Jr. and 1988 comments on readers' letters and the visit of antibusing leaders to the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* newsroom, see Barry Bingham Jr. interview, March 17, 1988. In that interview Bingham claimed that both newspapers published each letter they received on the busing issue, provided it was not libelous and included a name and address. Actually, Bingham's newspapers announced new policies on busing letters in the October 4, 1975, *Courier-Journal* and the October 10, 1975, *Times*. The "About Busing Letters" announcement in the *Courier-Journal* stated that "the time has come when we must begin rejecting for publication in Readers' Views some of the mail we are receiving on the subject of school busing." The announcement cited the fact that the amount of letters had cut into the paper's available space, and forced delays in printing letters on subjects other than busing. The announcement's second rationale was the fact that "so many of the busing letters have become extremely repetitive." See "About Busing Letters." The October 9 note in the *Times* regarding the new letters policy announced that letters regarding busing had become repetitive, and thus "[i]n the future we will present letters on the subject selectively, so as to give greatest exposure to new viewpoints on the subject." See "Letters to the Times," *Louisville Times*, Oct. 9, 1975.

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<sup>30</sup> Lukas, *Common Ground*, 499; Taylor, *Desegregation in Boston and Buffalo*, 173; Bob Hill interview, March 28, 1988.

<sup>31</sup> On news media certification of antibusers, see Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 152. On Barry Bingham Jr.'s characterization of the resentments of Jefferson County working-class residents, see Barry Bingham Jr. interview, March 17, 1988. On antibusers and lessons learned from the civil rights movement, see Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 138–46, 151–52. On Jefferson County antibusers and the need for press coverage, see Bob Hill interview, March 28, 1988.

<sup>32</sup> On antibusers and the monopoly enjoyed by the Bingham newspapers, see “Criticizes Daily Newspapers,” *Shively Newsweek*, Jan. 27, 1977, clipping, “Anti-busing Activities (1976–1977)” folder, box 5, Progress in Education Records, 1972–1978 (Special Collections and Archives, University of Louisville). On *NAPF*, see *NAPF*, Oct. 1975, pp. 1–4; and “Stop Busing,” *ibid.*, Nov. 23, 1975, p. 1. DePrez and his fellow employees at International Harvester raised the money for the first issue of *NAPF*. See “Antibusing Paper Planned,” *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Oct. 16, 1975. All issues of *NAPF* were found in “National Organization to Restore and Preserve Our Freedom Papers, 1975–1976” folder, box 4, Progress in Education Records. A total of five issues ranging from October 1975 through March 9, 1976, were found. It is clear that the collection is not complete, but the total number of issues printed is unknown.

<sup>33</sup> “Communism in Louisville,” *NAPF*, Oct. 1975, p. 4.

<sup>34</sup> Mary Jane Busroe, “Protest Group Has First ‘Mass’ Meeting: Antibusing Speakers Warn of ‘Disrupters,’” *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Oct. 27, 1975; untitled cartoon, *NAPF*, Nov. 23, 1975, p. 1; “School Incidents Increase,” *ibid.*, Feb. 20, 1976, pp. 1, 12.

<sup>35</sup> “Free Press,” *ibid.*, Feb. 5, 1976, p. 2; “Free Press,” *ibid.*, Feb. 20, 1976, p. 2.

<sup>36</sup> On *NAPF* and other conservative issues, see “Statement of Purpose,” *ibid.*, Oct. 1975, p. 1; “Bureaucrats Busy Promoting County Metro Government”; “Bus Ride to Slavery”; “News Briefs,” *NAPF*, Feb. 20, 1976, p. 10; “Creeping Humanism,” *ibid.*, p. 6; Joe Williams, “Prelude to Submission,” *ibid.*, Oct. 1975, p. 3; Robert Herzberg, “Gun ‘Documentary’ Phony . . . and CBS Knew It,” reprint of Oct. 1, 1975, *National Spotlight* article, *NAPF*, Feb. 5, 1976, p. 3; S. Baumgartner, “E.R.A. and the Unborn Child,” *ibid.*, Feb. 20, 1975, p. 6; “A Reprint from The Phyllis Schlafly Report: Can a State Rescind Ratification of ERA?,” *ibid.*, Feb. 5, 1976, p. 10.

<sup>37</sup> Jim Adams, “New Antibusing Group Organizes in Louisville,” *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Oct. 9, 1975; Judi Ryce, “New Paper Emerges from Busing Fight,” *Louisville Times*, Oct. 16, 1975.

The author was unable to obtain copies of *The Issue* or the newsletter, the title of which was not revealed in the October 9, 1975, *Courier-Journal* article.

<sup>38</sup> On conservative newspapers and commentators in Boston, see Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 118, 123, 132, 152, 154, 187, 189–90, 236. On the South Boston Information Center, see *ibid.*, 152.

<sup>39</sup> On *NAPF* and grassroots conservative activists in other cities, see “Congrats to South Boston,” *NAPF*, March 9, 1976, p. 5; “Charlestown March Draws Local Group”; “Textbook Controversy—How Rev. Horan Got Involved,” *ibid.*, March 9, 1976, p. 4; and “Facts Don’t Add Up: In Detroit,” *ibid.*, Feb. 5, 1976, p. 6; “From the National R.O.A.R. Office,” undated reprint of *Boston News Digest* article, *NAPF*, March 9, 1976, p. 5. On *NAPF* and contacts with Detroit-area antibusers, see James Thomas, “Mayor Declares April 24 ‘Anti-busing Day,’” undated reprint of *Macomb* (Mich.) *Daily* article, *NAPF*, March 9, 1976, p. 1. On Carmen A. Roberts and *NAPF*, see incomplete edition of Nov. 15, 1976, issue of *NAPF*, “Clippings, June–Dec. 1976” folder, Carmen A. Roberts Papers.

<sup>40</sup> On *NAPF* circulation, see *NAPF*, Feb. 5, 1976, p. 1. The author was unable to verify *NAPF*’s claimed circulation, or determine how widely the newspaper was distributed. No issue of *NAPF* in the author’s possession, nor any articles about *NAPF* in the *Courier-Journal* or *Times*, identified the printer of the newspaper. On the *Courier-Journal* and *Times* circulation numbers, see *1976 Editor and Publisher International Yearbook*, 107. On *NAPF* and conservative alternative news media, see “ROAR Paper Praised,” *NAPF*, March 9, 1976, p. 10.

<sup>41</sup> On the belief of antibusers that the news media portrayed them as racists, and their denials that busing was a racial issue, see Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 152; and “Issue a National One, Not Racial,” *NAPF*, March 9, 1976, p. 11. On color-blind conservative rhetoric, see Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, “The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past,” *Journal of American History*, 91 (March 2005), 1233–63, esp. 1255; Lassiter, *Silent Majority*, 4–5, 153–59; Kevin M. Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism* (Princeton, 2005), 245; and Jason Sokol, *There Goes My Everything: White Southerners in the Age of Civil Rights* (New York, 2006), 226–27.

<sup>42</sup> On anticommunist rhetoric used by Jefferson County antibusers, see “Readers’ Views: Subject of School Busing Draws More Opinions from Letter Writers,” *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Aug. 30, 1975; “Readers’ Views: More Pros and Cons Are Heard on the Topic of Desegregation by Busing,” *ibid.*, Aug. 30, 1975; “Readers’ Views: More Readers Express Their Opinions of Decision on School Busing,” *ibid.*; “Readers’ Views: Subject of School Busing Draws More Opinions from Letter Writers,” *ibid.*, Sept. 17, 1975; and “Readers’ Views: More Opinions from Readers on Busing,” *ibid.*, Sept. 20, 1975. On accusations that Barry Bingham Jr. was a communist, see Richard Des Ruisseaux

and Judy Rosenfield, "About 200 Protestors March along Preston Near Southern High," *Louisville Times*, Sept. 5, 1975. On *NAPF* and accusations that the Bingham newspapers wanted to brainwash readers with communism, see "Bus Ride To Slavery." *NAPF* also reprinted items from the publication *National Spotlight*, produced by the Far Right organization Liberty Lobby, which used veiled anti-Semitic language. *NAPF* reprinted a *National Spotlight* stories on a "phony" 1975 CBS documentary on hunting that was widely criticized by conservatives, charges that CBS was owned by bankers, and gun control efforts. Whether *NAPF*'s editors recognized the veiled anti-Semitism in *National Spotlight* appears doubtful, because on the front page of its November 23, 1975, issue *NAPF* criticized a recent United Nations (UN) proclamation equating Zionism with racism, blamed communists in the UN for doing so, and urged Americans to stand with Jews. See Herzberg, "Gun 'Documentary' Phony . . . and CBS Knew It"; "Secret Gun Ban Pushed," reprint of Oct. 1, 1975, *National Spotlight* article, *NAPF*, Feb. 5, 1976, p. 7; "Banks Top Owners of CBS," *ibid.*; and "The U.N. Take Anti-Jewish Action," *NAPF*, Nov. 23, 1975, p. 1. For more on *National Spotlight* and anti-Semitism, see Chapter 6. On *NAPF*'s suggestion that communists were behind violence connected with racial integration, see "Communist Dynamite," *ibid.*, March 9, 1976, p. 12.

<sup>43</sup> K'Meyer, *Civil Rights in the Gateway to the South*, 271, 258.

<sup>44</sup> On racist rhetoric and violence connected to resistance to open housing and busing in Louisville, see *ibid.*, 137–38, 265–66, 270–74, 280–81; Dick Kaukas, "Women Stage Okolona March against Busing," *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Oct. 10, 1975; Mike Brown, "Black Persons Taunted by Busing Protestors," *ibid.*, Oct. 23, 1975; Mike Brown and Dick Kaukas, "Busing Protest Includes Incidents of Racial Discord," *Sunday Louisville Courier-Journal and Times*, Dec. 7, 1975; and photos and captions, *Liberty Bell*, May 1976, pp. 23, 24. Racial violence and rhetoric connected to the busing implementation were pervasive in Boston. See Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 1, 77–82, 144; Lukas, *Common Ground*, 157–59, 241, 511, 526–27, 531–33; and Jack Tager, *Boston Riots: Three Centuries of Social Violence* (Boston, 2001), 197–227. The April 1976 attack on black attorney Theodore Landsmark by young antibusing activists outside Boston City Hall was the most prominent incident of racially motivated violence during Boston's busing crisis. Stanley Forman's photograph of the attack, "The Soiling of Old Glory," showed a young antibusing activist using a United States flag attached to a staff as a spear-like weapon against Landsmark. The photograph won a Pulitzer Prize in 1977 and inspired a 2008 book. See Louis P. Masur, *The Soiling of Old Glory: The Story of a Photograph That Shocked America* (New York, 2008).

<sup>45</sup> On Robert F. Hughes, see Carolyn Colwell, "Anti-busing Leader Urges Boycotts: United Way, Service Stations Mentioned," *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Sep. 1, 1975. On Sue Connor and the

reference to Martin Luther King Jr., see Bob Hill and Caroline Yetter, “Anti-busing Forces Claim Victory; ‘Buses Are Empty,’ Sue Connor Says,” *Louisville Times*, Sept. 4, 1975. On “Truth about M. L. King,” see John F. McManus, “Truth about M. L. King,” *NAPF*, Feb. 5, 1976, p. 9; John F. McManus, “Truth about Martin Luther King,” the *Citizen*, March 1976, p. 25. On *NAPF* advertisements for a local Ku Klux Klan chapter, see “Those Interested in Information or Participation in the United Klans of America,” advertisement, *NAPF*, Feb. 5, 1976, p. 7; and “Those Interested in Information or Participation in the United Klans of America,” advertisement, *ibid.*, March 9, 1976, p. 4.

<sup>46</sup> Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 108–9, 161. On George Wallace, see Dan T. Carter, *The Politics of Rage: George Wallace, the Origins of the New Conservatism, and the Transformation of American Politics* (1995; Baton Rouge, 2000).

<sup>47</sup> Kenneth D. Durr, *Behind the Backlash: White Working-Class Politics in Baltimore, 1940–1980* (Chapel Hill, 2003); Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, 1996); Heather Ann Thompson, *Whose Detroit? Politics, Labor, and Race in a Modern American City* (Ithaca, 2001).

<sup>48</sup> Bob Hill interview, March 28, 1988; Minchin, *From Rights to Economics*, 147. In June 2007, the U.S. Supreme Court declared Jefferson County’s school integration plan unconstitutional in *Meredith v. Jefferson County School Board*. See Emily Bazelon, “The Next Kind of Integration,” *New York Times Magazine*, July 20, 2008; and Cameron Lawrence, “Riders on the Storm,” *Louisville Magazine*, Sept. 2002, pp. 52–59.

<sup>49</sup> The circulation drop might have been also attributable to other factors, but the author believes the widespread boycott of the newspapers by antibusing activists was the primary factor. The 24,708 figure represents the circulation drop for the combined *Courier-Journal* and *Times* editions, Monday through Saturday. The combined Monday–Saturday circulation in September 1974 was 394,539; in September 1976, it was 369,831. The newspapers published a combined *Courier-Journal* and *Times* Sunday edition. The *Sunday Courier-Journal* and *Times* circulation dropped by 14,371 (a 4 percent drop) between September 1974 and September 1975, but increased by 534 between September 1975 and September 1976. See “Firms Report Greater Pressure from Groups against Busing”; *1975 Editor and Publisher International Yearbook* (New York, 1975), 111; *1976 Editor and Publisher International Yearbook*, 107; and *1977 Editor and Publisher International Yearbook* (New York, 1977), I-95; *1971 Editor and Publisher International Yearbook* (New York, 1971), 130; and *1981 Editor and Publisher International Yearbook* (New York, 1981), I-111. On morning newspaper circulation in the 1970s, see Laura J.

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Miller and David Paul Nord, "Reading the Data on Books, Newspapers, and Magazines: A Statistical Appendix," in *The Enduring Book: Print Culture in Post War America*, vol. 5 of *A History of the Book in America*, eds. David Paul Nord, Joan Shelley Rubin, and Michael Schudson (Chapel Hill, 2009), 516.

<sup>50</sup> On awards received by the Bingham news media outlets for its reporting on busing, see "C-J to Be Honored for Its Busing Coverage," *Louisville Times*, March 31, 1976; "WHAS Wins Award for Integration Reporting," *ibid.*, April 15, 1976; and "Photographers for C-J&T Win Pulitzer," *Louisville Courier-Journal*, May 4, 1976.

## Chapter 2

### “The Only Honest Paper in Detroit”:

#### *Northeast Detroit*, a Newspaper for White Conservatives

In 1974 Bert Henry wrote a letter to *Northeast Detroit* that applauded its journalism. Henry wrote that *Northeast Detroit* was “the only honest paper in Detroit. It is the only conservative paper and it is the only paper that is any good for anything besides wrapping fish.” Henry and other conservatives in northeast Detroit and its adjacent suburbs read *Northeast Detroit* in the 1970s because they believed it provided honest, courageous, and truthful news and opinion on issues that mattered to the white homeowners who comprised the great majority of the newspaper’s readership: their residential neighborhoods, income and property taxes, crime and the policing of crime, and the public schools attended by their children. Those were the very issues that *Northeast Detroit* and its readers believed that the city’s daily newspapers and television stations either ignored totally or, if they did cover such issues, they distorted the truth.<sup>1</sup>

*Northeast Detroit* provided a local news alternative for Detroit-area residents who believed that liberalism was to blame for the alarming decline of their city. By the 1970s Detroit had become the most prominent symbol of the deterioration of America’s industrial cities. Decades of deindustrialization and the white flight of millions of residents (mostly whites), thousands of businesses, and millions of tax dollars had devastated the city. *Northeast Detroit* and its readers argued that racial liberalism and civil rights “gone too far” had destroyed once-thriving neighborhoods, workplaces, and the downtown area; led to out-of-control crime and liberal judges who refused to punish crime; ensured the election of a liberal black mayor who taxed Detroit’s white homeowners beyond their ability to pay; and

instituted reverse discrimination against whites through affirmative action programs and court-ordered busing.

This chapter provides a lens on how a weekly city neighborhood newspaper offered a source of news and a forum for white conservatives struggling with urban change. Like other conservative publications such as *NAPF*, *Citizens Informer*, and *South Boston Marshal*, *Northeast Detroit* was a strident critic of the local and national “liberal” news media. In this chapter I make four principal arguments:

First, I demonstrate that *Northeast Detroit* voiced the local and national concerns of its audience: the mostly white, working-class city and suburban residents who identified themselves as homeowners, taxpayers, and school parents. Homeowners turned to *Northeast Detroit* because it provided readers the kind of local news that conservatives believed was ignored by the city’s mainstream print and electronic news media. Although *Northeast Detroit* could not do its own reporting on national issues, it did provide opinion on both local and national issues that reflected the conservative political and cultural viewpoints of its readers. *Northeast Detroit* readers felt that those kinds of conservative views were missing in the mainstream local and national print and broadcast media. *Northeast Detroit* also served its readers by giving them a forum. Letters published in the “Editor’s Mail Box” overwhelmingly supported the newspaper’s point of view by decrying busing, affirmative action, urban crime, and the mayoral administration of Coleman Young. The newspaper’s willingness to print readers’ letters was a significant reason why loyal readers considered *Northeast Detroit* “their paper.” It served as both a news outlet and a citizens’ forum for Detroit-area conservatives seeking the kind of news and conservative viewpoints that they believed the vast majority of the news media intentionally suppressed.<sup>2</sup>



Second, I argue that *Northeast Detroit* played an essential role in publicizing, backing, and offering a forum for the grassroots campaign against busing in Detroit in the 1970s. When court-ordered busing was implemented in Detroit public schools in January 1976, *Northeast Detroit* regularly ran front-page stories with reports on violence in schools affected by busing—almost always incidents in which black students attacked white students—in an effort to show that busing was a failed liberal experiment. The newspaper also provided large amounts of coverage of and publicity for the antibusing organizations Northeast Mothers Alert (NEMA) and its citywide successor, Mothers Alert Detroit (MAD). Other conservative neighborhood newspapers in Detroit were also vital to the local antibusing movement, just as the conservative suburban newspaper *Macomb Daily* of Warren, Michigan, was essential to antibusers in the suburbs north of Detroit. Conservative newspapers in other cities such as Louisville and Boston also played key roles in grassroots campaigns against open housing and busing in the 1960s and 1970s. Finally, conservative newspapers that supported antibusing such as *Northeast Detroit* helped link like-minded conservatives across the country, just as the *Citizens Informer* helped link racial conservatives in St. Louis and Boston. Antibusing activists sent each other letters, newsletters, and newspaper clippings to keep each other informed about what was happening in cities where citizens were fighting busing and other liberal “evils.”

Third, like the Jefferson County, Kentucky, antibusing newspaper *NAPF*, *Northeast Detroit* characterized itself as a truth-telling alternative to the liberal news media and the city establishment. In 1976 *Northeast Detroit* provided detailed coverage of incidents of violence in Detroit public schools that had implemented court-ordered busing. The newspaper and its readers argued that incidents of violence were being covered up by the daily newspapers, the city school board, and the mayoral administration, all of whom had allegedly agreed to

downplay violence and portray busing positively. School parents and other readers thanked *Northeast Detroit* for its honesty and its courage to print the truth about what was happening in the schools. *Northeast Detroit* and many of its readers believed that the city's two daily newspapers and its TV stations, as well as the national TV news networks, were beholden to liberal and civil rights interests and were therefore unwilling or unable to report the truth about issues such as busing, affirmative action, and urban crime. White conservatives in Louisville, Boston, Pontiac, and Charlotte also accused local news media of colluding with the city government, the business community, school officials, and the judges who had ordered busing. *Northeast Detroit* regularly criticized the mayoral administration for proposing plans for downtown development, such as a convention center, a sports arena, and a mass transit system that the newspaper and its readers felt were destined to fail and would be paid for out of the pockets of the city's white homeowners.

Fourth and finally, I demonstrate that *Northeast Detroit* and its readers employed a mixture of "color-blind" conservative rhetoric that emphasized rights and freedoms and denied racism; coded language that suggested, implicitly, that blacks were responsible for crime and were inferior to whites; and, on occasion, explicitly racist rhetoric. Thus I again challenge the idea that racial resentments were no longer salient in white working-class urban politics of the 1970s. I argue that *Northeast Detroit* appealed to both city and suburban homeowners for whom racial resentments played an important role in their rejection of liberalism and the liberal news media.

### **Detroit in Urban Crisis**

Detroit in the 1970s was a city plagued by the flight of industry, businesses, and residents (especially whites) away from the city to the suburbs; rampant crime; grave

financial problems; and intense racial polarization. Between 1950 and 1970 Detroit lost more than one hundred thousand manufacturing jobs, its population fell from 1.85 million to 1.51 million, and the city's African American population increased from 16.2 percent to 44.5 percent, primarily due to white flight. Probably no other city symbolized the postwar decline of America's cities more so than Detroit, especially after its devastating 1967 riot.<sup>3</sup>

Yet Detroit's problems, particularly its racial tensions, did not emerge anew from the 1967 uprising. Even when Detroit was at its industrial peak and its automobile industry at its mightiest, racial conflict was constant. Throughout the twentieth century Detroit's African Americans voiced grievances about workplace and housing discrimination and police brutality, while white Detroiters sought to maintain rigidly segregated neighborhoods. Detroit was a city dominated by single-family homes and made up of neighborhoods heavily segregated by race—either overwhelmingly white, overwhelmingly black, or in the midst of racial change. As in most U.S. cities, Detroit's patterns of residential segregation were far from *de facto*—real estate agents, federal housing and mortgage agencies, and the legal and extralegal efforts of homeowner groups helped to ensure that many neighborhoods were largely off-limits to nonwhites. Whites' defenses of their homes and neighborhoods were often stated in racially explicit ways. In the aftermath of the city's 1967 riot, whites blamed the city's black population for racial integration, declining neighborhoods and property values, rising taxes, and crime and urban unrest. In a climate of fear, many Detroiters chose to arm themselves; one estimate suggested that Detroit residents owned more than five hundred thousand handguns in the early 1970s. Detroit's stark racial polarization was all too evident in the city's 1973 mayoral election. Former city police commissioner John F. Nichols, who campaigned on issues salient to the city's white homeowners—the policing of crime, the preservation of property values, and opposition to court-ordered busing—ran

against Coleman Young, an African American liberal who promised to abolish STRESS (Stop the Robberies, Enjoy Safe Streets), a controversial Detroit Police Department (DPD) anti-crime unit. In the end, Young narrowly won in a race in which he won 92 percent of city's black votes; in defeat, Nichols won 91 percent of the white vote.<sup>4</sup>

While the city's morning daily paper, the *Detroit Free Press*, endorsed Young in 1973, an altogether different kind of newspaper, *Northeast Detroit*, backed Nichols and called Young a "Negro Communist." *Northeast Detroit* had been providing residents of northeast Detroit with a conservative voice since its founding in 1945. *Northeast Detroit* was one of four newspapers owned by Northeast Detroit Publications, which also published *Harper Woods Herald*, *Grosse Pointe Guardian*, and (beginning sometime between 1972 and 1974) *St. Clair Shores Herald*—all essentially the same newspaper under different names—and served 16,500 readers in northeast Detroit and seven city suburbs. (For the sake of simplicity I will refer to the newspaper as *Northeast Detroit*.) A weekly broadsheet, *Northeast Detroit* billed itself simultaneously as "An Independent Newspaper Devoted to the Interests of Homeowners and Taxpayers," and as the "official" newspaper of the Northeast Homeowners Associations.<sup>5</sup>

### **The Politics of Homeownership**

The historian Thomas J. Sugrue has documented the history of white resistance to racial integration of predominantly white neighborhoods in Detroit. Between 1943 and 1965 Detroiters formed nearly two hundred neighborhood organizations (sometimes called "civic associations" or "improvement associations"); these organizations, Sugrue argues, "reshaped urban politics" in postwar Detroit by "moving the politics of race, homeownership, and neighborhood to center stage." Members of Detroit's homeowner groups shared the

common goal of protecting their most precious asset: their homes. Kenneth D. Durr, a historian of white working-class politics in postwar Baltimore, writes that the home “was a working-class family’s most valuable possession, usually held more tenuously than the property of the middle class.” White homeowners in Detroit joined forces with their neighbors to fight “blockbusting” practices by realtors, appealed to city officials to protect their neighborhoods, and used extralegal means such as threats and violence. Neighborhood associations were often at the heart of resistance to racial integration of predominantly white neighborhoods in other U.S. cities including Baltimore, Chicago, and Atlanta. Like most homeowner organizations in the city during the postwar era, the concerns of homeowners in northeast Detroit were primarily the safety and upkeep of their homes and neighborhoods, the threat of racial change to their properties, and taxes. Declining property values and rising taxes were major concerns for homeowners in Detroit, where the city government increasingly relied on property taxes for revenue as its tax base dwindled. Homeowner organizations were numerous and influential in northeast Detroit throughout the 1950s and 1960s. By the early 1970s neighborhoods in the northeast and the northwest areas were the last bastions of homeowner association activism in Detroit; thousands of other whites had sold their homes and left the city for the suburbs.<sup>6</sup>

As befitting an “official” homeowners association newspaper, *Northeast Detroit* carried articles with coverage of the activities, meetings, and concerns of local homeowner organizations. *Northeast Detroit* editors eschewed a strict demarcation between editorial comment and objective reporting, and thus many of its articles included strong conservative editorial commentary that would have seemed out of place outside a typical city daily newspaper’s editorial page. Traditional journalism standards of objectivity were not emphasized in *Northeast Detroit*, which regularly used sensationalistic and partisan all-caps

headlines such as “CREEPING SLUMS THREATEN AREA,” “STATE LAND USE LEGISLATION IS PROPERTY RIGHTS SELL-OUT,” “HIGHER TAXES ARE PREDICTED AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT,” and “NO HELP FROM 911 EMERGENCY CALL.” *Northeast Detroit*’s role as a voice (an often loud and alarmist one) for conservative white homeowners was well established by the 1970s. Following the 1967 riot, the newspaper helped foment fears that another violent uprising was imminent, city services would be sabotaged, and blacks would soon invade the suburbs and target white children for violence. For example, in February 1968 *Northeast Detroit* ran an article titled “Civil War in Detroit’s Future,” accompanied by the sub-headlines “Rioters Heavily Armed,” and “Shoot at White Children.” The article suggested that homeowners should “make ready for the beginning of the end,” and that they should expect thousands to die across the nation.<sup>7</sup>

Perhaps no other issue preoccupied Detroit and its suburbs in the 1970s more than law and order. *Northeast Detroit* was filled with information and commentary on crime and the policing of crime, and often suggested that crime was simply out of control. Beginning in the late 1960s conservatives across the country began to believe that crime was surging and little was being done to stop it. According to the historian Michael W. Flamm, crime “was the most visible sign and symbol of the perceived failure of activist government and of liberalism itself.” Fears about crime were particularly acute in Detroit, a city that had suffered through the 1967 riot and in the 1970s was undergoing major economic and racial change.<sup>8</sup>

*Northeast Detroit* editors, writers, and the majority of its readers agreed that liberalism, particularly in the form of the city’s liberal establishment, was to blame for the city’s crime problem. As the columnist “Cassandra” (the *nom de plume* of a columnist whose identity *Northeast Detroit* said was a “closely guarded secret”) wrote in 1974 that the

“implications of all-out liberalism” were “murder, rape, robbery and larceny.” *Northeast Detroit* articles such as May 1977’s “I Watched My Neighborhood Die” told of how once-safe neighborhoods had deteriorated because of crime, and provided information and tips for the protection of homes and neighborhoods. Stories about incidents of crime and reports about crime rates were regular front-page items—accompanied by headlines such as “Murder Suspect Is out on Bond; How Can It Happen?” *Northeast Detroit* also supported STRESS, the DPD special undercover unit that used aggressive measures to combat crime in poor, usually predominantly black, neighborhoods. Over a nine-month period in 1971, STRESS officers arrested 1,400 suspects and killed ten people, nine of whom were African Americans, and Detroit’s black citizens, according to the historian Heather Ann Thompson, had come to “view STRESS as little more than all-white, DPD-sanctioned vigilante organization.” *Northeast Detroit* readers and northeast Detroit homeowner associations enthusiastically supported STRESS; the Greenbriar Home Owner Association, for example, argued in a letter to *Northeast Detroit* that STRESS had been unfairly maligned by the liberal news media. *Northeast Detroit* and its readers also argued that liberal judges failed to effectively punish criminals. In a series of well-publicized trials between 1969 and 1973 local courts acquitted several blacks accused of violent crime, including the alleged murder of a STRESS officer. According to Thompson, by 1973 Detroit’s white conservatives believed that “radicals were taking over Detroit and that liberals were no longer simply fueling dependency through their myriad community programs—now they actually were catering to black criminals in their own courtrooms.”<sup>9</sup>

*Northeast Detroit* columnists such as Cassandra and A. H. Stedman II regularly assailed liberalism and civil rights and consistently provided readers forceful right-wing opinion on local, national, and international topics. Like many antibusers in Boston and

Louisville, the white conservatives who read *Northeast Detroit* were opposed to liberalism in all its forms, and they criticized court-ordered busing, affirmative action, welfare, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), sex education, abortion, the United Nations, and a host of other issues and concerns. Readers of the newspaper were able to share their anticommunist, antiliberal, and anti-civil rights views in *Northeast Detroit*'s "Editor's Mail Box." The journalism historian James Carey described journalism as a model of information and conversation—and *Northeast Detroit* offered its readers both. The newspaper printed large numbers of letters in every issue compared with most daily newspapers, did not prohibit regular letter writers from writing in week after week, and did not appear to edit letters for space. Over four issues in May 1974, *Northeast Detroit* printed a total of fifty letters in the "Editor's Mail Box," including eighteen letters in the May 23, 1974, edition. Many of the regular contributors to the "Editor's Mail Box" were vociferous critics of liberalism, including G. A. (Guy) Bachelard, who wrote in December 1977 that Detroit-area suburbanites should get ready for the same liberal initiatives and regulatory agencies that had crippled the city: "gems" including the Environmental Protection Agency, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, affirmative action, food stamps, and busing. Complaints about busing, government regulation of free enterprise and property rights, affirmative action, welfare assistance, and tax increases were regularly voiced in the "Editor's Mail Box." Readers also used the "Editor's Mail Box" to praise *Northeast Detroit*; a 1974 letter writer thanked *Northeast Detroit* for its willingness to print every letter she sent in, and she noted that the city dailies had yet to print any of her letters.<sup>10</sup>



## Conservative Media and Grassroots Social Movements

Like so many of the publications I examine in this dissertation, conservative newspapers such as *Northeast Detroit* were vital sources of opinion and served as political forums for conservatives who said they had had enough of civil rights, liberalism, and the liberal news media. *Northeast Detroit* also demonstrates that conservative news media of the 1970s could play important roles in grassroots conservative social movements such as opposition to busing. The newspaper offered local and national news about busing, publicized meetings and rallies of local antibusing organizations, praised the efforts of such organizations in columns and articles, invited antibusing activists to write guest columns, and allowed antibusing activists and ordinary citizens opposed to busing a forum for their views in the “Editor’s Mail Box.” Antibusers in Detroit and other cities claimed that the daily news media and electronic news media ignored busing opponents, and they turned to weekly neighborhood newspapers such as *Northeast Detroit* for publicity and support. I demonstrate that *Northeast Detroit* and other conservative news media in Detroit and other cities *certified* local antibusing movements and portrayed their activism as legitimate, praiseworthy, and even heroic.

In 1971 the city of Pontiac, located thirty miles northwest of downtown Detroit, instituted a busing plan that was met with fierce and sometimes violent resistance from antibusing protestors, many of whom charged that busing was unconstitutional and would lead to school violence. In the years that followed residents of Detroit and its suburbs lived in fear of busing, but in 1974 suburbanites were spared when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Milliken v. Bradley* that a metropolitan cross-district busing plan that included Detroit’s suburbs was unconstitutional. But Detroit public schools were not off the hook, and busing was finally implemented in January 1976. By that time Detroit’s antibusing movement had

been active for years. Among the antibusing groups that formed in Detroit in the early 1970s was North East Mothers Alert (NEMA), which eventually consolidated with antibusing organizations on the city's west side to form Mothers Alert Detroit (MAD) in 1975. NEMA and MAD drew their support primarily from neighborhoods dominated by white homeowners, including northeast Detroit.<sup>11</sup>

Throughout the early and mid-1970s *Northeast Detroit* made busing one of its focal points of coverage and reminded readers that if busing came to Detroit the result would be disaster. A major component of *Northeast Detroit*'s busing coverage was news about busing opposition. NEMA and MAD kept *Northeast Detroit* abreast of its activities, and the paper responded by providing those organizations with frequent and prominent coverage and by making it clear that the paper supported their efforts. NEMA and MAD's tactics included rallies and marches, demonstrations against and boycotts of local businesses that supported civil rights groups, and boycotts of the city's "liberal" daily newspapers. *Northeast Detroit* columnists declared their opposition to "forced busing" and their support of antibusing organizations in Detroit and other cities including Boston. For example, columnist Ross Christie Sr. praised MAD for its "courage" in a 1975 column titled "Racial Politics Is Object of Pro-bussing Officials." Christie argued that "blacks are now using the Democratic party as a vehicle to force the entire nation to accept their version of Civil Rights."<sup>12</sup>

In the mid-1970s MAD president Carmen Roberts was the most prominent antibusing leader in Detroit. She served on the city's Region 7 school board and was also a member of the Detroit chapter of Happiness of Womanhood (HOW), a committed opponent of public-school sex education and the ERA. *Northeast Detroit* gave Roberts frequent coverage and anointed her with hero-like status. In a December 1975 front-page article *Northeast Detroit* wrote that Roberts "has been one of those that everyone is

depending on. Any action to silence her or to halt her leadership of the anti-bussing movement would be a direct attack on each and every parent who opposes the forced bussing of their children.”<sup>13</sup>

Both NEMA and MAD used the “Editor’s Mail Box” to publicize their activities and call on readers to support the antibusing cause. In the November 7, 1974, “Editor’s Mail Box,” Pat Crump of NEMA called on antibusers to boycott downtown businesses, stop reading the daily newspapers, and only listen “to their radio for the news that was important.” NEMA also recognized the support it received from *Northeast Detroit*. In a June 1975 bylined article titled “Northeast Mother’s Alert Anti-bus March Successful,” Ronnie Kloock of NEMA wrote that its recent antibusing parade “was a big success thanks to *Northeast Detroit*. Your paper was one of two community papers that bothered to announce this event although press releases were sent to twenty-nine papers all told.” Kloock also declared, “Someone has to begin to listen to the plight of the silent majority!!!”<sup>14</sup>

*Northeast Detroit* was not the only community newspaper to offer coverage and support to Detroit’s antibusing movement. *East Side Community News*, which served Grosse Pointe, Harper Woods, and the east side of Detroit, provided frequent coverage of antibusing events. In April 1976 *East Side Community News* ran a front-page photograph of a very happy Carmen Roberts shaking the hand of George Wallace, the Alabama governor and outspoken opponent of busing and liberalism, who was visiting Detroit as part of his campaign for president in 1976. In June 1975 NEMA praised *Community News* for its “accurate” and “complete” reporting of a local antibusing rally. Another homeowners association newspaper, the monthly “*Hi*” *Neighbor*, also provided antibusing coverage and conservative views for Detroit residents. Finally, just six miles northwest of *Northeast*

*Detroit*'s editorial offices, the *Macomb Daily* of Warren, Michigan, sided with busing opponents and gave them frequent and positive coverage.<sup>15</sup>

Neighborhood newspapers similar to *Northeast Detroit* and *East Side Community News* in other cities provided white working-class residents a conservative alternative to daily newspapers during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. In Baltimore, white working-class residents who resented the “lies” of the *Baltimore Sun*, which supported civil rights, turned to weekly newspapers such as *South Baltimore Enterprise* and *East Baltimore Guide*, newspapers that “stood up for the concerns of their constituents when most mainstream publications did not,” according to the historian Kenneth D. Durr. Like *Northeast Detroit*, both the *Enterprise* and *Guide* provided news about violent crime that conservatives said the *Sun* covered up. And, like antibusing conservatives in Boston and Louisville, working-class whites in Baltimore came to see the *Sun* as representative of an elite liberal establishment that did not represent their interests.<sup>16</sup>

Conservative alternative news media such as *Northeast Detroit* helped busing opponents connect with conservative activists in other cities. Detroit antibusers clipped articles and “Editor’s Mail Box” letters from *Northeast Detroit* and sent them to antibusers in Boston, Louisville, and other cities to keep them informed about their activities and the latest local news about busing. Sharing antibusing newsletters and newspapers such as the Louisville antibusing newspaper *NAPF* was also essential for connecting antibusers in different cities; for example, I found an incomplete edition of a November 15, 1976, edition of *NAPF* among Carmen Roberts’s archived antibusing papers. Detroit antibusers also shared publications and reprinted articles from local and out-of-town conservative publications in their own newsletters and publications.<sup>17</sup>

## “Our Paper”

A March 1976 letter from reader Lee Harrison to *Northeast Detroit* declared, “Many of your readers feel that this newspaper is ‘our paper’ since it is our source of information about what is happening in our neighborhood.” Readers considered *Northeast Detroit* “their” paper partly because, like so many community papers, it provided news about local events, clubs, and meetings, including school activities, Girl Scouts meetings, and single adult dance parties. More often, readers praised *Northeast Detroit* because they believed it told the truth. Like other conservative newspapers, *Northeast Detroit* provided news that readers thought that the allegedly objective mainstream news media ignored or distorted.<sup>18</sup>

*Northeast Detroit*’s role as a conservative truth-teller offering the facts Detroit’s liberal news media allegedly covered up was apparent in its coverage of school violence in 1976. January 26, 1976, marked the first day of busing for Detroit’s public schools, and over the next two months, nearly every front page of *Northeast Detroit* featured bold, all-capital-letters headlines that indicated that busing had created an epidemic of violence in northeast Detroit schools. Front-page headlines in February and March of 1976 included “SCHOOL VIOLENCE CONTINUES” and “AUTHORITIES CONTINUE TO HIDE VIOLENCE.” *Northeast Detroit* alleged that school authorities, city officials, and the city’s daily newspapers and TV stations were colluding to covering up violent incidents in the schools to make busing appear successful. A March 1976 front-page article declared, “SCHOOL OFFICIALS SAY NOTHING: ATTACKS IN SCHOOLS CONTINUE.” The accompanying article cited twenty-three separate violent incidents occurring in seven different schools, and concluded with accusations of censorship:

Despite efforts by the Detroit Board of Education, reports of violence in the schools and injury to local children continue to leak past the Board’s self-imposed censorship.

While radio, TV, and daily papers refuse to print [anything] other than the “everything’s calm” releases issued by the Schools, the Detroit Police are being called into the schools on the average of once every seven minutes in this city.<sup>19</sup>

*Northeast Detroit*’s coverage of school violence was often racially explicit and suggested that black students were responsible for the majority of the violence. Front-page stories on school violence usually included a lengthy list of violent incidents at each school in the newspaper’s coverage area. The vast majority of incidents reported by *Northeast Detroit* involved black students attacking white students, who were often portrayed as innocent victims who only fought back when provoked. In a March 18, 1976, front-page story titled “Negro Attacks Girl at Osborn; Girl Suspended,” *Northeast Detroit* reported that a white student used a racial epithet, but only after she had been attacked: “Angry and in pain, Julie lost her temper and called her attacker a ‘nigger.’” Although antibusers in Detroit and elsewhere often insisted that busing was not a racial issue, *Northeast Detroit*’s coverage of school violence made it clear to readers that the newspaper believed busing put white students at the mercy of violent black students.<sup>20</sup>

*Northeast Detroit*’s coverage of violence in Detroit’s public schools in early 1976 sparked a contentious debate about the newspaper’s ethics. The newspaper described its view of the criticism it had received in its March 18, 1976, edition, under the headline “Parents Group Would Censor Reporting of School Crimes”:

*Northeast Detroit* and Herald Newspapers has become the target of an apparent organized protest by three area groups this week. The protest came as a result of the continued publication of stories reporting crime and violence in northeast area schools.

Leveling charges of racism, irresponsibility, inaccurate reporting and attempting to discredit and destroy successful peaceful integration, were two school groups and one pro-bussing organization.

*Northeast Detroit* printed the text of three different letters of complaint from two different mothers' clubs and the Let's Make It Work Committee, a group committed to the peaceful implementation of busing. The following week, the newspaper also printed a letter of complaint from the Region 7 Board of Education; the letter argued, understatedly, that a *Northeast Detroit* article on violence in the schools "showed a very emphasized racial bias."<sup>21</sup>

While supporters of busing decried the newspaper's "sensationalistic" coverage, loyal readers wrote in to the "Editor's Mail Box" to argue that *Northeast Detroit* was the only paper with the honesty and courage to print the truth—unlike school officials, the city dailies and TV stations, and the national news media. In the March 18, 1976 "Editor's Mail Box," John Dent wrote that he "opposed sensationalism in newspapers," but he believed that *Northeast Detroit* was "performing a major public service in printing the crime reports from local schools. We need that information." In the same issue, Gary Brewer explained that *Northeast Detroit* was important to him and other white parents opposed to busing and concerned about violence in the schools. "It is easy for people to sit back and yell RACIST when your paper prints the truth about what is happening in the schools," he wrote. "Please remember that there is still a silent majority out here that looks forward to reading your paper. It is our one source of information that we know doesn't give into the political pressures that effect the daily media."<sup>22</sup>

When violence flared in Boston during the 1974–1976 busing crisis, the neighborhood newspaper *West Roxbury Transcript* played a role similar to that of *Northeast Detroit* as a voice for local white conservatives who believed that the *Transcript* told the "truth" about busing and school violence. Busing opponents in Boston, like their counterparts in Louisville and Detroit, accused the local news media, especially the *Boston Globe*, of downplaying violence in schools, especially incidents of black-on-white violence.

*West Roxbury Transcript*, on the other hand, did not downplay violence related to busing nor did it tone down stories about black-on-white violence. In addition, the popular antibusing columnist Dick Sinnott, whose columns appeared in *West Roxbury Transcript* and other conservative neighborhood newspapers opposed to busing such as *South Boston Tribune*, as well as the Boston Police Patrolman's Association newspaper *Pax Centurion*, also called attention to black-on-white violence in Boston connected to busing while blaming the news media for allegedly depicting antibusers as racists.<sup>23</sup>

*Northeast Detroider* provided a crucial conservative voice and forum for its readers, but even its enthusiastic backers were aware that a weekly newspaper could not match the influence of daily newspapers and TV stations. In a December 1976 letter, reader Peter Brower wrote:

I have found that reading your paper supplies me with critical information affecting my home, my taxes, and the safety of myself and my family.

In addition, I repeatedly read information here that I see nowhere else. To me, that means that your staff is doing a job that needs to be done.

I am just sorry that the daily papers, the TV Stations and the radio cannot cover some of these same issues. As much as I enjoy your newspaper, even you will have to admit that you can't get your paper to as many people as—say, a TV station does.

Ellen Hook echoed Brower's views in a December 1974 letter in which she thanked the newspaper for its fine coverage, but acknowledged that most Detroit-area residents were forced to rely on the city dailies for "day-to-day" information. Though conservative newspapers such as *NAPF*, *South Boston Marshal*, and *Northeast Detroider* were beloved by their white conservative readership, the reality was that such papers could not hope to compete with mighty daily newspapers such as the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, *Boston Globe*, and *Detroit Free Press*—the kind of news media that conservatives associated with powerful local liberal establishments.<sup>24</sup>



### The “Liberal Establishment–Controlled News Media”

I argue that city and suburban residents turned to *Northeast Detroit* in part because Detroit’s daily newspapers and TV stations had failed to convince city and suburban readers and viewers that they shared a stake in the city’s future. In her 1991 book *Making Local News*, the media scholar Phyllis Kaniss explained that in the face of postwar suburbanization, daily newspapers attempted to position the city as a symbolic bond for a suburbanized, metropolitan audience. *Northeast Detroit*’s urban and suburban readers, however, unambiguously rejected the idea that they should have a shared interest or responsibility in the future of Detroit’s downtown, just as conservatives nationwide rejected the idea of “metro” identity and governance. As citizens who identified themselves as law-abiding, taxpaying citizens, *Northeast Detroit* readers objected to being taxed to pay for projects—liberal “schemes,” as they were often described by conservatives—that they believed would only benefit the central city and African Americans while penalizing white homeowners. *Northeast Detroit* echoed such views and allowed its readers to express them directly in the “Editor’s Mail Box.”<sup>25</sup>

Detroit conservatives believed that the city’s two daily newspapers, the morning *Detroit Free Press*, and, to a lesser extent, the evening *Detroit News*, did not tell the truth about Detroit’s stark reality and dim future. The *Free Press* was the more liberal of the two dailies, and it endorsed Coleman Young for mayor in 1973 and again in 1977. Joe Stroud, the editorial page editor of *Detroit Free Press* in the 1970s, told Phyllis Kaniss in 1984 that he used his column to emphasize hope for Detroit’s future. Yet this kind of spin likely created resentment among conservatives who interpreted the *Free Press*’s hopeful editorials as nothing but liberal exaggerations and lies. Some conservatives who read *Northeast Detroit* also saw the city dailies and TV stations as propaganda mouthpieces for the city

administration and business community. For example, both daily newspapers participated in a campaign launched in 1970 by Detroit's Central Business Association called "Talk Up Detroit." Detroit conservatives might have wondered how their daily newspapers could claim that they provided objective news about the city when they had promised the city's business establishment they would "talk up" Detroit's present and future.<sup>26</sup>

In *Making Local News*, Phyllis Kaniss also found that in some cities suburbanites believed that the local news media tended to exaggerate the benefits of downtown development projects such as convention centers and sports arenas and stadiums. In Detroit, both suburbanites and city homeowners rejected plans for downtown development, and white city residents were especially aggrieved because they believed that they would be the ones largely funding such projects through taxes. Such conservatives also cited the city's crime problem as a major reason that downtown development projects were doomed.

*Northeast Detroit* and its readers blasted tax hikes proposed by Mayor Young to fund plans for downtown development and mass transit, and defended suburbanites who felt that they should not be taxed by the city. Shortly after taking office Young proposed that the city build a new downtown arena to prevent the Detroit Red Wings hockey team from leaving for the suburbs (a project that eventually became Joe Louis Arena, which opened in 1979).

*Northeast Detroit* argued that no taxpayer money should be used to build an arena when the city's crime situation was so hopeless that no one wanted to venture downtown. *Northeast Detroit* was also hostile to what it called mass transit "experiments." It suggested that no one would use a mass transit system since so many jobs and department stores had fled to the suburbs; it also worried that mass transit might bring inner-city crime to the suburbs.

*Northeast Detroit* readers voiced concerns about personal safety when they critiqued proposals for downtown development and mass transit systems. In October 1976 Tim Liska

wrote that “[a]ll the mass transit in the world” would not change the fact that until “a woman is safe walking the streets of Detroit, there is nothing that would make me risk my life for a few bargains or an evenings entertainment. It isn’t Detroit that is dying. It’s the people who risk life and limb to venture out on its streets.”<sup>27</sup>

*Northeast Detroit* writers and readers also accused the city and the local news media of covering up crime. In the fall of 1976, after a suburban man was killed near the Olympia, the decaying city hockey arena, reader Bob Brookley attacked the city for trying to cover up the incident. “NO COMMENT is the only answer Detroit officials for the death of a suburban man at the Olympia,” he wrote. “Well that’s typical of the Detroit attitude. They are luring suburbanites into the city with promises of entertainment and shopping bargains and then they are killing them.” Joining city officials in the crime “cover-up,” *Northeast Detroit* readers alleged, were city daily newspapers and TV stations. In the same November 11, 1976, issue in which Brookley’s letter appeared, Richard Monteferro criticized local television station TV2 (WJBK, Detroit’s CBS affiliate station) for suggesting that the suburbs were no safer than the city. Monteferro called TV2’s arguments “patently false and misleading,” and credited a *Northeast Detroit* article praising the suburbs for being safer than the city for opening “a lot of eyes to the crime situation.”<sup>28</sup>

*Northeast Detroit* and readers who wrote in to the “Editor’s Mail Box” attacked the local and national “liberal” news media for allegedly supporting busing and insisting that it was a racial issue. In the December 16, 1976, front-page article “Forced Bussing Still Alive,” *Northeast Detroit* accused the liberal media of “brainwashing” the American public about busing:

The liberal media and others have taken years to brainwash the American people into the idea that the words racial and prejudice are the same.

Unfortunately, they have been all too successful in their efforts. By calling bussing a racial issue, they have forced Americans to believe that anyone who opposed bussing is prejudiced against minorities or are racists.

“Forced Bussing Still Alive” also argued that bussing was an issue “forced” on Americans by liberals who had successfully created a “national guilt complex.” The columnists A. H. Stedman II and Cassandra also offered plenty of harsh criticism of the mainstream news media and argued that the liberal news media failed to report the truth about the communist conspiracy. In Stedman’s many columns and letters to the editor he referred to the “liberal establishment–controlled news media” and called the *New York Times* the “New York *Pravda*.” He also had harsh words for other news media outlets including *Detroit Free Press*, *Detroit News*, *Time*, and the television networks. On the other hand, Stedman was full of praise for *Northeast Detroit*, which he said had the “guts and honesty” to reveal Mayor Young’s alleged ties to the Communist party. Stedman granted that *Northeast Detroit*’s impact was smaller than the city’s “two liberal papers,” but argued that because *Northeast Detroit* was not a member of the liberal elite establishment, it did not brainwash readers.<sup>29</sup>

Detroit’s antibusing organizations and leaders were also frequent and strident critics of the allegedly liberal news media, which they believed did not report the truth about bussing or violence in the schools because news organizations were in cahoots with local and federal government officials. At a 1976 antibusing meeting, antibusing leader Carmen Roberts said that the “news media are prostitutes for the federal government. They have made a deal with the Justice Department not to write anything negative about Detroit bussing so they won’t incite the community.” Linda Haerens, who served with Roberts in NEMA and MAD as well as the antifeminist organization HOW, echoed Roberts’s views about newspaper suppression of news about school violence in *Northeast Detroit*’s “Editor’s Mail Box.” “Keep printing the truth about the incidents in Detroit Public Schools,” Haerens wrote.

“Our major papers prefer to propagandize and maintain peace at all costs. Orders from the U.S. Justice Department no doubt.” Just like antibusers in Boston and Louisville, Detroit’s busing opponents believed that local and national news media were members of or partners with an all-powerful liberal establishment, and the unfortunate result was that such news media did not tell Americans the truth.<sup>30</sup>

### **“The White Man’s Conception of Law and Order”**

In her 2001 book *Whose Detroit? Politics, Labor, and Race in a Modern American City*, Heather Ann Thompson used the term “racially conservative” to characterize Detroiters who identified themselves as white homeowners opposed civil rights and liberalism. “Racially conservative” is an apt term to describe the philosophy of *Northeast Detroit* and its readers, who rejected all forms of racial liberalism and civil rights in the 1970s, including affirmative action and busing. Writers and readers used different kinds of rhetoric when they commented on issues that involved race. Often, like many antibusers in Boston and Louisville, they used “color-blind” language that emphasized constitutional freedoms and the rights of parents. Coded language was also used to suggest, implicitly, that blacks were responsible for crime and were inferior to whites. Finally, explicitly racist rhetoric was used by *Northeast Detroit* and readers to characterize African Americans as undeserving, incapable of hard work, and prone to crime and violence.<sup>31</sup>

For *Northeast Detroit* and its loyal readers, affirmative action was a liberal experiment designed by liberal elites that favored undeserving minorities and victimized hard-working whites. Affirmative action was particularly controversial in Detroit, where the auto industry and police department had instituted widely publicized affirmative action programs. The historian Dennis A. Deslippe has chronicled the hostile reaction of white officers in the

DPD who saw affirmative action as a threat to the time-honored seniority promotion system. Many white officers also interpreted affirmative action as yet another case of meddling by liberal elites who did not have to bear the burden of the liberal programs they designed, implemented, and advocated. City police officers opposed to affirmative action expressed their sense of victimization in racially explicit terms at a May 1975 rally in downtown Detroit; they held signs that read “Do Whites Have Rights?” and “Real Affirmative Action: Fire the Mayor.” *Northeast Detroit* echoed the views of Detroit police officers who blamed liberals and liberalism for “reverse discrimination.” It ran front-page stories on affirmative action in the auto industry, including an article headlined “AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IS KILLING THE BIG THREE AUTO COMPANIES” in November 1976, while a front-page headline of the same month read, “Affirmative Action, Government by Edict.”<sup>32</sup>

While *Northeast Detroit*’s coverage of “reverse discrimination” emphasized color-blind expressions of rights and fairness, its coverage and opinion on crime was often racially explicit. In fact, *Northeast Detroit* editors believed they had a responsibility to its readers to tell the truth about black crime, because other city news media would not tell that truth. In the aftermath of the 1967 riot *Northeast Detroit* had made racially explicit claims that black violence threatened whites, including white children. *Northeast Detroit* editor Jim Schmidt, who often reported for work armed with a handgun, said in 1968 that he believed the news media had “a gentleman’s agreement to play down the news of racial tension”; thus, *Northeast Detroit* had a duty to make Detroit’s black population aware that the city’s whites were “armed to the teeth. If the militant Negroes plan to riot and snipe, they’d get killed immediately.”<sup>33</sup>

In the 1970s *Northeast Detroit* ran front-page headlines emphasizing race such as “Negro Communist Seeks Election,” about Coleman Young’s bid for the mayor’s office, and “Negro Attacks Girl at Osborn,” about black-on-white school violence. *Northeast Detroit* argued that because Mayor Young was black, the city administration was only concerned with Detroit’s black citizens and the inner city. The columnists Cassandra and A. H. Stedman II also used racist language in their columns. In an October 1974 column Cassandra praised antibusing protestors in Boston and attacked the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), calling it a “pressure group” that had “sold the country on the idea that separation of the races is immoral; therefore, irreligious and unlawful.” In a column responding to the termination of STRESS, Cassandra argued that Detroit’s blacks had a higher tolerance for crime than did whites. “To impose the white man’s conception of law and order in Detroit’s large Black population has been repeatedly interpreted by them to be ‘oppression,’” Cassandra wrote. Cassandra also used anti-Semitic rhetoric to argue that Jews were “manipulator[s].” Cassandra’s fellow columnist Stedman often used a language of rights to defend a conservative silent majority allegedly tyrannized by liberalism and civil rights, but he used racist language to fend off any notions that whites should feel guilty about slavery. Stedman and other columnists argued that Martin Luther King Jr. was a communist and should not be honored as a hero. Finally, in an unbylined May 1976 column in *Northeast Detroit* titled “Thin Line Separates Racism and Civil Rights,” the anonymous writer claimed that he was not a racist, but then went on to blame Detroit’s problems squarely on blacks:

The white race has achieved a high level of civilization and it took centuries to reach this level. The African peoples remained the same through these centuries and did not begin to advance until there was contact between the two races. . . . Detroiters who remember when Detroit was predominantly white remember when they could walk out alone at home. They remember when Detroit was not known as “Murder City” and when

criminals were prosecuted. They remember when downtown stores did not have iron shutters outside and armed guards inside.<sup>34</sup>

*Northeast Detroit* letter writers used racially explicit language in the “Editor’s Mail Box” when lamenting Detroit’s crime problems and the specter of tax hikes to pay for downtown development. In the Christmas Day 1975 “Editor’s Mail Box,” Gregg Lesinski complained that Michigan residents were “taxed to the limit of their ability to pay,” and then wrote sarcastically, “I agree with Mayor Young. Let Detroit help itself IF it wants too, but let those of us living in the suburbs alone. It is bad enough we have to work in that jungle without have to pay to feed the animals too.” Stan Simek wrote in March 1977 that if the downtown arena plan went forward, the victim would be the white taxpayer. He wrote that the arena should be called “Young’s White Donkey,” instead of a white elephant: “The ‘white’ part of the name is for us, the taxpayers, and the ‘donkey’ part is for the jackasses who voted to approve the whole mess.” Readers also resented that, from their point of view, blacks were now in charge. Edna St. John complained in an October 1974 letter that black people were once known as “colored,” but then they demanded to be Negroes, then Afro Americans, and then Blacks. “The way the government, the Civil Rights Commission and the courts are going, pretty soon well have to call them all ‘SIR.’”<sup>35</sup>

## Conclusion

In his 2003 book *Behind the Backlash: White Working-Class Politics in Baltimore, 1940–1980*, Kenneth D. Durr argued that explicit racial resentments had largely disappeared from white urban working-class politics by the 1970s. The racist language and opinions found in *Northeast Detroit*, a newspaper that provided a source of information and a forum for white working-class conservatives in the 1970s, belies Durr’s contention. *Northeast Detroit* readers and Detroit antibusers often argued that they were not racists, and blamed liberals and the



liberal media for characterizing them as racists. Those claims were also voiced by busing opponents in Boston, Louisville, and other cities. Yet the racism found in *Northeast Detroit*, a conservative newspaper considered by many readers and busing opponents as “our paper,” cannot be dismissed as the province of a small minority of racist extremists. Only a handful of readers wrote letters to complain about the racism or anti-Semitism found in *Northeast Detroit* and its “Editor’s Mail Box.” In fact, *Northeast Detroit*’s racially explicit coverage of school violence in 1976 was lauded by its readers. This chapter argues that racial resentments were key factors in the rejection of liberalism by *Northeast Detroit* and its readers, and I suggest that the fact that those racial resentments were voiced implicitly and explicitly in *Northeast Detroit* and its “Editor’s Mail Box” was a significant reason why its loyal readers read the newspaper, wrote letters to it, and preferred it to the “liberal” news media.<sup>36</sup>

I make similar arguments about the salience of racial resentments in chapter 3. Like antibusers in Louisville and Detroit, Boston busing opponents often denied that they were racists and blamed the news media for portraying them as racists. Yet a number of prominent Boston antibusing leaders enthusiastically welcomed the support of the virulently racist St. Louis–area Citizens’ Council newspaper *Citizens Informer*, which offered a steady critique of racial liberalism, busing, and the liberal news media throughout the 1970s.

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<sup>1</sup> “Editor’s Mail Box,” *Northeast Detroit*, Nov. 7, 1974, p. 2; “Editor’s Mail Box,” *ibid.*, Oct. 10, 1974, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> On white conservatives who identified themselves as “homeowners, taxpayers, and schoolparents,” see Matthew D. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton, 2006), 7.

<sup>3</sup> Dennis A. Deslippe, “‘Do Whites Have Rights?’: White Detroit Policemen and ‘Reverse Discrimination’ Protests in the 1970s,” *Journal of American History*, 91 (Dec. 2004), 932–60, esp. 938; Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, 1996), 23.

<sup>4</sup> Eleanor P. Wolf, *The Detroit School Segregation Case* (Detroit, 1981), 163; Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis*, 33–88, 181–258; Deslippe, “‘Do Whites Have Rights?’,” 941; B. J. Widick, *Detroit: City of Race and Class Violence* (Chicago, 1972), 213.

<sup>5</sup> Al Harvard, “Mrs. Nichols: Future First Lady” and accompanying photograph, *Northeast Detroit*, Nov. 1, 1973, p. 1; “Negro Communist Seeks Election: Congress Identifies Coleman Young as Communist,” *ibid.*, Aug. 2, 1973, p. 1. “Negro Communist Seeks Election” revealed that the Congressional Un-American Activities Committee identified Young as one of “top three” black communists in December 1952. See *ibid.* John F. Nichols ran campaign advertisements in *Northeast Detroit*. See advertisement, *ibid.*, Nov. 1, 1973, back page. On the towns served by Northeast Detroit Publications and circulation, see *ibid.*, March 18, 1976, p. 1; “Northeast Detroit Publications,” information box, *ibid.*, March 25, 1976, p. 2; “Northeast Detroit” information box, *ibid.*, Jan. 27, 1972, p. 2; “Northeast Detroit” information box, *ibid.*, April 4, 1974, p. 8; “Northeast Detroit” information box, *ibid.*, March 18, 1976, p. 1; and *1970 Editor and Publisher International Year Book* (New York, 1970), 347. At the end of the 1970s *Editor and Publisher* reported that *Northeast Detroit* and *Harper Woods Herald* had a circulation of 6,400 paid and 4,200 unpaid. See *1981 Editor and Publisher International YearBook* (New York, 1981), I-325. On *Northeast Detroit* as an independent newspaper and the “official” newspaper of the Northeast Homeowners Association, see “Northeast Detroit Publications,” information box, *Northeast Detroit*, March 25, 1976, p. 2; [no headline], *ibid.*, Nov. 28, 1974, p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> On white resistance to residential racial integration in Detroit and other cities, see Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis*, 209, 211; Kenneth D. Durr, *Behind the Backlash, White Working-Class Politics in Baltimore, 1940–1980* (Chapel Hill, 2003), 82–111, esp. 84–85; Kevin M. Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta*

and the Making of Modern Conservatism (Princeton, 2005); Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago 1940–1960* (Chicago, 1983); Tracy K'Meyer, *Civil Rights in the Gateway to the South: Louisville, Kentucky, 1945–1980* (Lexington, Ky., 2009); and Stephen Grant Meyer, *As Long As They Don't Move Next Door: Segregation and Racial Conflict in American Neighborhoods* (Lanham, 2001). On the concerns of Detroit homeowners, see Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis*, 211–12, 215, 229, 231–58, 265; and Heather Ann Thompson, *Whose Detroit? Politics, Labor, and Race in a Modern American City* (Ithaca, 2001), 209.

<sup>7</sup> On *Northeast Detroit* coverage of homeowner organizations and their concerns, see “Forced Bussing Problems Not Over Yet,” *Northeast Detroit*, Aug. 15, 1974, p. 1; “Creeping Slums Threaten Area; Eye-Sores Cost Money” *ibid.*, March 15, 1973, p. 1; “NO HELP FROM 911 EMERGENCY CALL: Mrs. Robert Collins Twenty-Six Minutes of Terror; Your Husband Has Been Kidnapped,” *ibid.*, Nov. 4, 1976, p. 1; “STATE LAND USE LEGISLATION IS PROPERTY RIGHTS SELL-OUT,” *ibid.*, Aug. 22, 1974, p. 1; and “HIGHER TAXES ARE PREDICTED AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT,” *ibid.*, Nov. 14, 1974, p. 1. On *Northeast Detroit* following the 1967 riot, see Marilyn Rosenthal, “Where Rumor Raged,” *Trans-action*, 8 (Feb. 1971), 35, 37, 39.

<sup>8</sup> Michael W. Flamm, *Law and Order: Street Crime, Civil Unrest, and the Crisis of Liberalism in the 1960s* (New York, 2005), 4.

<sup>9</sup> On Cassandra, see Cassandra, “Why Detroit Remains Murder Capitol,” *Northeast Detroit*, Jan. 24, 1974, p. 3; Cassandra, “Congress Lost Control of Country,” *ibid.*, Feb. 15, 1973, p. 6; Cassandra, “Some Old Promises from Mayor Young,” *ibid.*, Jan. 17, 1974, p. 8; and “Editor’s Mail Box,” *ibid.*, Jan. 17, 1974, p. 2. On *Northeast Detroit* coverage of crime and neighborhood safety, see “I Watched My Neighborhood Die,” *ibid.*, May 5, 1977, p. 1; “Cooperation, Dedication Can Stop Northeast Detroit Crime,” *ibid.*, April 28, 1977, p. 1; “Creeping Slums Threaten Area”; “Crime Rate Continues to Increase in Detroit, Suburban Communities,” *ibid.*, Dec. 5, 1974, p. 1; Raymond Raymond, “Scared Woman Won’t Prosecute Mugger,” *ibid.*, May 5, 1977, p. 1; “No Help From 911,” *ibid.*, Nov. 4, 1976, p. 1; and Jim Schmidt, “Murder Suspect Is Out on Bond; How Can It Happen?” *ibid.*, Aug. 29, 1974, p. 1. On STRESS, see Thompson, *Whose Detroit?*, 82. On support of STRESS, see “Public Letter Box,” *Northeast Detroit*, Jan. 11, 1973, p. 2; Kitty McIntyre, “Von Steuben Supports STRESS with Letters to Commissioner,” *ibid.*, Feb. 1, 1973, n.p.; “Northeast Council of Homeowners to Honor Commissioner Nichols: Support STRESS,” *ibid.*, Feb. 15, 1973, p. 1; “Editor’s Mail Box,” *ibid.*, Jan. 18, 1973, p. 2; and “Editor’s Mail Box,” *ibid.*, Jan. 25, 1973, p. 2. On white Detroit residents, courts, and crime, see Thompson, *Whose Detroit?*, 128, 147–55, esp. 155.

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<sup>10</sup> A. H. Stedman II, "Thanksgiving and Free Enterprise," *Northeast Detroit*, Nov. 28, 1974, p. 5; A. H. Stedman, "Big Brother Plan," *ibid.*, Oct. 17, 1974, p. 5; A. H. Stedman II, "Panama Canal Treaty Another Give-Away," *ibid.*, April 4, 1974, p. 4; A. H. Stedman II, "Peace Movement," *ibid.*, March 14, 1974, p. 4; A. H. Stedman II, "How the Communists Use American Negroes," *ibid.*, Nov. 15, 1973, p. 2; A. H. Stedman II, "Liberals Push Martin King for Next National Holiday," *ibid.*, Jan. 13, 1977, p. 8. On journalism as a model of information and conversation, see David Paul Nord, *Communities of Journalism: A History of American Newspapers and Their Readers* (Urbana, 2001), 6, 7. On the numbers of letters printed by *Northeast Detroit*, see "Editor's Mail Box," *Northeast Detroit*, May 2, 9, 16, and 23, 1974, p. 2. Before it became the "Editor's Mail Box" in January 1973, *Northeast Detroit*'s letters-to-the-editor section was called the "Public Letter Box." In January 1977 "Editor's Mail Box" was renamed "Letters to the Editor." On G. A. (Guy) Bachelard, see "Letters to the Editor," *ibid.*, Dec. 15, 1977, p. 2. On readers' praise of *Northeast Detroit*, see "Editor's Mail Box," *ibid.*, May 30, 1974, p. 2.

<sup>11</sup> On busing in metropolitan Detroit, see David Riddle, "Race and Reaction in Warren, Michigan, 1971–1974: *Bradley v. Milliken* and the Cross-District Busing Controversy," *Michigan Historical Review*, 26 (no. 2, 2000), 1–49, esp. 1–2, 22–23. On Detroit and school integration, see Wolf, *Detroit School Segregation Case*; and Joyce A. Baugh, *The Detroit School Busing Case: Milliken v. Bradley and the Controversy over Desegregation* (Lawrence, 2011). On Detroit's antibusing movement, see Thompson, *Whose Detroit?*, 95; and "Mothers Alert Expands into City-Wide Group," "*Hi*" *Neighbor*, Aug. 1975, pp. 1–2, clipping, "Clippings June–Dec. 1976" folder [apparently misfiled], Carmen A. Roberts Papers, 1972–1981 (Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.).

<sup>12</sup> On *Northeast Detroit* busing coverage, see "FORCED BUSSING PROBLEMS NOT OVER FOR DETROITERS YET," *Northeast Detroit*, Aug. 15, 1974, p. 1; "NEW BUSSING PLAN IS FOR ALL INTERMEDIATE AND HIGH SCHOOLS," *ibid.*, Oct. 10, 1974, p. 1; and "Bussing Costs to Hit \$12 Million; For Just Six Months," *ibid.*, Feb. 24, 1977, p. 1. On *Northeast Detroit* coverage of NEMA and MAD, see Kittye McIntyre, "Carmen Roberts Guest at Von Steuben Meet," *ibid.*, Feb. 24, 1977, p. 2; "MAD Chooses Wohlfield as New Pres.," *ibid.*, Oct. 7, 1976, p. 2; and "NANS Challenges Rights Reports," *ibid.*, Oct. 14, 1976, p. 1. On antibusing boycotts, see "Editor's Mail Box," *ibid.*, Nov. 7, 1974, p. 2; and "Boycott Farmer Jack Supermarket," flyer, n.d., "Mothers Alert Detroit, Misc., 1973–1974" folder, box 1, Shirley Wohlfield Papers, 1972–1988 (Bentley Historical Library). On *Northeast Detroit* columnists and busing, see Cassandra, "Forced Bussing Issue Never Had a Majority and Never Got a Vote," *Northeast Detroit*, Oct. 31,

1974, p. 5; and Ross Christie Sr., “Racial Politics Is Object of Pro-bussing Officials,” *ibid.*, Oct. 28, 1976, p. 7.

<sup>13</sup> Carmen Roberts was elected to the Region 7 school board in 1976. See “Anti-busing Leader Speaks in Louisville,” *Community News*, Oct. 7, 1976, p. 5-A, clipping, “Clippings, Jan–May 1976” folder, Carmen A. Roberts Papers. On *Northeast Detroit*’s praise of Roberts, see “Is Mrs. Carmen Roberts Going to Jail?,” *Northeast Detroit*, Dec. 25, 1975, p. 1.

<sup>14</sup> “Editor’s Mail Box,” *ibid.*, Nov. 7, 1974, p. 2; R. Kloock, “Northeast Mother’s Alert Anti-bus March Successful,” *ibid.*, June 19, 1975, p. 5. Carmen Roberts also wrote in to the “Editor’s Mail Box” to thank supporters. See “Editor’s Mail Box,” *ibid.*, March 22, 1973, p. 2.

<sup>15</sup> On *East Side Community News*, see James Thomas, “Neighboring County Follows Anti-busing Lead; Washington March Planned,” *Community News*, Feb. 26, 1976, n.p., “Clippings Jan.–May 1976” folder, Carmen A. Roberts Papers; “Greeting Governor Wallace,” photograph and caption, *Community News*, April 15, 1976, p. 1, clipping, *ibid.*; and “Coverage Praised,” *Community News*, June 26, 1975, n.p., clipping, “Clippings, 1975” folder, *ibid.* On “*Hi*” *Neighbor*, see “Mothers Alert Expands into City-Wide Group”; “Van Dyke Seven Mile Businessmen Initiate ‘Silent Observer’ Program; To Prevent Crime,” “*Hi*” *Neighbor*, Aug. 1975, p. 1, clipping, “Clippings June–Dec. 1976” folder [apparently misfiled], Carmen A. Roberts Papers; and “Citizen Group Launches Strong Petition Drive to Recall Controversial Detroit Mayor Young; Northeast Council of Homeowners Association President Explains Recall Petition Attempt,” *ibid.*, pp. 1, 4. On *Macomb Daily*, see Riddle, “Race and Reaction in Warren, Michigan.”

<sup>16</sup> Durr, *Behind the Backlash*, 75, 92–93, 139, 142.

<sup>17</sup> Incomplete edition of Nov. 15, 1976, issue of *NAPF*, “Clippings, June–Dec. 1976” folder, Carmen A. Roberts Papers; “NAG Rag,” Jan. 7, 1972, “NEMA History and Notes 1972–1973” folder, box 1, Shirley Wohlfield Papers.

<sup>18</sup> “Editor’s Mail Box,” *Northeast Detroit*, March 25, 1976, p. 2; “Editor’s Mail Box,” *ibid.*, March 18, 1976, p. 2; “Beach Party,” *ibid.*, June 19, 1975, n.p.; “Dance Party Is Scheduled,” *ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> “AUTHORITIES CONTINUE TO HIDE VIOLENCE—CRIME IN SCHOOLS,” *ibid.*, Feb. 26, 1976, p. 1; “SCHOOL VIOLENCE CONTINUES; 8th Week of Bussing,” *ibid.*, March 18, 1976, p. 1; “SCHOOL OFFICIALS SAY NOTHING: ATTACKS IN SCHOOLS CONTINUE,” *ibid.*, March 4, 1976, p. 1.

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<sup>20</sup> “Negro Attacks Girl at Osborn; Girl Suspended,” *ibid.*, March 18, 1976, p. 1. On antibusers and their argument that busing was not a racial issue, see “Editor’s Mail Box,” *ibid.*, 2.

<sup>21</sup> “Parents Group Would Censor Reporting of School Crimes,” *ibid.*, 1; “Editor’s Mail Box,” *ibid.*, March 25, 1976, p. 2.

<sup>22</sup> For John Dent’s and Gary Brewer’s letters, see “Editor’s Mail Box,” *ibid.*, March 18, 1976, p. 2. For other letters that supported the newspaper’s coverage of busing and school violence, see *ibid.*; and “Editor’s Mail Box,” *ibid.*, March 25, 1976, p. 2.

<sup>23</sup> Ronald P. Formisano, *Boston against Busing: Race, Class, and Ethnicity in the 1960s and 1970s* (Chapel Hill, 1991), 75–76, 154–55, 187–89.

<sup>24</sup> “Editor’s Mail Box,” *Northeast Detroit*, Dec. 16, 1976, p. 2; “Editor’s Mail Box,” *ibid.*, Dec. 5, 1974, p. 2.

<sup>25</sup> Phyllis Kaniss, *Making Local News* (Chicago, 1991), 3–5, 54–59, 64–68.

<sup>26</sup> On *Detroit Free Press*, see Frank Angelo, *On Guard: A History of the Detroit Free Press* (Detroit, 1981), 263. On *Detroit News*, see Thompson, *Whose Detroit?*, 154. B. J. Widick, author of the 1972 book *Detroit: City of Race and Class Violence*, suggested that the *News*’s emphasis on crime in the city in the early 1970s helped “keep the city in a state of fear.” See Widick, *Detroit*, 214. On Joe Stroud of the *Free Press*, see Kaniss, *Making Local News*, 234. On “Talk Up Detroit,” see Widick, *Detroit*, 216.

<sup>27</sup> Kaniss, *Making Local News*, 233. On *Northeast Detroit* and taxes, see “Tax Notices Are Big Shock,” *Northeast Detroit*, Feb. 10, 1977, p. 1; and “Letters to the Editor,” *ibid.*, Feb. 24, 1977, p. 2. On Joe Louis Arena, see Neil deMause and Joanna Cagan, *Field of Schemes: How the Great Stadium Swindle Turns Public Money into Private Profit* (Lincoln, 2008), 99. On *Northeast Detroit* and proposed arena, see “Taxpayers Stuck with Arena,” *Northeast Detroit*, March 17, 1977, p. 1. On *Northeast Detroit* and mass transit proposals, see “TAXPAYER DOLLARS TO PAY THE BILL FOR AREA MASS TRANSIT EXPERIMENT,” *ibid.*, Nov. 18, 1976, p. 1; and “\$600 Million Grant to SEMTA,” *ibid.*, Feb. 17, 1977, p. 1. On readers and attitudes about downtown development and mass transit, see “Editor’s Mail Box,” *ibid.*, Oct. 21, 1976, p. 2; and “Letters to the Editor,” *ibid.*, Feb. 24, 1977, p. 2.

<sup>28</sup> “Editor’s Mail Box,” *ibid.*, Nov. 11, 1976, p. 2.

<sup>29</sup> “Forced Bussing Still Alive,” *ibid.*, Dec. 16, 1976, p. 1; Cassandra, “Television Credibility,” *ibid.*, April 4, 1974, p. 8; Stedman, “Questions—Answers from A. H. Stedman II”; “Editor’s Mail

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Box,” *ibid.*, May 9, 1974, p. 2; “Editor’s Mail Box,” *ibid.*, Feb. 21, 1974, p. 2; Stedman, “Liberal Press: From Custer to Elections”; A. H. Stedman II, “American Teen-ager: Portrait of a Problem,” *ibid.*, Nov. 21, 1974; A. H. Stedman II, “When Reading the News Consider the Source,” *ibid.*, Jan. 20, 1977, p. 6; A. H. Stedman II, “Stedman Sees Different ‘Tail-Gunner Joe’ Story,” *ibid.*, Feb. 24, 1977, p. 8.

<sup>30</sup> Douglas Ilka, “Bussing Foe Takes ‘Crusade’ to the Suburbs,” *Detroit News*, March 9, 1976, p. 2-B, clipping, “Clippings, Jan.–May 1976” folder, Carmen A. Roberts Papers; “Editor’s Mail Box,” *Northeast Detroitier*, March 25, 1976, p. 2.

<sup>31</sup> Thompson, *Whose Detroit?*, 95. On color-blind rhetoric, see Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, “The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past,” *Journal of American History*, 91 (March 2005), 1233–63, esp. 1255; and Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis*, 218–19.

<sup>32</sup> Deslippe, “Do Whites Have Rights?,” 947, 933, 936; “AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IS KILLING THE BIG THREE AUTO COMPANIES; Executives Leaving for Volkswagen,” *Northeast Detroitier*, Nov. 11, 1976, p. 1; “Affirmative Action, Government By Edict,” *ibid.*; “Editor’s Mail Box,” *ibid.*, Nov. 18, 1976, p. 2.

<sup>33</sup> Rosenthal, “Where Rumor Raged,” 35, 37. Marilyn Rosenthal, a sociologist, also argued that the *Observer* newspapers representing the northwest Detroit suburbs and the suburban *Macomb Daily* also fomented fears about racial violence. See *ibid.*, 38.

<sup>34</sup> “Negro Communist Seeks Election”; “Negro Attacks Girl at Osborn.” Also see “BLACKS THREATEN REGION SIX; We’ll Bring Guns Next Time,” *Northeast Detroitier*, Feb. 15, 1973, p. 1. On Mayor Young and alleged favoritism toward blacks, see Ross Christie Sr., “Judicial Dictatorship Could Cause Revolution,” *ibid.*, Nov. 20, 1975, n.p. On Cassandra and racist and anti-Semitic rhetoric, see Cassandra, “Forced Bussing Issue Never Had a Majority and Never Got a Vote”; Cassandra, “Why Detroit Remains Murder Capitol”; Cassandra, “Minority Political Power Blamed for Butz Dismissal,” *ibid.*, Oct. 14, 1976, p. 6. In January 1977 reader Albert Stein wrote that while he agreed with many of *Northeast Detroitier’s* editorial positions, he was saddened by the anti-Semitism he was seeing in the paper. “Recent articles in your newspaper under the obviously phony by-line of CASSANDRA are giving your newspaper a decidedly anti-Jewish reputation,” he wrote. See “Letters to the Editor,” *ibid.*, Jan. 13, 1977, p. 2. For other examples of racist rhetoric in *Northeast Detroitier*, see Stedman, “Questions—Answers from A. H. Stedman II”; and “Thin Line Separates Racism and Civil Rights,” *ibid.*, May 6, 1976, n.p.

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<sup>35</sup> “Editor’s Mail Box,” *ibid.*, Dec. 25, 1975, p. 2; “Letters to the Editor,” *ibid.*, March 24, 1977, p. 2; “Editor’s Mail Box,” *ibid.*, Oct. 31, 1974, p. 2.

<sup>36</sup> Durr, *Behind the Backlash*, 205. On antibusers’ denials that they were motivated by racism and their belief that the liberal news media depicted them as racists, see Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 150–58; and “Thinking Out Loud!,” copy of letter from James Venema, National Association of Neighborhood Schools to *Evening Journal*, Dec. 7, 1976, in “Mothers Alert Detroit, Corresp., September 1976–March 1977” folder, box 1, Shirley Wohlfield Papers. For letters to the *Northeast Detroit* criticizing the newspaper’s racial views and rhetoric, see “Editor’s Mail Box,” *Northeast Detroit*, Feb. 14, 1974, p. 2; “To the School Board,” *ibid.*, March 18, 1976, p. 1; “Editor’s Mail Box,” *ibid.*, Dec. 2, 1976, p. 2; and “Letters to the Editor,” *ibid.*, March 24, 1977, n.p.



### Chapter 3

#### “The Voice of the No Longer Silent Majority”:

#### The St. Louis *Citizens Informer*, Liberal News Media Bias, and Busing in Boston

In the summer of 1975, Jack Doran of South Boston, Massachusetts, wrote a letter to the editor of *Citizens Informer*, a monthly newspaper published by the St. Louis–area chapters of the Citizens’ Councils of America. Doran was one of thousands of Bostonians active in the movement against court-ordered busing. He wrote:

Not all of Boston was in sympathy to the cause of so-called “civil rights” workers who invaded Mississippi, Georgia, Alabama, Arkansas, and the others. By our resistance [to busing] alone, you know the position of South Boston’s 38,000 residents. . . .

Keep in touch. I enjoy the CITIZENS INFORMER newspaper and the Council’s monthly national THE CITIZEN publication. You’re doing a fine job.

Doran’s letter was one of at least eighteen written by twelve different Boston antibusing activists and organizations printed by *Citizens Informer* in 1975. The letters declared opposition to busing, thanked *Citizens Informer* for its support of Boston’s antibusing movement, signed up for subscriptions, asked for copies of the newspaper to distribute to other Boston antibusers, and praised the newspaper’s point of view.<sup>1</sup>

*Citizens Informer*’s support was welcomed by two of Boston’s most prominent antibusing groups, ROAR (Restore Our Alienated Rights) and S.T.O.P.; antibusing leaders such as Boston city councilor Albert “Dapper” O’Neil; the popular antibusing talk-radio host Avi Nelson; the official newspaper of the Boston Police Patrolman’s Association, *Pax Centurion*; and the antibusing newspaper *South Boston Marshal*. In addition to printing the letters of Boston antibusers, *Citizens Informer* reprinted antibusing articles originally published by *Pax Centurion* and *South Boston Marshal*. And in January 1975 two St. Louis–area Citizens’

Council leaders traveled to Boston for a two-week visit hosted by Boston antibusing leaders, where they were welcomed as honored guests at antibusing rallies at which copies of *Citizens Informer* were distributed.<sup>2</sup>

This chapter focuses on the criticism of the news media and liberalism levied by an explicitly racist newspaper that advocated white supremacy and racial segregation. I demonstrate that white resistance to racial integration was a primary motivation for some conservative critics of the news media in the 1970s. I also show how conservative newspapers could make important connections with other racially conservative opponents of integration and the allegedly liberal media in a distant city. This chapter makes four principal arguments:

First, I demonstrate that conservative alternative news media were often crucial in voicing and disseminating the liberal news media critique and in connecting like-minded conservatives who shared views about busing, race, liberalism, and the news media. As I explained in chapter 1, antibusing leaders in Louisville and Boston argued that the “liberal” news media supported busing and intentionally distorted news about busing and opposition to it. I argue that *Citizens Informer* provided a vital link that connected white conservatives in St. Louis and Boston. Antibusers in Boston and St. Louis—area members of the Citizens’ Council shared a deep conviction that liberalism was destroying the United States: in their view, liberals were responsible for the country’s diminishing prestige around the world as well as détente and appeasement of the Soviet Union; the radical concepts of feminism, legalized abortion, sex education in public schools, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), and homosexual rights; court decisions that kicked prayer out of the schools, took away guns from law-abiding Americans, and allowed murderers and rapists to run free; and “civil rights” in the form of busing, affirmative action, and open housing, all of which penalized

whites and rewarded minorities. *Citizens Informer* called itself the “Voice of the No Longer Silent Majority,” and both the newspaper and antibusers nationwide believed that a liberal establishment committed to secular humanism and socialism was stripping away the freedoms of hardworking, taxpaying, and God-fearing Americans.<sup>3</sup>

Second, I argue that *Citizens Informer*, like many other conservative alternative news media, characterized itself as a truth-telling alternative to the allegedly liberal news media. Like antibusers in Jefferson County, Kentucky, and Detroit opponents of affirmative action, busing, and the ERA, white conservatives in St. Louis and Boston argued that the news media were the most powerful members of the liberal establishment, distorted the truth, and “brainwashed” Americans with liberalism and civil rights. William J. Adams, a resident of South Boston, one of the primary bases of the Boston antibusing movement, wrote at least five letters published by *Citizens Informer* in 1975 and 1976. In the April 1975 issue he wrote that people in “Southie” respected *Citizens Informer* because it had the “guts” to tell it like it is—unlike liberal papers such as the *Boston Globe*. However, there were newspapers in Boston that had the kind of “guts” Adams admired—publications such as *Pax Centurion*, *West Roxbury Transcript*, *South Boston Marshal*, and *South Boston Tribune*—as well as antibusing columnists and radio talk-show hosts such as Dick Sinnott and Avi Nelson, all of whom offered conservative Bostonians the kind of truth-telling that they believed the liberal, supposedly objective news media failed to provide.<sup>4</sup>

Third, I demonstrate that conservatives did more than just complain about the alleged bias of local and national news media. *Citizens Informer* took local and national action by publishing its own newspaper, organizing protests against local media outlets, demanding equal time from local radio and television stations for conservative and “white-oriented” viewpoints, and by writing letters of complaint to the Federal Communications Commission

(FCC) that cited alleged violations of the Fairness Doctrine by “liberal” electronic news media outlets.<sup>5</sup>

Fourth, this chapter argues that segments of the Boston antibusing movement, including some of its most vocal, powerful leaders, approved of *Citizens Informer*’s opposition to liberalism and its unambiguous racism. I thus challenge historians who argue that resistance to integration and racial resentments were less salient by the 1970s in the politics of working-class whites. Boston antibusers complained that the *Globe* and other allegedly liberal news media unfairly portrayed Boston’s busing opponents as racists, and Jefferson County busing opponents made the same kind of complaints. The majority of the antibusing groups and activists in Boston publicly distanced themselves from racist rhetoric and insisted that busing was not a racial issue. Yet, as this chapter will make clear, some of Boston’s most prominent and powerful antibusing leaders welcomed the support of *Citizens Informer*, a newspaper that argued that blacks were intellectually inferior, sexually deviant, and to blame for urban blight and crime. The Citizens’ Councils of America, founded in Mississippi in 1954 to galvanize resistance against “forced integration,” included in its official logo the motto “States Rights, Racial Integrity” situated below U.S. and Confederate flags. That logo appeared on the front page of each issue of *Citizens Informer*. The white-supremacist views of *Citizens Informer* were readily apparent to anyone who read a single issue of the newspaper.<sup>6</sup>

*Citizens Informer* and its links with the Boston antibusing movement tell us much about the nature of antibusing activism, grassroots conservatism, and the racial resentments of whites in the 1970s. It reminds us that resistance to integration and white racism were not exclusive to the Deep South. Institutional and individual racism were pervasive not only in Little Rock, Charlotte, Birmingham, and Atlanta but also in Jefferson County, St. Louis, Boston, Detroit, and Pontiac—and racial resentments were often the most salient

motivations for white conservatives in the 1970s who complained about and took action against court-ordered busing and the liberal news media that they believed were biased against whites. This chapter supports the historian David Greenberg's argument that white proponents of racial segregation believed that news media reporting on civil rights and race relations was liberally biased; in this case, that belief was held by white conservatives with decidedly racist views outside the Deep South.<sup>7</sup>

### **A “Modern, Professional Approach to White Supremacy”**

The Citizens' Council was founded in Mississippi to provide organized resistance to court-ordered integration in the aftermath of the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling. As opposed to the Ku Klux Klan, the Citizens' Council represented a “modern, professional approach to white supremacy”; membership was open and public, and its activities were meant to be law-abiding and nonviolent. The Citizens' Councils of America published a monthly magazine, the *Citizen*, and produced its own syndicated radio show, *Forum*, which was broadcast in twelve states. Citizens' Council chapters in other states besides Missouri also published their own newspapers; the Citizens' Council of Louisiana published the *Councilor*, a fortnightly tabloid that claimed a national circulation of more than two hundred thousand. (For more on the *Councilor*, see chapter 6.)<sup>8</sup>

The newspaper *Tri-State Informer* was founded in 1969 by businessman Carl Helt in Cairo, Illinois, a small city located about 150 miles from St. Louis that was in the midst of serious racial conflict in the late 1960s. Beginning in 1967, Cairo's black community responded to unemployment, segregation, and white vigilante activity by launching a campaign that included demonstrations, picketing, a boycott of downtown businesses, and lawsuits. Helt founded *Tri-State Informer* to serve, in his words, the “thoroughly fedup citizens

of Cairo [who] were tired of [a] violent revolutionary black minority, getting all the attention of area and national news media.” *Tri-State Informer* argued that Cairo’s civil rights campaign was a communist conspiracy.<sup>9</sup>

In 1971 *Tri-State Informer* was purchased by Citizens’ Council member Fred C. Jennings and moved to Overland, Missouri, a suburb west of St. Louis. Jennings and unpaid Citizens’ Council volunteers produced the monthly tabloid and relied primarily on advertising income for revenue. The February 1975 issue included forty-six advertisements for St. Louis businesses including barbershops, service stations, restaurants, taverns, beauty salons, and a chiropractor, as well as Cairo small businesses. As of 1975 the paper cost 20 cents a copy, with subscriptions set at \$3 a year. *Citizens Informer* (Jennings changed the name from *Tri-State Informer* in 1974) served twenty-four Citizens’ Council chapters including several in St. Louis and central Illinois as well as chapters in Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, Tennessee, Virginia, and cities including Chicago, Memphis, and Kansas City. However, the primary focus of the newspaper was on Citizens’ Council chapters in metro St. Louis and central Illinois, and *Citizens Informer* kept its readers aware of council meetings and events, public tributes to Confederate dead, a Council-sponsored softball team, and on the sports and social activities of private, white-only academies. *Citizens Informer* backed Citizens’ Council members who campaigned for local public office. The Citizens’ Council enjoyed some degree of political legitimacy in the St. Louis area; Richard Gephardt, the future Democratic party leader in the House of Representatives and in 1976 a St. Louis alderman, visited a Metro-South Citizens’ Council meeting in 1976 to speak out against busing and hiring quotas.<sup>10</sup>

St. Louis, like many other American cities during the postwar period, suffered from massive deindustrialization, the white flight of both businesses and residents, a reduced tax

base, and policy decisions that exacerbated those problems. The white conservatives who read *Citizens Informer* blamed blacks for the decline of St. Louis and lamented “socialistic” programs such as welfare that they believed took money from hardworking taxpayers and was handed out to undeserving minorities. The official motto of *Citizens Informer* was “The Voice of the No Longer Silent Majority,” employing the term President Richard M. Nixon had coined in 1969 to characterize those Americans who supported the U.S. military effort in Vietnam; by the early 1970s the term had been adopted by Americans who rejected liberalism and embraced traditional beliefs in God, family, and country. *Citizens Informer* and its readers rejected détente with the Soviet Union and called for the United States to leave the United Nations; demanded an end to welfare assistance and affirmative action; rejected legalized abortion, the ERA, and gay rights; defended the right of Americans to own guns, control their property as they saw fit, and practice free enterprise; resisted ideas about regional and metro governance; decried increases in property and income taxes; and bemoaned what they believed was the nation’s abandonment of traditional Christian values. *Citizens Informer* printed slogans scattered throughout its issues such as “Support Your Local Police,” “Register Commies . . . Not Guns!,” “Stop E.R.A.,” “Stop Forced Busing,” and “Gun Control Means People Control.”<sup>11</sup>

Like most conservative publications of the 1970s, *Citizens Informer* was concerned about sociocultural issues involving gender and sexuality. The newspaper kept readers up to date on the anti-ERA activism of Phyllis Schlafly, who lived in nearby Alton, Illinois, and her organizations STOP ERA and Eagle Forum (see chapter 4 for more on Schlafly’s pro-family activism and media criticism). The newspaper praised Schlafly and argued that the proposed amendment “would weaken the family, undermine alimony and child-support laws, and lead to a host of social evils ranging from homosexual marriages to unisex toilets.” *Citizens*

*Informer* ran notices on upcoming STOP ERA events; reported on local speeches delivered by Schlafly, including one before an audience of John Birch Society members; and covered a 1979 anti-ERA rally in Washington, D.C., that included a photograph of Schlafly being interviewed by editor Fred C. Jennings. *Citizens Informer* agreed with Schlafly's contention that the "controlled" media were unfair to Schlafly and other pro-family activists and intentionally blacked out coverage of anti-ERA events.<sup>12</sup>

In addition to its original content, *Citizens Informer* reprinted articles and columns from other conservative publications including the *Utah Independent*, a newspaper "dedicated to the Constitution, liberty, morality, truth"; the Christian anticommunist publication *Christian Crusade Weekly* (which I examine in chapter 5); and the gun-enthusiast magazine *Guns and Ammo*. It also published columns written by conservative syndicated writers including Victor Riesel and E. P. Thornton, whose opinions appeared in conservative publications nationwide. Nearly all the letters printed by *Citizens Informer* in its letters-to-the-editor section from 1974 to 1980 echoed the newspaper's conservative racial views. It received letters from readers across the country, including J. Kesner Kahn of Chicago, Illinois, whose missives appeared more often than not in *Citizens Informer's* letters section. Kahn also wrote articles for the decidedly conservative (but not racially explicit) monthly newspapers *Free Enterprise* and *Independent American*, and he supported Boston's antibusing movement by donating stamps to the Boston antibusing organization S.T.O.P. Paul Chiera of Silver Spring, Maryland, noted in a series of letters that he was a regular reader of conservative publications such as *Review of the News*, *Phyllis Schlafly Report*, and *Don Bell Reports*, as well as the syndicated columns of the conservative James J. Kilpatrick, a frequent critic of the news media. Letters written by Kahn and Chiera suggest that *Citizens Informer* was a member in a large network of conservative alternative news media that shared letter writers,



article reprints, and syndicated columns, and helped to direct readers to other publications in that conservative print news media network—which included racially explicit and non–racially explicit conservative publications.<sup>13</sup>

### **Blacks and Liberals Are to Blame**

The political, cultural, and racial views found in *Citizens Informer* were grounded in the philosophies of white supremacy and anticommunism, yet many of the newspaper’s opinions were shared by conservatives nationwide who also resented liberal philosophies and programs. Throughout the 1970s *Citizens Informer* provided a mix of racially explicit language; coded racial language about crime, welfare, law and order, and blight; and color-blind rhetoric that stressed constitutional freedoms that was the most common rhetoric used by conservatives of the 1970s. The newspaper’s use of both race-specific and color-blind rhetoric was apparent in its coverage of issues such as busing, affirmative action, gun control, and law and order.

*Citizens Informer* and its letter writers blamed African Americans for crime and defended the right of citizens to defend themselves with firearms. The only way to combat crime, the newspaper reasoned, was with tough punishment. Accordingly, it praised local judges who meted out tough sentences while bemoaning “liberal” judges who “coddled” criminals. The sense that crime was out of control and judges were doing little to stop it—an opinion shared by many conservatives of the 1970s (fears about black crime and complaints about liberal judges who coddled criminals were pervasive among Boston busing opponents, for example)—was conveyed by *Citizens Informer* in a November 1974 front-page story titled “What Kind of Justice Do We Have?” The article reported that a Vietnam War veteran and his father had allegedly been beaten to death by illegal immigrants in Valmeyer, Illinois, but

the grand jury had declined to indict three of the four men charged. Like the publishers and readers of the Detroit neighborhood newspaper *Northeast Detroiter*, *Citizens Informer* and its readers argued that the supposedly objective mainstream liberal news media refused to tell the truth about crime and who was to blame for it. *Citizens Informer*, on the other hand, believed it had the courage to tell that truth. A 1974 story about a nineteen-year-old white woman killed while shopping in St. Louis reported that two black teenage suspects had been arrested by police. “No mention was made of race in accounts of this heinous crime by the major news media,” *Citizens Informer* reported, “but the accused killers are very definitely black, according to police.” Readers echoed worries about unsafe streets in racially explicit letters to the editor. World War II veteran Clifford C. Haines of Chicago wrote in January 1975 that “blacks are running rampant making our streets, buses, ‘L’ trains, parks, schools and even our neighborhoods unsafe.”<sup>14</sup>

The white-supremacy philosophy of *Citizens Informer* was evident in stories on a range of issues besides crime. The newspaper was clearly proud of the fact that it told the “truth” about racial differences. *Citizens Informer* claimed that blacks “caused ghettos”; argued that blacks were by nature sexually promiscuous, deviant, and prone to preying on young white women; and cited “recent scientific studies” that allegedly proved that whites were superior to other races. The newspaper also reported on white-supremacist organizations in other countries. It covered a speech by England’s National Front chairman John Tyndall before the Memphis Citizens’ Council in June 1979, where he spoke of the superiority of the white race and its culture. Like many defenders of racial segregation in the Deep South, *Citizens Informer* argued that civil rights leaders and their organizations were communists or socialists, or were dupes of the “Reds.” And like the Louisville antibusing newspaper *NAPF*, *Citizens Informer* argued that Americans should not honor the memory of Martin Luther King Jr. and

that the truth about King's communist ties had been suppressed by the liberal news media. Several readers also attacked King and liberals who wished to commemorate him. G. H. "Bud" Abbott of Nellyville, Missouri, wrote that he opposed Southeast Missouri State University's plan to erect a memorial statue honoring King on its Cape Girardeau campus.<sup>15</sup>

Letters to the editor printed in *Citizens Informer* often included racist rhetoric and praised the newspaper for telling the truth about race. Lonnie Robert Lindsay, of Dallas, Texas, wrote in 1975 that *Citizens Informer* "is about the only source of the facts." He blamed the 1968 "Forced Open Housing" law and other civil rights bills for turning "the Negroes loose on White People." P. A. Kennedy of High Point, North Carolina, wrote that reading *Citizens Informer* "is somewhat like breathing fresh mountain air after being forced to breath[e] the air of the ghetto. . . . Reading your paper makes me feel clean. Makes me feel like maybe—just maybe—the White People have a chance. We are an endangered species you know!"<sup>16</sup>

### **"The Silent Majority Speaks"**

Whether it was reporting on crime, busing, or other topics, *Citizens Informer* regularly flayed the "liberal news media" for alleged biases and distortions. Headlines such as "CBS Accused of Anti-white Bias," "Conservative Judge Being Attacked by Liberal Media," and "Crime Statistics Belie Media's Image of Blacks" laid bare the newspaper's attitudes about the news media and their alleged cover-up of the truth about racial issues. The newspaper argued that the liberal news media had applauded the "antics" of Martin Luther King Jr. and other civil rights leaders who broke the law again and again, but now, hypocritically, criticized the same kind of nonviolent tactics being used by busing opponents in Boston and textbook opponents in West Virginia. *Citizens Informer* recommended that its readers avoid

the liberal media and instead turn to truth-telling conservative publications such as *Christian Crusade Weekly*, *Christian Beacon*, and the *Citizen*.<sup>17</sup>

*Citizens Informer* was an avid supporter of George Wallace, whose resistance to integration as governor of Alabama, his brand of populist conservatism, his Christian faith, and his frequent denouncements of busing, liberalism, and the liberal news media had enormous appeal for Citizens' Council members. Wallace received frequent coverage in *Citizens Informer*, often on the front page accompanied by photographs of the candidate. While some conservatives criticized the news media for continuing to link Wallace with white racism in the 1970s, *Citizens Informer* blamed the allegedly liberal news media for doing the opposite: portraying a "New Wallace" whose views on race had mellowed. "Time has not changed George Wallace's voice," *Citizens Informer* wrote in February 1974. "It has only served to show an ever increasing number of Americans HOW RIGHT HE WAS AND HOW RIGHT HE IS!"<sup>18</sup>

Writers of letters to *Citizens Informer* bemoaned the bias of the liberal media. Edith F. Clites of Camden, Delaware, wrote in the February 1974 issue that "the liberal element" was in charge of the broadcast media "and wish to keep the public in the dark as to what is going on." A. Wick of Jennings, Missouri, who also wrote articles for *Citizens Informer*, complained of CBS "distortion." He blasted *Guns of Autumn*, a CBS news documentary on hunting that aired in September 1975, which was also criticized by conservatives and conservative publications including *NAPF* and *National Spotlight*. Wick argued that CBS produced "racial propaganda": "If you will reflect on the type of programs they have broadcast about the South, George Wallace, Civil Rights, Integration, School Busing, you will have to conclude that their program 'Guns of Autumn' was no more dishonest than the other things they broadcast." He advised that citizens stop buying daily newspapers and subscribe to "good

conservative newspapers”—truth-telling news media—such as *Citizens Informer* and *Christian Crusade Weekly* (for more on *Christian Crusade Weekly*, see chapter 5). Clearly, white racial conservatives of the 1970s had vivid memories of the news media’s coverage of the civil rights movement in the 1960s, and those memories informed their opinions of the “liberal” news media in the 1970s.<sup>19</sup>

*Citizens Informer* and members of the Citizens’ Council did more than just complain about the liberal news media. Every month the newspaper chronicled the activities of the St. Louis–area Citizens’ Council Fairness in Broadcasting Committee (FIBC), an organization founded to seek air time for white conservative views and ensure that radio and television stations adhered to FCC Fairness Doctrine rules, which required that broadcast stations provide equal time for contrasting views on matters of public importance. Believing that most radio and TV outlets provided more time for liberal and African American viewpoints, the FIBC appealed to local radio and TV outlets for equal time to present Citizens’ Council and white viewpoints, and it filed complaints with the FCC when it felt a local media outlet was not adhering to the Fairness Doctrine. The kind of media-reform tactics used by the FIBC were also used by other conservatives, including pro-family activists opposed to the ERA (see chapter 4).<sup>20</sup>

The FIBC’s appeals to local stations for equal time were often successful. Local Citizens’ Council field director Gordon Lee Baum appeared on several local radio and TV programs, including a January 1974 appearance on “At Your Service,” a KMOX radio (a CBS affiliate) program. Baum voiced opposition to busing and urged whites to organize against it. Other representatives of the FIBC appeared on St. Louis TV and radio programs to speak about busing, abortion, gun control, “out of control” crime, the ERA, regional government, and the alleged liberal bias of the news media. Because local TV station KSD

had aired National Association for the Advancement of Colored People announcements, the FIBC successfully appealed to KSD to carry Citizens' Council recruiting spots. One of the spots urging listeners to join the Citizens' Council declared, "Don't let your freedoms slip away. The silent majority is now speaking out." The FIBC filed FCC complaints against two other St. Louis TV stations, KPLR and the educational station KETC, for allegedly airing programming that favored blacks and leftists. The FIBC did credit certain stations and reporters for fairness; in 1974 it praised local reporter Max Roby of KSD for "impartial" reporting and called him one of the best reporters in St. Louis.<sup>21</sup>

*Citizens Informer* and its FIBC column often criticized network news and entertainment programs. The newspaper declared in March 1974 that network shows "should be balanced by the networks to allow for pro-white views." The January 1975 FIBC column criticized Norman Lear, the producer of the network comedies *All in the Family*, *Maude*, *Sanford and Son*, and *Good Times*, which the FIBC argued fed "audiences a steady diet of sugar-coated leftist propaganda (referred to as 'social commentary' by the liberal news media)," and promoted abortion and interracial marriage. *Citizens Informer* also alleged that network comedies such as *Barney Miller* and *Soap* had a "preoccupation with homosexuality." *Citizens Informer* urged readers to write letters of complaint to the networks and program advertisers. The FIBC column in the November 1974 *Citizens Informer* listed the addresses of NBC, CBS, and ABC, and urged viewers to write to the networks with their complaints and "remind them that the airwaves belong to the people."<sup>22</sup>

In March 1974 *Citizens Informer* attacked the alleged propaganda of the CBS made-for-TV drama *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman*, based on a novel about a black woman living in the South. The FIBC sent letters of complaint to CBS and the FCC, accusing the network of "deliberate distortion of the truth and historical events stacked with bias[ed]"

opinions designed to brainwash the public and to instill feelings of guilt in the white population.” The complaint also called the program “one-hour of undiluted anti-white racism.” The FCC eventually rejected the complaint. A North Carolina chapter of the Citizens’ Council also complained to CBS and the FCC about *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman*.<sup>23</sup>

*Citizens Informer* carried news about FCC policy; in 1974 it praised the FCC mandate that TV stations make program logs public, calling the decision a “boon for citizens action groups trying to get broadcast stations to comply with the ‘fairness doctrine.’” *Citizens Informer*’s FIBC column also explained how members of the Citizens’ Council members could participate in the FCC “ascertainment” process. The commission required that all broadcast stations applying for renewal of broadcast licenses ascertain the local community; in other words, interview local citizens and organizations to determine the community’s local issues and broadcast needs. In 1976 Gordon Lee Baum was among the “community leaders” ascertained by the news director of the CBS affiliate KMOX-TV. Baum said in his ascertainment interview that the news media, in particular television news, had to present unbiased news and present the concerns of the white majority. Baum was also ascertained by WIL radio, the largest country-and-western music station in St. Louis, and he identified busing as a vital community issue. Other conservatives also involved themselves in the ascertainment process during the 1970s. Phyllis Schlafly encouraged her pro-family supporters to participate in ascertainment in order to influence the news and programming content of local radio and TV stations.<sup>24</sup>

*Citizens Informer* covered the Memphis Citizens’ Council’s efforts to combat liberal media bias, which included a May 1, 1978, protest march in front of WMC-TV in Memphis where members of the Citizens’ Council demanded equal time for the “white conservative

viewpoint.” The Citizens’ Council claimed that WMC promised that it would be able to air a commentary on Martin Luther King Jr., but the station had reneged. Photos published by *Citizens Informer* of the demonstration showed protestors holding U.S. and Confederate flags and signs reading “Station Unfair” and “No Voice for Whites.” The Memphis members of the Citizens’ Council said they would also be sending letters of complaint to businesses that advertised on WMC. The Memphis Citizens’ Council also picketed the “lopsided” Memphis TV station WHBQ and boycotted its sponsors, monitored local programming in search of “liberal/black” bias, and filed FCC complaints against local stations.<sup>25</sup>

The campaign against the liberal media waged by Citizens’ Council chapters was supported by the Citizens’ Councils of America. The *Citizen*, the national Citizens’ Councils of America monthly, provided an explanation of the Fairness Doctrine in its January 1972 issue, and Citizens’ Council leadership conferences included information sessions about the doctrine. The efforts of Citizens’ Council chapters to ensure the Council had a voice on local and national broadcast media and to counteract the bias of the liberal media had roots in earlier Citizens’ Council activism during the massive-resistance era. In addition to Citizens’ Council newspapers and radio programs, the Council produced its own syndicated TV program, *Citizens’ Council Forum*, which was broadcast in states inside and outside the Deep South. In Jackson, Mississippi, the presence of Citizens’ Council members in managerial positions at TV stations often ensured that Council programs were provided air time and network news coverage of civil rights was censored during the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>26</sup>

Citizens’ Council members also fought back against the alleged bias of network television by writing letters of complaint to program sponsors. In 1956 news outlets reported that an upcoming CBS episode of *Playhouse 90* would be based closely on the murder of the fourteen-year-old African American Emmett Till in Mississippi in 1955. U.S.



Steel, which sponsored the program, received more than three thousand letters of complaint, and the company pressured the show's writers to revise the script. The Citizens' Council celebrated the victory by thanking those "who helped in protesting against this proposed anti-South, pro-Negro propaganda show" and argued that "all objectionable TV shows could be eliminated" if citizens wrote letters to sponsors. In Jackson, members of the Citizens' Council often telephoned the NBC affiliate station WLBT to complain about NBC programming and demand equal time; their complaints likely received rapt attention, because the station's general manager was a Council member. The FCC reprimanded WLBT and other Mississippi TV and radio stations in 1962 for biased coverage of civil rights activism and violent reaction to such activism. In 1969 the FCC stripped WLBT of its license, a move that might have contributed to action by Citizens' Council chapters in the 1970s to push the FCC to punish networks and stations that allegedly broadcast antiwhite programming and to ensure white views were heard (and seen) on TV and radio.<sup>27</sup>

### **"Liberty Dead in Boston?"**

In November 1975 the St. Louis-area Citizens' Council program the *Silent Majority Speaks* debuted on the local country-and-western station WGNU (a station that advertised in *Citizens Informer*). An advertisement for the program in the November 1975 *Citizens Informer* featured the words "SILENT AMERICA" in bold-face type, and urged the 98 percent of "good, loyal Americans to speak up," because the news received by Americans mostly concerned the "other" two percent. The debut program dealt with busing and gun control; the second program, broadcast on December 18, 1975, focused on busing in Boston and was hosted by Gordon Lee Baum and Thomas Bugel, the Citizens' Council members who

had visited Boston earlier that year. The show's live call-in guests that afternoon were the Boston antibusing leaders Dapper O'Neil and Avi Nelson.<sup>28</sup>

The appearance of O'Neil and Nelson on "The Silent Majority Speaks" indicated the close links that had been established by St. Louis-area members of the Citizens' Council and Boston antibusing leaders. It was *Citizens Informer* that made those links possible. *Citizens Informer* and the Citizens' Council publicly advocated white supremacy and segregation, while the majority of antibusing leaders and groups in Boston insisted that they were not racists and blamed the news media for depicting them as bigots. Yet the links between St. Louis-area segregationists and prominent Boston antibusers made possible by *Citizens Informer* belies claims that white racism did not motivate powerful factions of the Boston antibusing movement.

Even before it began focusing on busing in Boston, *Citizens Informer* regularly ran articles on local and national news about court-ordered busing. It provided coverage of the activities of the local Citizens' Council antibusing group, the Committee against Busing, and printed antibusing petitions in the newspaper to be cut out and distributed by readers so they could collect signatures. An October 1975 story on a Committee against Busing protest at the federal courthouse in St. Louis chided local newspapers for undercounting the number of protestors that *Citizens Informer* claimed actually attended. Jefferson County and Boston antibusers as well as antifeminists made similar claims that the news media undercounted attendance at their meetings, rallies, and marches and overestimated the attendance at events held by their liberal opponents.<sup>29</sup>

*Citizens Informer* argued that busing was wreaking havoc in other cities besides Boston: a front-page headline in February 1975 declared that busing was "destroying" Denver. The newspaper kept readers informed on the many court decisions involving busing

and used racially explicit language about white rights, black inferiority, and sexual relations between blacks and whites when it criticized busing. In response to a 1974 federal court ruling in favor of busing, editor Fred C. Jennings wrote, “The Integration Idiots have won another round and America has taken another step toward mongrelization.” *Citizens Informer*’s belief that the Citizens’ Council stood on the side of antibusers was demonstrated in a 1976 article announcing the formation of a Kentuckiana Citizens’ Council to serve Jefferson County and the Louisville area; it was headquartered on Dixie Highway in southern Jefferson County—as *Citizens Informer* correctly described it, the “very heart” of the most “vigorous and adamant” antibusing resistance.<sup>30</sup>

*Citizens Informer* began focusing much of its attention on Boston once court-ordered busing began there in September 1974. It printed front-page photographs of “racial turmoil” in the city, “the result of massive forced busing” ordered by Judge W. Arthur Garrity Jr. The photographic captions written by *Citizens Informer* often emphasized the race of antibusing protestors: a November 1974 caption accompanying a front-page photo of a Boston antibusing march stressed that it was “white students” who were marching against busing. The newspaper also kept readers up to date on the efforts of Boston antibusing leaders to win or hold on to political office. It reported in December 1975 that the antibusing leaders Louise Day Hicks and Dapper O’Neil had won seats on the Boston city council, “Pixie” Palladino had been elected to the school committee, and Chet Broderick, a strident antibuser and a critic of “liberal” police commissioner Robert DiGrazia, had been re-elected chairman of the Boston Police Patrolman’s Association (BPPA). O’Neil, Broderick, and Palladino frequently criticized the *Boston Globe* and other allegedly liberal news media. When George Wallace visited Boston in January 1976, *Citizens Informer* ran a front-page story that mentioned that Wallace, another outspoken opponent of busing, was joined on stage by

O'Neil and Palladino. The article conveyed pleasure at witnessing three “scrappers”: Wallace, “Dapper,” and “Pixie,” all together on one stage.<sup>31</sup>

In its coverage of Boston, *Citizens Informer* regularly stressed the whiteness of the city's antibusers and characterized them as heroic, hard-working, and patriotic whites fighting back against liberalism. For both *Citizens Informer* and Boston busing opponents, nothing was more symbolic of “out-of-control” liberalism than court-ordered busing. According to antibusers, powerful liberals including politicians, judges, bureaucrats, civil rights organizations, and the news media had colluded to force busing on the nation, and silent majority Americans had to fight back against the liberal establishment. In Boston, the liberal establishment was represented by the *Boston Globe*, Judge Garrity, and Sen. Edward M. Kennedy. *Citizens Informer* gleefully reported a September 1974 incident in downtown Boston in which antibusers threw tomatoes and eggs at Kennedy, who was seen by conservatives as a representative of both the Boston and national liberal establishment. Antibusing groups in Boston and other cities also used rhetoric and slogans that recalled the American Revolution to portray themselves as rightful descendants of American founders who fought for liberty and against tyranny. The April 1975 *Citizens Informer* article “Liberty Dead in Boston?” reported on the activities of ROAR on the 205th anniversary of the Boston Massacre, which included a memorial service in honor of the symbolic corpse of “Miss Liberty.”<sup>32</sup>

In January 1975 field director Gordon Lee Baum and fellow Citizens' Council member Thomas Bugel spent two weeks in Boston as guests of local antibusers. The March 1975 issue of *Citizens Informer* featured two articles co-written by Baum and Bugel—“Federal Judge Imposes Police State in Boston” and “Bostonians Organize to Fight Judicial Tyranny”—which recounted their visit as well as a dozen photographs snapped by the

visitors. Baum and Bugel praised the “good people” of Boston who were fighting busing and wanted to connect with other opponents of “forced integration”:

The vast majority of the anti-busing leaders interviewed in Boston are not only eager to develop a united effort in their city, but expressed the desire to develop closer relations and communications with other anti-busing organizations and Citizens’ Councils throughout the country. They realize the necessity of creating a unified national effort to stop busing and problems related to forced integration.

The dedication and efforts of the leaders and active members of the anti-busing groups in Boston is an inspiration to white communities throughout the nation.

Baum and Bugel went on to describe other “dedicated” and “hard-working” organizations opposed to “forced” integration, including antibusers, founders of private white-only schools, George Wallace, and the Citizens’ Council, an organization “fighting against forced integration and federal tyranny for over 20 years.”<sup>33</sup>

Bugel (who returned to Boston in September 1975, when he again spent time with Dapper O’Neil) and Baum were not the only members of the Citizens’ Council to visit Boston during that city’s busing crisis. In March 1975 sixteen-year-old Gary Black of Belleville, Illinois, a member of the Central-Illinois Citizens’ Council, was invited to Boston as an “honored guest” of South Boston residents after he raised \$400 to help the Boston antibusing movement. He spent three weeks in Boston and attended ROAR meetings and other antibusing marches and events. *Citizens Informer* ran a first-person account of Black’s visit on the front page of its May 1975 edition, along with a photograph (that had originally appeared in the March 13 *Boston Herald-American*) of Black with Boston city councilor and busing opponent Louise Day Hicks, who was shown attaching an antibusing button on Black’s lapel.<sup>34</sup>

In addition to Baum and Bugel’s report on their Boston visit, the March 1975 issue of *Citizens Informer* included a press release written by Dapper O’Neil that declared

opposition to busing. At the bottom of the release *Citizens Informer* described O'Neil as a "new breed" of honest elected officials who represented "little people . . . the Middle Americans." O'Neil thanked *Citizens Informer* in a letter that appeared in the next issue, calling it a "great paper." *Citizens Informer* also received letters from ROAR and individual opponents of busing from the Boston area. Charles "Charlie" W. Ross Jr., the director of the South Boston antibusing organization S.T.O.P., wrote in a December 1975 letter that he wanted copies of the newspaper, thanked *Citizens Informer* for its Boston coverage, and praised the opinions of Jennings. William J. Adams of South Boston, who wrote frequently to *Citizens Informer*, expressed in a December 1975 letter his resentment of liberal elites who he said called antibusers racists, bigots, and fascists. The enemy, according to Adams, was the L.I.E.: the "Liberal Intellectual Establishment." *Citizens Informer* also printed poems written by Boston busing opponents that used imagery of the American Revolution and the Civil War to characterize their movement. Jo Stockbridge of Boston contributed the poem "If Paul [Revere] Was Here Today," while Eddy, a poet from "Southie," penned a verse based on the "Gettysburg Address" that argued that forced busing and judicial tyranny must be eliminated by the people.<sup>35</sup>

*Citizens Informer* and Boston antibusers believed passionately that the "liberal" news media were to blame for propagating liberal initiatives like busing, for providing overly sympathetic coverage to minority groups, and for insufficiently covering and distorting the political activism of conservatives such as those fighting busing. Antibusers seeking conservative truth-telling alternatives to the "biased" *Globe* and TV news turned to newspapers that opposed busing such as *Pax Centurion*, *South Boston Marshal*, and *West Roxbury Transcript*, as well as local radio talk shows hosted by antibusing personalities such as Avi Nelson and Joe Casper. Beginning in 1976 *Citizens Informer* ran reprints of articles from

*Pax Centurion* that spelled out conservative positions on issues such as gun control, urban crime and punishment, affirmative action, federal bureaucracy, the courts, and welfare cheats. The importance of *Pax Centurion* to antibusers in Boston was noted by *Citizens Informer*, which said that *Pax Centurion* had consistently carried news about busing and the schools that had been suppressed by Boston's liberal news media.<sup>36</sup>

*South Boston Marshal* demonstrated a fierce opposition to liberalism from its inception in 1980. In its second issue, antibusing activist Nancy Yotts, a member of the National Association for Neighborhood Schools (NANS), a national antibusing organization that included prominent antibusers such as Carmen Roberts of Detroit and Jean Ruffra and Bob DePrez of Jefferson County serving in leadership positions, wrote a letter asking the paper to “always stand against those liberals who have been trying to destroy this community.” *South Boston Marshal* included articles and columns written by leading Boston antibusers such as Pixie Palladino, Dapper O'Neil, and Chester Broderick of the BPPA and *Pax Centurion*, as well as nationally syndicated conservative columnists such as Phyllis Schlafly and E. P. Thornton, whose columns also appeared in *Citizens Informer*. Columns and articles in and letters to *South Boston Marshal* frequently criticized the news media, particularly the *Boston Globe*, and contrasted the *Globe*'s alleged bias and lack of objectivity with *South Boston Marshal*, a paper that “told it like it is.” In the *Marshal* Chester Broderick complained about the failure of Boston's daily papers to practice “objective journalism,” and columnist Edward P. Shallow noted the “unmitigated bias of the *Globe*'s reporting on the racial and political situation in Boston” since busing was ordered. In the early 1980s *Citizens Informer* ran reprints of *South Boston Marshal* columns that touched on busing and other conservative issues. Sharing reprints of articles and columns was clearly important to newspapers in St. Louis and Boston that were opposed to busing—as was criticizing the allegedly liberal news media.<sup>37</sup>

Newspapers such as *South Boston Marshal*, *Citizens Informer*, and *NAPF* emphasized the truth-telling concept to contrast themselves with the allegedly untrustworthy liberal news media: *South Boston Marshal* declared that it “Really Tells It Like It Is,” Dapper O’Neil’s *South Boston Marshal* column was titled “Telling It Like It Is,” Avi Nelson claimed he was one of the few newsmen in Boston to tell it like it is, and *NAPF* used the same kind of rhetoric. Bostonians who wrote to *Citizens Informer*, signed up for subscriptions, and distributed copies of the paper to other antibusers did so in a quest to read and share publications that they believed told the truth about busing and forced integration—the kind of truth-telling that the liberal *Globe* and the liberal news networks could not or would not provide. Boston busing opponents who read *Citizens Informer* certainly would have agreed with the newspaper’s November 1974 claim that there was a news “blackout” on what was really happening in the city. “The national news media has magnified all out of proportion the few disturbances created by whites, as usual, and down-played or ignored the many acts of violence by blacks against whites occurring in Boston,” *Citizens Informer* wrote. “White citizens throughout the nation are rallying to the support of the whites in South Boston.” *Citizens Informer* also praised Avi Nelson, who it said had become a “hero” in Boston for airing antibusing sentiment on his show, which listeners had dubbed “Radio Free Boston.” Nelson said in 1975 that he was “the only one in the media in Boston coming out and telling it like it is.” Nelson’s Boston radio show included antibusing guests including Louise Day Hicks and fellow city council member John J. Kerrigan, an outspoken critic of busing and the news media who referred to journalists as “media maggots.” Nelson regularly criticized the “liberal” *Globe* on his show and also criticized the women’s movement, amnesty for draft evaders, and big government, and defended free enterprise.<sup>38</sup>



## A Liberal Citadel?

The historian David Greenberg's 2008 article in the journal *The Sixties: A Journal of History, Politics, and Culture* argued that the "liberal media bias" concept derived from resistance to civil rights and integration in the Deep South the 1950s and 1960s. Segregationists believed—correctly—that the East Coast news media helped the civil rights movement in the Deep South win national attention—and sympathy—in the 1950s and 1960s. The antimedia rhetoric found in *Citizens Informer* drew on the critiques of the news media that the Citizens' Council and its publications had been making since the 1950s. In the 1970s racial resentments fueled much of the anger directed toward the local and national media by antibusers. A South Boston antibuser complained, "How come when Negroes have a civil rights march people pay attention, but when we do nobody stirs? Don't we have civil rights?" A Boston antibusing leader summarized his view of how the media framed antibusers in just a few words: "They were heroes and martyrs—we were racists."<sup>39</sup>

Indeed, one of the major complaints of *Citizens Informer* and of antibusers in Boston, Detroit, and Louisville was that the media unfairly portrayed them as racists. Though Boston's busing crisis included much ugly violence and racism (graffiti laden with racial slurs such as "Niggers Suck" and "White Power" appeared throughout Boston), a majority of antibusing leaders and rank-and-file insisted that busing was not a racial issue. As Formisano reminds us in *Boston against Busing*, there was no single, united antibusing movement in Boston, just as there were no single, unified antibusing movement in Detroit or in Louisville. Boston antibusing leaders such as Palladino, O'Neil, and Kerrigan represented the right wing of the antibusing movement. These were the leaders who on occasion used racist rhetoric and were the most hostile in their criticisms of the news media and especially the *Globe*. They were also the leaders who appeared to be the most enthusiastic about the support of *Citizens*

*Informer* and its white viewpoint. It would be incorrect, then, to assume that *Citizens Informer* appealed to most antibusers in Boston. In addition, the majority of Boston busing opponents who wrote to *Citizens Informer* did not use explicitly racist language—yet they must have been aware of the newspaper’s explicit racism.<sup>40</sup>

The connections established between *Citizens Informer* and Boston antibusers, however, suggest that many antibusers, including some of the most prominent leaders of the movement, welcomed the white supremacist views of *Citizens Informer* and the Citizens’ Council. Letters to *Citizens Informer* written by Boston busing opponents indicated that they were as troubled about “race mixing” as were members of the Council. Many Bostonians opposed to busing considered their movement to be consonant with Boston’s tradition as the “cradle of liberty.” Yet perhaps, as Baum and Bugel wrote in *Citizens Informer* after their visit to the city, Boston was not the “liberal citadel” many thought it to be, and its citizens shared many of the same racially conservative views as did members of the Citizens’ Council:

The “liberal” national news media has led the rest of America to believe that Boston was the “citadel of liberalism.” A leftist stronghold. Actually, Boston is populated largely by hard-working, law-abiding, patriotic white people—such the same as those you will find in Michigan, Missouri or Mississippi. Good, up-standing people (often referred to as the Silent Majority or Middle Americans), who only want to live their lives with as little government interference as possible. The one thing they expect of government, which it fails to do, is protect them from the criminal element. But, evidently, the federal government is more interested in “racial quotas” and “social experimentation.”

The current anti-busing movement has dramatically shown that Boston is definitely not a “liberal citadel,” and that the majority of responsible citizens throughout the nation are united in their opposition to liberal schemes such as forced busing to achieve racial balance or quotas.

In the introduction to their 2010 book *The Myth of Southern Exceptionalism*, the editors Matthew D. Lassiter and Joseph Crespino warn against history that portrays “epic showdown[s] between the retrograde South and a progressive nation” and “attributes the rise of modern conservatism primarily to white southern backlash against the civil rights

movement.” While this chapter examines a newspaper that embraced the politics of white supremacy of the “retrograde South,” it also argues that those politics appealed to white conservatives in a northern city. I argue that *Citizens Informer* did not “southernize” white conservative busing opponents in Boston with their racial views; instead, its opinions appealed to Bostonians with already established racial resentments.<sup>41</sup>

White conservatives of the 1970s sought out, read, and shared newspapers that they believed were “telling it like it is.” Local conservative newspapers played vital roles in conservative antibusing movements in other cities besides Boston. Detroit and Louisville antibusers who complained about the liberal bias of their local daily newspapers and television stations, as well as the national news networks, turned to conservative media that they felt provided truth instead of liberal bias. The similarities and consistency of the conservative, antiliberal views found in *Northeast Detroit*, *NAPF*, *South Boston Marshal*, and *Citizens Informer*, and the topics of interest given coverage in those newspapers (busing, crime, law and order, affirmative action, property rights, gun control, taxes, regional government, the ERA, abortion, secular humanism, etc.) are striking. In chapter 2, I analyzed *Northeast Detroit*, a newspaper that served as a news source and a public forum for white conservative Detroiters who, like white conservatives in Boston, Louisville, and St. Louis, were opposed to busing and other manifestations of racial liberalism in the 1970s. Like *Citizens Informer*, *Northeast Detroit* offered readers a steady critique of liberalism by rejecting busing and affirmative action, publicizing the activism of local antibusing groups, and scapegoating African Americans for urban crime.

Though I argue that racism was often a driving force behind white conservative resentments of liberalism and the liberal media during the 1970s, there were other motivations that were more salient for other conservative critics of the news media during

that decade. In the next chapter, I demonstrate that conservatives' concerns about sociocultural issues such as the ERA, sex education in the public schools, and homosexual rights were driving forces behind conservative campaigns to protect the family and children from the influences of feminism, liberalism, and the propaganda and brainwashing power of the liberal-oriented news and entertainment media. However, such conservatives were often also committed busing opponents who believed the news media unfairly portrayed antibusers as racists. In other words, cultural conservatives who criticized the news media often resented all of the political, cultural, and social dimensions of 1970s liberalism.

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<sup>1</sup> “Letters to the Editor: Boston Update,” *Citizens Informer*, July 1975, p. 10. The *Citizen* was published by the Citizens’ Councils of America. All copies of *Tri-State Informer* and *Citizens Informer* were accessed at the Wilcox Collection at the University of Kansas. See *Tri-State Informer* and *Citizens Informer*, RH WL G600, Wilcox Collection of Contemporary Political Movements (Kansas Collection, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas). The author found eighteen letters written by twelve different Boston antibusing activists in ten issues of *Citizens Informer* in 1975. No copy of the November 1975 edition was found in the Wilcox Collection, and *Citizens Informer* printed a combined August–September 1975 edition.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Bugel and Gordon Lee Baum, “Federal Judge Imposes Police State in Boston,” *Citizens Informer*, March 1975, pp. 1, 9; Gordon Lee Baum and Thomas Bugel, “Bostonians Organize to Fight Judicial Tyranny,” *ibid.*, pp. 2, 8; photos and captions, *ibid.*, pp. 1, 9, 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Citizens Informer* publication information box, *ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>4</sup> “Letters to Editor: Bouquet from Boston” *ibid.*, April 1975, p. 10.

<sup>5</sup> “Fairness in Broadcasting: Committee Report,” *ibid.*, Aug.–Sept. 1974, p. 8; “Fairness in Broadcasting: Committee Report,” *ibid.*, Oct. 1974, p. 8; “Fairness in Broadcasting: Committee Report,” *ibid.*, July 1975, p. 8; “Fairness in Broadcasting: Committee Report,” *ibid.*, March 1976, n.p.

<sup>6</sup> Ronald P. Formisano, *Boston against Busing: Race, Class, and Ethnicity in the 1960s and 1970s* (Chapel Hill, 1991), 150; “News Briefs,” *Citizens Informer*, March 1975, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> On white conservatism and racial resentments in the postwar period, see Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, 1996); Thomas J. Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North* (New York, 2008); Matthew D. Lassiter and Joseph Crespino, eds., *The Myth of Southern Exceptionalism* (New York, 2010); Matthew D. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton, 2006); Kevin M. Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism* (Princeton, 2005); Donald T. Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism: A Woman’s Crusade* (Princeton, 2005); Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton, 2001); Kenneth D. Durr, *Behind the Backlash: White Working-Class Politics in Baltimore, 1940–1980* (Chapel Hill, 2003); Jefferson Cowie, *Stayin’ Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class* (New York, 2010); Joseph Crespino, *In Search of another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution* (Princeton, 2007); and Bruce J. Schulman and Julian E. Zelizer, eds., *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s* (Cambridge, Mass, 2008).

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<sup>8</sup> Joseph Crespino, *In Search of another Country*, 19–20, 23; Neil R. McMillen, *The Citizens' Council: Organized Resistance to the Second Reconstruction, 1954–1964* (Urbana, 1971), 18, 22, 35–36, 38, 72. The Council of Conservative Citizens was founded in 1985 to replace the Citizens' Councils of America. See Crespino, *In Search of another Country*, 272. Gordon Lee Baum, who as a Citizens' Council field director traveled to Boston in January 1975, is CEO of the Council of Conservative Citizens, which uses the motto "The No Longer Silent Majority" and continues to publish *Citizens Informer* as a quarterly. See "Join Today!," <http://cofcc.org/join-today/>; "The Art of Cultural Activism," <http://cofcc.org/2007/05/the-art-of-cultural-activism/>; and "Citizens Informer," <http://cofcc.org/newspaper/>. The Council of Conservative Citizens advocates for "white rights," and its Web site cites statistics showing African Americans commit more violent crimes than do whites. See "More Info" and "Shocking Statistics," <http://cofcc.org/more-info/>.

<sup>9</sup> Preston Ewing Jr., *Let My People Go: Cairo, Illinois, 1967–1973*, ed. Jan Peterson Roddy (Carbondale, 1996), ix–x, xxii; "From the Editor's Desk," *Tri-State Informer*, Jan. 1971, p. 2; "From the Editor's Desk—A Look Back," *Citizens Informer*, May 1976, p. 10; "Is Cairo Part of the Communist Conspiracy," *Tri-State Informer*, Aug. 1970, p. 1. The August 1970 issue of *Tri-State Informer* was not found in the Wilcox Collection but its front page was reprinted on the inside back cover of *Let My People Go*. See Ewing, *Let My People Go*, inside back cover.

<sup>10</sup> On *Tri-State Informer's* relocation to Overland, Missouri, see information box, *Tri-State Informer*, Sep. 1972, p. 2. Jennings served as an elected director of the St. Louis Metropolitan Area Citizens' Council. See "St. Louis Metropolitan Area" and photos and captions, *Citizens Informer*, Dec. 1977–Jan. 1978, p. 7. A Citizens' Council affiliate had first been organized in the St. Louis area in 1964–1965 but did not fully establish itself until late 1968. See Clarence Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway: Class Politics and Black Freedom Struggle in St. Louis, 1936–75* (Ann Arbor, 2009), 228. On the newspaper's staff, advertisers, and prices, see "From the Editor's Desk—A Look Back," *Citizens Informer*, May 1975, p. 10; *ibid.*, Feb. 1975, *passim*; and "Subscription Blank," *ibid.*, p. 11. On the newspaper's coverage area and examples of Council-related articles, see "Council List," *ibid.*, Aug.–Sept. 1974, p. 3; "Citizens Council News," *Tri-State Informer*, Jan. 1971, p. 12; "Carondelet Days' Fair Big Success" (photos and captions), *Citizens Informer*, Aug.–Sept. 1974, p. 6; "Blackhawk B-B-Q and Rallies Draw Thousands" and photos and captions, *ibid.*, Oct. 1975, p. 5; "Confederate Memorial Day Service to Be Held in South St. Louis County," *ibid.*, April 1976, p. 6; "Citizens Council and Ken's Lounge Sponsor Softball Team," *ibid.*, May 1976, p. 6; and "Pillow Academy Stopped at 100 Wins," photos and captions, *ibid.*, Jan. 1975, p. 4. On *Citizens Informer* and local politics, see "Elect Betty Prokopf License Collector" (photos and captions), *ibid.*, Nov. 1974, p. 6. Prokopf was a

member of the Citizens' Council. One of the photographs showed her posing with Missouri State Auditor John Ashcroft, who became U.S. attorney general in 2001. See *ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> On St. Louis and postwar decline, see Colin Gordon, *Mapping Decline: St. Louis and the Fate of the American City* (Philadelphia, 2008), 10, 13, 25, 35. As thousands of residents fled west for the suburbs of St. Louis County, the city "became progressively older, blacker, and poorer"; during the 1970s the city's population fell from 622,236 to 452,801, and by the end of the decade blacks comprised 46 percent of the city's population. See *ibid.*, 11, 25. On St. Louis white conservatives, see Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, 225–26, 229. On the silent majority, see Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 5; and publication information box, *Citizens Informer*, March 1975, p. 10. For examples of *Citizens Informer* articles reflecting the newspaper's and its readers' concerns, see "Reverse Discrimination Combated," *ibid.*, Aug.–Sept. 1976, pp. 1, 8; "News Briefs," *ibid.*, Jan. 1976, p. 1; "Welfare Worker Convicted of Food Stamp Thefts," *ibid.*, Aug.–Sept. 1974, p. 2; "Letters to the Editor: Land Control," *Tri-State Informer*, March 1974, p. 2; "U.S. Appeals Black Jack Decision," *Citizens Informer*, Aug.–Sept. 1974, p. 1; "Symbols of Revolution: Their Real Meaning; Sinister Background," *Tri-State Informer*, Jan. 1971, p. 23; "Use of 'Rebel' and Confederate Flag Upheld by Federal Court," *Citizens Informer*, March 1975, p. 4; Gene Stalnaker, "How Does Regionalism Affect Americans?" *ibid.*, Jan. 1976, p. 9; Arthur Wuigk, "Truth on Side of Parents in W. Va. Textbook Controversy," *ibid.*, Feb. 1975, pp. 1, 9; "An Evaluation from J. Edgar Hoover" (box), *ibid.*, Dec. 1974, p. 12; and "Solzhenitsyn Warns Americans," *ibid.*, Aug.–Sept. 1975, p. 1. On *Citizens Informer* slogans, see "Support Your Local Police," *Citizens Informer*, Aug.–Sept. 1974, p. 9; "Register Commies . . . Not Guns!," *ibid.*, p. 12; "Stop E.R.A.," *ibid.*, Feb. 1975, p. 9; "Stop Forced Busing," *ibid.*, March 1976, n.p.; "Gun Control Means People Control" (logo and cartoon), *ibid.*, Feb. 1975, p. 12; and "Stand Up for America," *ibid.*, Aug.–Sept. 1974, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> On *Citizens Informer* coverage of Schlafly and the ERA, see "ERA Amendments Defeated in New York and New Jersey," *ibid.*, Dec. 1975, p. 1; "Stop E.R.A. Meets" announcement, *ibid.*, Aug.–Sept. 1974, p. 9; "Missouri Ladies Defeat E.R.A. Ratification" and photo and captions, *ibid.*, April 1975, p. 1; "Schlafly Defends Family Life," *ibid.*, Jan–Feb. 1980, pp. 1, 8; and Vickie Harvey, "Legal End of E.R.A. Celebrated by Foes in Wash. D.C." and photo and caption, *ibid.*, May–June 1979, p. 12.

<sup>13</sup> On *Citizens Informer* reprints, see "A Continuing Leftist Hoax," *Citizens Informer*, Jan. 1976, p. 2; Billy James Hargis, "The Traitors and the Naïve in Our Pulpits," reprint of undated *Christian Crusade Weekly* article, *Citizens Informer*, Feb.–March 1978, p. 8; Harlon Carter, "Crime Control=Gun

Control=Race Control???" *Tri-State Informer*, March 1974, pp. 10–11. On *Utah Independent*, see "About the Utah Independent (Salt Lake City, Utah) 1970–1980," Library of Congress "Chronicling America" Web site, <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85058124/>. On syndicated columnists, see Victor Riesel, "Panthers' Line Strictly Maoist," *Tri-State Informer*, Jan. 1971, p. 8; Victor Riesel, "Fortunes Made in 'Saving' the Poor," *ibid.*, p. 12; E. P. Thornton, "A Conservative Speaks Out," *Citizens Informer*, Aug.–Sept. 1974, p. 4; and E. P. Thornton, "A Conservative Speaks Out," *ibid.*, Feb. 1976, p. 11. On J. Kesner Kahn, see "Letters: Remember Mistakes," *ibid.*, July 1975, p. 1; J. Kesner Kahn, "What's Been Happening," *Independent American*, Dec. 1973, p. 1; information box, *Free Enterprise*, August 1968, p. 2; "I Do Not Choose to Be a Common Man," S.T.O.P. newsletter, Spring 1980, p. 2, S.T.O.P. (Boston, Mass.), RH WL E499, Wilcox Collection; and Charlie Ross, "S.T.O.P.: I Do Not Choose to Be a Common Man," *South Boston Marshal*, March 1980, p. 17. On Paul Chiera, see "Letters to the Editor: Subversive List," *Citizens Informer*, Aug.–Sept. 1974, p. 10; "Letters to the Editor: 'Day Care,'" *ibid.*, Dec. 1975, p. 11; and "Letters to the Editor: Unconstitutional Busing," *ibid.*, Dec. 1974, p. 11.

<sup>14</sup> On conservatives and fears about the decline of law and order in the late 1960s and 1970s, see Michael Flamm, *Law and Order: Street Crime, Civil Unrest, and the Crisis of Liberalism in the 1960s* (New York, 2005), 4; and Durr, *Behind the Backlash*, 145, 194. On Boston antibusers and concerns about crime, see Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 185. On *Citizens Informer* and racially explicit articles about crime, see "What Kind of Justice Do We Have?" *Citizens Informer*, Nov. 1974, pp. 1, 4; "Letters to the Editor: Black Crime," *Tri-State Informer*, April 1974, p. 10; "Black Youths Charged in Senseless Murder," *ibid.*, 1; and "Letters to the Editor: Voice of Veteran," *Citizens Informer*, Jan. 1975, p. 10. Several cartoons printed by *Citizens Informer* indicated that crime threatened law-abiding whites, and that blacks and the liberals that tolerated their behavior were to blame. A cartoon in the April 1976 edition depicted a frightened, tie-wearing white man being mugged by a thug labeled "Crime Rate Increase." The caption read, "We do not have a gun problem, we have a crime problem." See cartoon, *ibid.*, April 1976, p. 11. A racially explicit cartoon printed in 1975 showed an aged, decrepit Uncle Sam with an ape labeled "CRIME" atop his back. See "Monkey on Uncle Sam's Back" (cartoon), *ibid.*, Aug.–Sept. 1975, p. 9.

<sup>15</sup> Roy V. Harris, "Blacks Cause 'Ghettoes,'" *ibid.*, Feb. 1975, p. 9; "City 'GHETTOS' Not as Bad as We Are Led to Think," *ibid.*, 2; "Negro Arrested for Making Love to Dog," *ibid.*; "Black Illegitimacy Rate: 64 percent in St. Louis; 53 percent in Missouri; 46 percent in Nation," *ibid.*, Jan. 1976, p. 12; "Blacks Prey on Young Runaway White Girls," *ibid.*, Dec. 1975, p. 3; "Europe, Not Mid-east, Seat of Civilization," *ibid.*, Oct. 1974, p. 2; "Head of England's National Front Addresses



Memphis Citizens Council,” *ibid.*, July–Aug. 1979, p. 5; photos and captions, *ibid.*; “Black Militant Stokely Carmichael Urges Blacks to Destroy American System,” *ibid.*, Dec. 1974, p. 12; “News Briefs,” *ibid.*, April 1975, p. 1; “Letters to the Editor: King Statue?” *ibid.*, Feb. 1976, p. 10. For another anti–Martin Luther King Jr. letter, see “Letters to the Editor: King Facts,” *ibid.*, Jan. 1976, p. 10.

<sup>16</sup> “Letters to the Editor: Texas Comment,” *ibid.*, Aug.–Sept. 1975, p. 11; “Letters to Editor: Fresh Air,” *ibid.*, May 1975, p. 11.

<sup>17</sup> “CBS Accused of Anti-white Bias,” *Tri-State Informer*, March 1974, pp. 1, 11; “Conservative Judge Being Attacked by Liberal Media,” *Citizens Informer*, April 1975, p. 6; “Crime Statistic Belie Media’s Image of Blacks,” *ibid.*, May–June 1979, pp. 1, 9; Wuigk, “Truth on Side of Parents in W. Va. Textbook Controversy”; “Bus Boycott,” *ibid.*, March 1976, p. 12. The Citizens’ Council publications the *Citizen* and the *Councilor* also criticized the media. In its April 1975 issue, the *Citizen* noted that the race of assailants and victims were never mentioned by the *New York Times*, the Associated Press, or United Press International. It then printed a number of photographs of blacks accused of crimes to show readers “the racial identities and their victims in all cases where we find that this information has been camouflaged or withheld by the national news media.” See “Black Crime Concealed,” the *Citizen*, April 1975, p. 2; and “Random Glances at the News,” *ibid.*, p. 16. On the *Councilor*, see Chapter 6.

<sup>18</sup> “From the Editor’s Desk,” *Tri-State Informer*, Feb. 1974, p. 2. For other articles on George Wallace, see “Constitutional Amendment against Busing Supported by U.S. Congressional Candidates” and photos and captions, *Citizens Informer*, July 1976, p. 6; and “Gov. Wallace Announces Candidacy,” *ibid.*, Dec. 1975, pp. 1, 9.

<sup>19</sup> “Letters to the Editor: Likes ‘INFORMER,’” *ibid.*, Dec. 1975, p. 11; “Letters to the Editor: CBS Distortion,” *ibid.*, Nov. 1975, p. 11; Robert Herzberg, “Gun ‘Documentary’ Phony . . . and CBS Knew It,” reprint of Oct. 1, 1975, *National Spotlight* article, *NAPF*, Feb. 5, 1976, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup> “Fairness in Broadcasting: Committee Report,” *Tri-State Informer*, Feb. 1974, p. 4.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*; “Fairness in Broadcasting: Committee Report,” *Citizens Informer*, Oct. 1974, p. 8; “Fairness in Broadcasting: Committee Report,” *ibid.*, Aug.–Sept. 1974, p. 8; “Fairness in Broadcasting: Committee Report,” *ibid.*, July 1975, p. 8; “Fairness in Broadcasting: Committee Report,” *ibid.*, March 1976, n.p. The Citizens’ Council also taped public service messages broadcast on KSD that argued against busing and reverse discrimination. See “McEwen on KSD-TV,” *Citizens*

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*Informer*, Summer 1978, p. 6. On the FIBC's FCC complaints, see "In Re Complaint by Citizens Council of America, Bridgeton, Mo., Concerning Refusal to Accept Paid Advertisement by KPLR," Nov. 7, 1972, 37 F.C.C.2d (1972), 1014–16; "Fairness in Broadcasting Committee Report," *Citizens Informer*, March 1976, p. 4; and "Fairness in Broadcasting Committee," *Tri-State Informer*, Sept. 1972, p. 8. On Max Roby, see "Fairness in Broadcasting Committee," *ibid.*, Feb. 1974, p. 4.

<sup>22</sup> "CBS Accused of Anti-white Bias"; "Fairness in Broadcasting Committee Report," *ibid.*, Jan. 1975, p. 8; "Lesbian Bar Ignites Controversy," *ibid.*, Sept.–Oct. 1979, pp. 1, 9, esp. 1; "Fairness in Broadcasting: Committee Report," *ibid.*, Nov. 1974, p. 8.

<sup>23</sup> "CBS Accused of Anti-white Bias"; "Fairness in Broadcasting: Committee Report," *Citizens Informer*, Jan. 1975, p. 8; "In Re Complaint of Fairness in Broadcasting Committee of the Citizens Council Concerning the Fairness Doctrine Involving CBS," April 24, 1974, 46 F.C.C.2d 498 (1974), 498–500; "N.C. Field-Director Asks CBS to Present White Southern View," *Tri-State Informer*, April 1974, p. 8.

<sup>24</sup> "Public Can Now See TV Logs," *ibid.*, Feb. 1974, p. 4; "Fairness in Broadcasting Committee Report," *Citizens Informer*, Oct. 1976, p. 8. On Phyllis Schlafly and ascertainment, see Chapter 4.

<sup>25</sup> "'Greater' Memphis Citizens Council Protests against WMC-TV" and photos and captions, *Citizens Informer*, Summer 1978, p. 4; "Memphis Citizens Council 'Drums Up' Local Support," reprint of Jan. 5, 1978, *North Mississippi Times* article, *Citizens Informer*, Feb.–March 1978, p. 5; "In Re Request by Memphis Citizens Council, Memphis, Tenn., to Designate for Hearing Renewal of License of Stations WMC-AM-FM and TV of Scripps-Howard Broadcasting Co.," Sept. 29, 1971, 32 F.C.C.2d F.C.C. 71-1006, pp. 46–47. Also see "Memphis Council Big Hit on Radio," *Citizens Informer*, July 1976, p. 4; and "Memphis Director Blasts WMC-TV," *ibid.*, March–April 1979, p. 4.

<sup>26</sup> "Memphis Council Big Hit on Radio"; Steven D. Classen, *Watching Jim Crow: The Struggles over Mississippi TV, 1955–1969* (Durham, N.C., 2004), 37, 36, 43.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 33–37, 202.

<sup>28</sup> "Silent America" (advertisement), *Citizens Informer*, Nov. 1975, p. 8; "'Silent Majority' Takes to Airwaves," *ibid.*, Dec. 1975, p. 9; "What's GNU?? 'Silent Majority Speaks'" (advertisement), *ibid.*, p. 8; "Fairness in Broadcasting Committee Report," *ibid.*, Jan. 1976, p. 8.

<sup>29</sup> "Council Takes to Street with Anti-busing Petitions" and photos and captions, *Citizens Informer*, March 1975, p. 6; "Petition," *ibid.*, Feb. 1975, p. 7; "Anti-busing Protestors Pick Federal

Court” and photos and captions, *ibid.*, Oct. 1975, p. 7. On antibusers and accusations that the news media undercounted attendance at antibusing events, see Scott Kaufer, “What Makes Avi Nelson Talk? You’ve Heard the Voice; Now Meet the Man,” *Boston Magazine*, Feb. 1975, pp. 56–59, 81–89; and Dick Kaukas, “Busing Protestors Stage Dixie Highway March,” *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Oct. 31, 1975.

<sup>30</sup> “Forced Busing Destroying Denver,” *Citizens Informer*, Feb. 1975, p. 1. For other antibusing stories, see “Federal Judge Orders Tax Increase for Busing,” *ibid.*, 1, 8; “The Bus to Nowhere” (cartoon), *ibid.*, 1; “Court Bans Cross District Busing,” *ibid.*, Aug.–Sept. 1974, pp. 1, 9; “From the Editor’s Desk—Is There No End??” *ibid.*, Feb. 1975, p. 10; Charles Meyer, “New Kentuckiana Citizens Council for Louisville Area,” *ibid.*, Aug.–Sept. 1976, p. 4.

<sup>31</sup> Photo and caption, *ibid.*, Nov. 1974, p. 1; photo and caption [of teenager being subdued by Boston police], *ibid.*, March 1976, n.p. For an example of a racist Far Right newspaper that emphasized the race of busing opponents, see “Busing Fails in San Francisco,” *Klansman*, April 1977, p. 1. “Boston Elects Anti-busers,” *Citizens Informer*, Dec. 1975, pp. 1, 9; caption and photo [Pixie Palladino], *ibid.*, 1; “Biggest Boston Crowd for Wallace” and photo, *ibid.*, Feb. 1976, p. 1.

<sup>32</sup> “Boston Anti-busing Protestors Boo Kennedy,” *ibid.*, Oct. 1974, p. 1; “Judge Usurps School Board’s Power,” *ibid.*, Jan. 1976, p. 1; “Liberty Dead in Boston?,” *ibid.*, April 1975, p. 1; photos and captions, *ibid.*, 2.

<sup>33</sup> “Anti-busing Resolution,” photo and caption, *ibid.*, May–June 1980, p. 6; Bugel and Baum, “Federal Judge Imposes Police State in Boston”; Baum and Bugel, “Bostonians Organize to Fight Judicial Tyranny”; photos and captions, *ibid.*, March 1975, pp. 1, 2, 8–9, esp. 8.

<sup>34</sup> Thomas Bugle [sic], “Busing Tyranny Resisted in Boston,” *ibid.*, Nov. 1975, pp. 1, 9; Bill Hatley, “The Illinois Scene,” *ibid.*, March 1975, p. 4. “Boston Honors Young Illinoisan” and photo, *ibid.*, May 1975, pp. 1, 9; photos and captions, *ibid.* Black and Baum talked about their visits to Boston on the St. Louis radio station KXOK public affairs program “Wake Up St. Louis” on May 25, 1975. See “Fairness in Broadcasting: Committee Report,” *ibid.*, July 1975, p. 8.

<sup>35</sup> “‘Busing Will Never Work in Boston,’ Says O’Neil”; “Letters to Editor: ‘Dapper’ O’Neil”; “Letters to the Editor: Wants Papers,” *ibid.*, Dec. 1975, p. 11; “Letters to the Editor: Standing with Us,” *ibid.*; “If Paul Was Here Today” (poem), *ibid.*, Aug.–Sept. 1975, p. 11; “Letters to the Editor: Gettysburg Address, Updated (With Apologies to Abe Lincoln),” *ibid.*, Nov. 1975, p. 11.

<sup>36</sup> On *West Roxbury Transcript*, see Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 132–34. On Joe Casper, see “Joe Casper’s School for Scoundrels! ‘Three Cheers for Us Middle People,’” advertisement, *South Boston Marshal*, March 1980, p. 23. On *Pax Centurion*, see “Labor Council Switches on Busing,” *Citizens Informer*, Jan. 1976, p. 2; “Oppose Forced Busing,” *ibid.*; “Happy New Year!,” *ibid.*, Feb. 1976, p. 2; “Boston Elects Anti-busers,” *ibid.*, Dec. 1975, p. 1, 9; and “‘Affirmative Action’=Reverse Discrimination,” reprint of Jan. 1978 *Pax Centurion* article, *Citizens Informer*, Feb.–March 1978, pp. 1, 9. On Detroit police officers, *Tuebor*, and affirmative action, see Dennis Deslippe, “Do Whites Have Rights? White Detroit Policemen and ‘Reverse Discrimination’ Protests in the 1970s,” *Journal of American History*, 91 (Dec. 2004), 932–60.

<sup>37</sup> “Readers Forum: Our Own Anti-busing Voice,” *South Boston Marshal*, March 1980, p. 5; Pixie Palladino, “From Pixie’s Desk: Another First, for Our Side,” *ibid.*, 6; Albert L. O’Neil, “From ‘Dapper’s Office,’” *ibid.*, 18; Chester Broderick, “Sound Off: B.P.P.A. Questions ‘Objective Journalism’ in Boston Daily Papers,” *ibid.*, Sept. 11, 1980, p. 4; E. P. Thornton, “A Conservative Speaks Out,” *ibid.*, Jan. 29, 1981, p. 14; Phyllis Schlafly, “Biased Politics of the League of Women Voters,” *ibid.*, May 1988, p. 3; “Men’s March—Was the Media Really There?; Editorial,” *ibid.*, March 1980, pp. 1, 4; Edward P. Shallow, “The Way It Is,” *ibid.*, Sept. 11, 1980, p. 13; “Readers Forum: Newsweek Replies,” *ibid.*, 5; Nancy Yotts, “NANS News,” reprint of undated *South Boston Marshal* column, *Citizens Informer*, March–April 1981, p. 4; Robert DePrez, “NANS News: Violence in the Schools,” reprint of April 9, 1981, *South Boston Marshal* column, *Citizens Informer*, May–June 1981, p. 12; Charlie Ross, “STOP,” undated reprint of *South Boston Tribune* article, *Citizens Informer*, Jan.–Feb. 1983, p. 12. Ross’s STOP column also ran in the Boston newspapers *Charlestown Patriot* and the *Somerville Chronicle*. See Charlie Ross, “S.T.O.P.,” undated reprint of *Charlestown Patriot* and *Somerville Chronicle* column, *Citizens Informer*, Spring 1983, p. 12.

<sup>38</sup> Albert L. “Dapper” O’Neil, “Telling It Like It Is,” *South Boston Marshal*, Jan. 29, 1981, p. 19; “The South Boston Marshal Really Tells It Like It Is—Page after Page,” box, *ibid.*, Sept. 11, 1980, p. 8; untitled cartoon, *NAPF*, Nov. 23, 1975, p. 1; photo and caption, *Citizens Informer*, Nov. 1974, p. 1; Bugel and Baum, “Federal Judge Imposes Police State in Boston,” 1; Kaufer, “What Make Avi Nelson Talk?” In a May 1977 profile of Kerrigan, the *Boston Phoenix* said that Kerrigan had capitalized on the distrust working-class white Bostonians felt toward the *Globe*. See Tom Sheehan, “John Kerrigan’s War with the Media Maggots,” *Boston Phoenix*, May 17, 1977, pp. 6–7, 23, 26–27.

<sup>39</sup> David Greenberg, “The Idea of ‘the Liberal Media’ and Its Roots in the Civil Rights Movement,” *The Sixties: A Journal of History, Politics and Culture* 1 (Dec. 2008), 167–86; Formisano,

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*Boston against Busing*, 151–52. For an example of media criticism by segregationists in the 1960s, see “Martin Luther King Car Theft Story Blacked Out by Dailies in 49 States,” *Councilor*, May 6, 1966, p. 1.

<sup>40</sup> Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 77.

<sup>41</sup> “Letters to the Editor: ‘Afro’ DiGrazia,” *Citizens Informer*, June 1976, p. 10; Baum and Bugel, “Bostonians Organize to Fight Judicial Tyranny”; Lassiter and Crespino, eds., *The Myth of Southern Exceptionalism*, 5, 6.

## Chapter 4

### Antifeminism, the News Media, and “Women’s Lib Propaganda”

In 1973 conservative women opposed to feminism and the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) accused the National Organization for Women (NOW) of extortion. Earlier that year NOW’s Detroit chapter had signed an agreement with the Detroit television station WXYZ in which the station promised to seek to add women to its staff; to consult with NOW members regarding hiring and programming decisions; to air ninety minutes of programming each year portraying women in “nonstereotype” roles; and to produce, at the station’s expense, two NOW public service announcements (PSAs).<sup>1</sup>

For “pro-family” conservatives, the WXYZ/NOW agreement was part of a nationwide campaign by NOW to bully stations into signing such agreements, which they claimed bound broadcast stations to airing “women’s lib” programming approved by NOW, hiring only NOW-approved female employees, and subjecting staff to feminist “brainwashing” sessions. According to its opponents NOW presented stations with two choices: either sign an agreement, or NOW would petition the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to take away the station’s broadcast license. Longtime anticommunist activist Phyllis Schlafly, the recognized leader of opposition to the ERA, argued that the agreements would require stations to air radical feminist propaganda. In the October 1973 edition of her monthly newsletter *Phyllis Schlafly Report*, Schlafly urged her supporters to take action. “Tell the station,” Schlafly wrote, “that you and your friends and other responsible community leaders will support the station in resisting this raw attempt to suppress freedom of speech and press.”<sup>2</sup>

ERA opponents, like most conservatives of the 1970s, believed that the majority of the nation's news media were biased. They also believed that the kind of TV agreements being pursued by NOW would ensure that the television airwaves would become even more liberal than before. Schlafly's call for pro-family conservatives to fight NOW's attempts at media "extortion" demonstrated that ERA opponents saw media activism as a vital component of their strategy to defeat the proposed amendment and fight back against liberalism.

This chapter shifts attention away from analyses of the class-based and racial resentments that fueled news media criticism by busing opponents and other racial conservatives in the 1970s to a focus on the role of cultural conservatism on criticism of the news and entertainment media. The ERA opponents who made media criticism and media-reform action a major strategy were motivated by concerns about the family, gender roles, parental control, dangers to youth, and moral degradation. They blamed liberalism for creating a permissive society that endangered the nation's morals. The liberal news media, they also argued, threatened traditional families and their children by legitimizing the ERA; at the same time, the news media either ignored, distorted, or ridiculed pro-family conservatives and their views. Thus, like busing opponents in Boston, Detroit, and Louisville, antifeminists felt that the "liberal" news media did not certify their cause.<sup>3</sup>

Pro-family conservatives also regularly criticized the entertainment media, especially television programming, and that criticism was closely linked to their resentment of the news media. Publications such as *Phyllis Schlafly Report* informed their readers about the alleged biases of the news media and the allegedly dangerous, antifamily programming aired by TV networks. Cultural conservatives said that the entertainment media pushed the liberal, permissive, and un-American ideas, trends, and programs that pro-family conservatives

rejected and fought against: the ERA; sex education and liberal textbooks in the schools; and allegedly immoral, perverted sexual behavior such as premarital sex and homosexuality. They also argued that the entertainment media glorified sex, drug use, and violence. Together, network TV news and entertainment programming wielded immense power. Cultural conservatives considered network TV to be a monopoly run by unelected elites who were able to poison and brainwash American families night after night with entertainment programming that attacked the family, derided Christianity, and questioned traditional American values. The TV monopoly threatened the modes of authority valued by cultural conservatives: parents, the family, the church, and the Bible. Indeed, Christian beliefs were shared by an overwhelming number of ERA opponents, and Christian conservatives were essential to the backlash against liberalism and to the growing political power of cultural conservatives in the 1970s and into the 1980s.

Concerns about moral decay and the poisoning of children's minds and souls were shared by Christian conservatives such as Billy James Hargis and Cold War anticommunists generally (see chapter 5). Some anticommunists believed that "smut" on TV, in Hollywood films, and on the newsstands was the work of a communist conspiracy designed to weaken the moral fiber of American youth. Anticommunism was also central to opposition to the ERA, which opponents believed would "de-sex" women, lead to unisex toilets, require women to serve in the military, and promote abortions and lesbianism. As the historian David K. Johnson has shown, the Cold War-era campaign against homosexual "perversion" was part of an anticommunist effort to root out men and women whom anticommunists believed lacked American and Christian values.<sup>4</sup>

While the first three chapters of this dissertation primarily focused on conservative criticism of local news media, this chapter provides an examination of news media criticism



and activism by conservatives on the local and national level. Pro-family leaders such as Phyllis Schlafly argued that fighting back against the perceived bias of the news and entertainment media was essential to the movement. ERA opponents believed local and national broadcast news media were overwhelmingly pro-ERA, and antifeminists worked to combat the alleged imbalance by taking local and national action. Locally, they demanded that stations refuse to sign agreements with NOW or rescind existing agreements; wrote letters to newspapers criticizing such agreements; and sought out businesses that advertised on stations that had made agreements with NOW to ask them to complain to the station. Antifeminists could also take national action against local news media outlets by filing complaints with the FCC about NOW agreements with TV stations and alleged violations of the Fairness Doctrine. Finally, antifeminists could file FCC complaints against television networks to complain about allegedly unbalanced news and entertainment programming. The FCC's regulatory powers offered a media-reform tactic for conservatives and liberals alike. In the early 1970s liberal and conservative individuals and organizations filed petitions-to-deny with the FCC with unprecedented frequency, but they were almost always unsuccessful; the commission denied an overwhelming majority of complaints by both conservative and liberal petitioners.<sup>5</sup>

This chapter also argues that though racial and class-based resentments were less salient than were sociocultural issues for most pro-family conservatives who criticized the news media, the great majority of ERA opponents were political conservatives and committed opponents of liberalism. For example, I demonstrate that many of the Michigan women who took action against the NOW/WXYZ agreement were the same women who led the antibusing movement in Detroit and who read and wrote in to the racially conservative newspaper *Northeast Detroitier*. These were women who considered their

antibusing and pro-family activism—movements in which criticism of the allegedly liberal news media was crucial—as closely linked with their opposition to other forms of liberalism.

Finally, this chapter also supports arguments I have made in previous chapters. I show that like most conservative critics of the news media in the 1970s, ERA opponents believed that a powerful, elite liberal establishment threatened the freedoms of Americans, and those antifeminists believed the news and entertainment media were some of the most powerful representatives of that establishment. Though Phyllis Schlafly was not a member of the working class, she voiced the resentments of conservative working-class women when she complained that many of the judges who ordered busing and the school board members who supported it sent their children to private schools, and that NOW was led by radical lesbians as well as a snobby elite of female college professors, lawyers, and urban professionals who enjoyed poking fun at the God-fearing, stay-at-home mothers who objected to the ERA. I also again demonstrate the important role played by conservative alternative news media in grassroots conservative movements of the 1970s. The most significant publication in the movement against the ERA was *Phyllis Schlafly Report*, which provided news about ERA opposition as well as information on issues of concern to conservatives including busing, taxes, affirmative action, abortion, permissiveness, and the threat of international communism. *Phyllis Schlafly Report* articles were reprinted in conservative publications throughout the country, including *NAPF*, *South Boston Marshal*, *Citizens Informer*, and dozens if not hundreds of other conservative publications, which helped to make opposition to the ERA a salient issue for a growing number of conservatives in the 1970s.<sup>6</sup>

I illustrate my arguments in this chapter by telling three stories. The first story details the WXYZ/NOW controversy; the second examines *Phyllis Schlafly Report's* efforts to fight

ERA and the alleged bias of the news and entertainment media; and the third analyzes two events that shed light on the importance of media criticism and media-reform activism for pro-family conservatives: a pro-ERA rally in Springfield, Illinois, in 1976, and the 1977 International Women's Year (IWY) conference and pro-family counter-rally in Houston. Before I tell those stories, however, I will provide background information on cultural conservatism, the ERA, and the pro-family movement.

### **Cultural Issues, Gender, and Grassroots Conservatism**

In his 2005 book *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism: A Woman's Crusade*, the historian Donald Critchlow argued that cultural issues such as abortion, sex education, school prayer, homosexuality, and feminism “revived” the Right during the 1970s. The historian Marjorie Spruill also suggests that for some 1970s conservatives the specter of “Godless feminism” supplanted “Godless Communism” as the greatest threat to America. However, I suggest that antifeminism nestled comfortably with anticommunist and antiliberal views on issues such as property rights, free enterprise, taxes, busing, and affirmative action for many conservatives of the 1970s. For conservatives, the most visible manifestation of feminism and women's liberation was the ERA, a proposed amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender. Congress passed the ERA on March 22, 1972, and within a year thirty states had approved it, with only eight more states needed for ratification. Initially the ERA sparked little controversy or opposition, but in 1972 Phyllis Schlafly began to mobilize pro-family resistance to the proposed amendment. Schlafly argued that the ERA would not provide women with any rights they did not already have, and that it would subject women to the military draft, abolish alimony payments, and even mandate unisex bathrooms, among other evils.<sup>7</sup>

When Schlafly founded STOP (Stop Taking Our Privileges) ERA in 1972 she already had two decades of experience as an outspoken anticommunist activist. A resident of Alton, Illinois, near St. Louis, she wrote a number of books on the threat posed by the Soviet Union and international communism; she also ran for Congress twice, but was never elected to any public office. Schlafly hosted the Daughters of the American Revolution radio program *America Wake Up* in the 1960s and in 1967 she began publishing the monthly *Phyllis Schlafly Report*, which kept readers abreast of issues of interest to conservative anticommunists. The first issue of *Phyllis Schlafly Report* to express opposition to the ERA appeared in February 1972, and in September 1972 she hosted the first national STOP ERA conference in St. Louis. According to Critchlow, Schlafly succeeded in mobilizing tens of thousands of conservatives in the 1970s because she “discovered a genuine populist sentiment in a large female population that opposed the ERA, feminism, and modern liberalism with the same intensity of emotion that feminists brought to their cause.” Schlafly’s trenchant opposition infuriated her primary opponent, NOW, which Schlafly considered the leading proponent of the ERA. During a 1973 debate, the prominent feminist and former NOW president Betty Friedan screamed at Schlafly, “I’d like to burn you at the stake!”<sup>8</sup>

Grassroots conservative campaigns of the Cold War era against the ERA, sex education, and gay rights were often led and organized by women. Women did not just lead grassroots conservative movements that dealt with issues of gender. Women in Pontiac (Irene McCabe), Louisville (Joyce Spond, Sue Connor), Boston (Louise Day Hicks, “Pixie” Palladino), and Detroit (Carmen Roberts) were prominent antibusing leaders. Such leaders were also successful in making connections with other women and men nationwide who

were involved in campaigns against busing, the ERA, abortion, sex education, gay rights, and “liberal” textbooks.<sup>9</sup>

“At the roots of the anti-communism, anti-feminism, and pro-family movements in post–World War II America,” Critchlow wrote in his biography of Schlafly, “remained a conviction that the nation must not stray from its religious foundations and values lest society collapse into anarchy.” The religious backgrounds of women opposed to the ERA (including Schlafly, a Roman Catholic) inspired their activism; 98 percent of anti-ERA activists said they belonged to a church. Not only were ERA opponents religious, many were also anticommunists deeply suspicious of the Soviet Union and the United Nations. In a 2004 book on conservative alternative media, Richard A. Viguerie and David Franke argued that Schlafly was successful because she focused on the single issue of ERA and avoided partisan politics—but the evidence suggests otherwise. Throughout the 1970s *Phyllis Schlafly Report* focused on issues besides the ERA such as the dangers of marijuana, how federal housing programs had devastated U.S. cities and towns, and the efforts of West Virginia parents to overturn the implementation of “dirty” textbooks in public schools. Schlafly was also an outspoken busing opponent; the October 1971 *Report* featured the front-page story “How to Stop Busing Now!”<sup>10</sup>

The conservative Detroit women who discovered the existence of the WXYZ/NOW agreement and informed Schlafly about it were also opposed to the ERA and a range of other issues they considered manifestations of liberalism. Many of them served in leadership roles in the antibusing group Northeast Mothers Alert (NEMA) and the Michigan chapter of the antifeminist organization Happiness of Womanhood (HOW). The prominent Detroit antibusing leader Carmen Roberts was chair of NEMA and was later president of NEMA’s citywide successor, Mothers Alert Detroit (MAD), and also served as the HOW

Michigan chapter's education chair, while Patt Barbour, Shirley Wohlfield, and Linda Haerens, all prominent members of NEMA and MAD, served as the HOW chapter's director, secretary, and publicity chair, respectively. The Michigan chapters of HOW and STOP ERA worked in tandem to defeat bills for sex education curricula in Michigan public schools, and both organizations were opposed to abortion and homosexuality. The conservative women who participated in countermovements against the ERA, sex education, and busing did so because they believed they were all liberal ideas that endangered their children and threatened parental control. Roberts, who characterized herself as a housewife and a mother of two, complained that "libbers" tried "to make 'mom' and 'apple pie' sound like dirty words," and argued that "the majority of women in the United States feel like Happiness of Womanhood does. Not like your libbers do. Because the majority of women are home."<sup>11</sup>

Just like the other conservatives I examine in this dissertation, the women who belonged to the STOP ERA, HOW, and NEMA/MAD shared a deep antipathy toward the "liberal" news media: Roberts once characterized the news media as "prostitutes" acting under orders from the federal government. Schlafly and antifeminists nationwide also believed that the news media were unfairly biased against conservatives. That alleged bias had serious ramifications for antifeminists because they believed that feminists who backed the ERA received prominent and favorable coverage from the print and broadcast media. For antifeminists, the WXYZ/NOW agreement represented another astonishing example of the media's blatant favoritism of ERA supporters.<sup>12</sup>

### **Giving In to NOW's "Extortion"**

Pro-family activists were correct when they argued that the WXYZ/NOW agreement represented a larger campaign by NOW to reform the broadcast media. Beginning in 1972 NOW chapters, acting independently and in collaboration with civil rights, church, and other liberal-oriented groups, sought to reach agreements with radio and television stations, or, when such efforts were unsuccessful, filed petitions-to-deny with the FCC seeking suspension of a station's broadcast license. NOW hoped its media-reform efforts would lead to improved portrayals of women on radio and TV and increase the number of women employed in managerial and programming positions at broadcast stations. ERA opponents, on the other hand, argued that since NOW was a radical group that did not represent a majority of women, no broadcast station could possibly serve the community's public interest by entering into an agreement with NOW.<sup>13</sup>

In May 1972 NOW's New York chapter filed an FCC petition-to-deny against New York City television station WABC after NOW representatives had attempted but failed to meet with the station to discuss programming and employment. That FCC complaint, the historian Allison Perlman writes, "inaugurated what would become a near-decade long fight between NOW and television stations across the country." NOW had been founded in 1966 and by the early 1970s had become one of the most prominent women's organizations in the country, with hundreds of local chapters, and had made ratification of the ERA one of its primary objectives. NOW's national office in Chicago made available to the organization's chapters a media-reform "kit" that included negotiating tips, information on license-renewal challenges, and lists of renewal dates for TV stations, while NOW chapters often monitored the programming of local stations. By mid-1974, fifteen agreements between NOW chapters

and local stations had been reached. These included agreements between NOW chapters and television stations in Pittsburgh (three different stations), Houston, San Diego, and Denver.<sup>14</sup>

NOW's media-reform efforts followed in the footsteps of civil rights groups. In *Office of Communication of the United Church of Christ, et al. v. FCC*, a U.S. Court of Appeals ruled in 1969 that members of the public had an interest in the renewal of broadcast licenses and thus must be recognized by the FCC. The decision meant that individuals and community groups could petition the commission to argue that a local station's license renewal should be denied. Civil rights groups as well as church, Latino, gay and lesbian, and environmentalist groups used the petition-to-deny strategy often in the late 1960s and 1970s in an effort to change the programming and hiring practices of broadcast stations. Community groups also formed media-reform coalitions such as the Memphis Coalition for Better Broadcasting and Atlanta's Community Coalition on Broadcasting; the latter group represented twenty civil rights groups and successfully negotiated agreements in 1970 with at least twenty-three radio and TV stations in the Atlanta area. In the agreements stations promised to seek African American hires, air programming that included positive portrayals of African Americans, and fund scholarships for young black people. When agreements could not be reached, groups and coalitions often filed petitions-to-deny with the FCC. NOW joined forces with civil rights, church, and other women's groups to form media-reform coalitions; in Pittsburgh, such a coalition negotiated an agreement with WTAE-TV that, among other stipulations, promised the formation of an advisory council that included local members of NOW.<sup>15</sup>

In 1949 the FCC had established the Fairness Doctrine (which was rescinded in 1987) to ensure that broadcast stations provided a range of views to serve their communities. However, the commission did not actively seek out violations but "instead passively waited



for citizens to file complaints, and [it] took no action on the vast majority of those complaints,” according to the media scholar Heather Hendershot. The *United Church of Christ* decision of 1969 made the petition-to-deny option available to citizens and groups, but FCC renewal of licenses tended to be nearly automatic. In the early 1970s the FCC received about two thousand program complaints in a typical year, and in one such year the commission followed up on only about 8 percent of such complaints and in the end made only five rulings against broadcast stations. One study estimated that a Fairness Doctrine complaint had a one-in-one-thousand chance of success between 1973 and 1976. Beginning in 1960, broadcast stations were also expected to “ascertain” their local communities—in other words, determine their community’s broadcasting needs—as a part of the license renewal process every three years, but the commission did little to explain exactly what community needs were. The 1969 *United Church of Christ* decision also made possible citizen agreements between stations and community groups, and between 1969 and 1975 the FCC encouraged citizen agreements—the very kind that WXYZ and NOW agreed to in 1973.<sup>16</sup>

WXYZ was an ABC affiliate station that first went on the air in 1948 and was, as of 1972, the number-one news station in Detroit. Like all television stations in Michigan, WXYZ was required to apply for renewal with the FCC in 1973. Joan Israel, president of NOW’s metropolitan Detroit chapter, contacted WXYZ vice president and general manager James Osborn and soon worked out a six-page agreement. In addition to stipulations about programming, hiring, and PSAs, WXYZ said it would consider “sensitivity sessions” on women’s issues for the station’s management and programming staff. Once the agreement was completed, NOW promised WXYZ it would not challenge the station’s FCC renewal. WXYZ then included the agreement in its FCC license renewal application, and the commission approved WXYZ’s renewal—for the time being—in September 1973.<sup>17</sup>

According to *Phyllis Schlafly Report*, WXYZ initially refused to provide a copy of the agreement when Elaine Donnelly, chair of STOP ERA's Michigan chapter, requested one; but WXYZ provided Donnelly with a copy after the FCC informed the station that such an agreement must be kept in a station's public file. *Detroit News* soon picked up the story (perhaps because Donnelly or other members of STOP ERA, HOW, or NEMA alerted the newspaper), and in an October 2, 1973, story titled "New Battle of Sexes: Lib vs. Anti-lib," the *News* aired the complaints of the "anti-libs." Donnelly told the *News* that NOW would soon be dictating network TV policy: "If NOW can get away with this agreement today, what are they going to do three years from now? How are they going to turn the screw?" In the same article, antibusing leader Carmen Roberts said that she was concerned with how the PSAs produced by NOW and aired on WXYZ would affect children; she claimed that NOW's views had already "infiltrated" the schools. Roberts, Donnelly, and the other conservative Detroit women opposed to the agreement did not believe that NOW was a legitimate community organization but instead a radical and dangerous group that had forced its philosophies onto the community's airwaves. They also argued that WXYZ had given in to NOW's "extortion" by signing the agreement under threat of an FCC petition-to-deny.<sup>18</sup>

The local chapters of STOP ERA, HOW, and NEMA—all named in the complaint filed with the FCC—hired James T. McKenna, an attorney with the Washington, D.C.-based Center for the Public Interest, who told the *News* he was dedicated to fighting socialist and collectivist influences. McKenna argued that the WXYZ/NOW agreement "violated the public's right to protection from undisclosed bias" and was the result of extortion by NOW. McKenna wrote a formal letter of complaint to the FCC, requesting that WXYZ's broadcast license be suspended, and Donnelly filed comments with the commission in support. The complaint described NOW as a "private, radical political action group," and claimed that the

agreement had given a “major portion” of WXYZ’s “special programming for the benefit of and subject to the control of NOW.” McKenna also objected to the “sensitivity” sessions mentioned in the agreement, which he argued would subject WXYZ employees to “bogus . . . psychiatric brainwashing.”<sup>19</sup>

Conservatives outside of Detroit learned about the WXYZ/NOW agreement when the October 1973 *Phyllis Schlafly Report* detailed the controversy under the front-page headline “Women’s Lib Suppresses Freedom of Press.” Schlafly charged that NOW was “secretly going around the country attempting to compel television and radio stations to sign an agreement which surrenders authority over programming, public service announcements, and hiring and personnel policies directly into the hands of NOW.” A few “courageous” stations, however, had refused to comply with the “threats” of NOW. As was common in her anti-ERA articles, Schlafly challenged the legitimacy of NOW and its members. She called NOW members “belligerent and threatening,” stressed the alleged influence of homosexuals in the organization, and insisted that NOW was a radical group that did not represent the interests of a majority of American women. Schlafly also credited the “alert members” of the Michigan chapters of STOP ERA and HOW for exposing NOW’s secret campaign, and she urged readers to follow their example.<sup>20</sup>

In October 1975 the FCC denied McKenna’s complaint and granted WXYZ’s license renewal. The FCC did not agree that NOW was a radical group and found that the agreement only bound WXYZ to “consider carrying informational public service announcements as it would do for any responsible community group.” However, the FCC decision also indicated that the complaint prompted the commission to reconsider its position on future agreements between NOW and broadcast stations. In a concurring

statement, FCC commissioner James H. Quello said that while he agreed with the decision, he was concerned about whether NOW represented the concerns of all women:

I believe that the views and philosophies of other responsible women groups . . . are also entitled to full consideration in ascertaining the overall needs of females in the service area and should be represented in the programming to meet those needs.

After all, no one feminist group, regardless of how laudable its objective, has been authorized to act as bargaining agent for women as a class or for the public at large.

Two months after its WXYZ decision the FCC released a policy statement that retreated somewhat from its formerly enthusiastic view toward citizen agreements. Donnelly was among those who filed comments on the citizen agreement issue, and she was cited and quoted in the policy statement several times. The commission acknowledged the danger of stations feeling “compelled to yield to organized pressure groups without regard to the merits of their complaints,” but largely left it up to stations to decide if they wanted to enter into agreements. Though it appears that the complaints of Michigan antifeminists, particularly Donnelly, prompted the FCC to rethink its policy on citizen agreements, in the end their efforts to revoke WXYZ’s license or at the very least invalidate the station’s agreement with NOW had failed. Yet antifeminists were able to employ other tactics to fight NOW’s efforts to influence the media, and they used their own news media to spread the word about the ERA, the news media’s allegedly unfair coverage of the ERA, and the dangers of the entertainment media.<sup>21</sup>

### **“The Opponents of the ERA Are Blacked Out by the Media”**

The conservatives Richard A. Viguerie and David Franke stressed the role of alternative news media in building a conservative movement in their 2004 book *America’s Right Turn: How Conservatives Used New and Alternative Media to Take Power*, and credited Phyllis

*Schlafly Report* for ensuring the eventual defeat of the ERA. The *Report* was essential to the anti-ERA movement because, according to the authors, the feminist supporters of the ERA had “all—all—the nation’s media on their side.” In the 1970s *Phyllis Schlafly Report* was the primary voice of the antifeminist movement and served as the primary means of communication for anti-ERA activists across the country. I argue that *Phyllis Schlafly Report* also played a significant role in disseminating the idea of news media bias among pro-family conservatives in the 1970s.<sup>22</sup>

The value *Phyllis Schlafly Report* placed on the issue of news media bias was evident in its April 1976 issue, which was titled “How to Cope with TV and Radio Bias.” In that issue the *Report* again took up the issue of NOW’s efforts to obtain station agreements and explained why pro-family conservatives had to combat them. The issue identified three ways antifeminists could take media-reform action. First, readers were told to form local coalitions representing at least twenty organizations, including local chapters of STOP ERA and the Eagle Forum (another conservative organization led by Schlafly), “any and all religious groups,” pro-life groups, labor unions, and even liberal groups. Such a coalition would then present a position paper on NOW (provided by the Eagle Forum) to local radio and TV stations. By forming such coalitions, pro-family activists would provide stations with the community backing to “resist NOW’s threats.” TV and radio station managers would even welcome the support, Schlafly predicted, because it would give them the ammunition to neutralize NOW and allow broadcasters to present both sides of the issue. Second, ERA opponents needed to participate in the ascertainment processes of local broadcast stations, and the *Report* provided a list of eighteen community problems that could be identified by conservatives to broadcast stations, including TV violence; crime in the public schools; drug and alcohol use, “high school immorality”; permissiveness; busing; the Panama Canal treaty;

the loss of U.S. military superiority; secret TV and radio contracts; ERA; abortion; “sexism” against traditional female roles as wives, mothers, and homemakers; and employment discrimination against the “husband and father who is trying to provide for his family.” The issues identified by the *Report* as salient to communities demonstrates that antifeminism and the media efforts of antifeminists were more than just about fighting ERA: pro-family activists were concerned with a wide array of local and national issues they associated with liberalism. Third and finally, the *Report* encouraged supporters to monitor TV programming—just as NOW members had been doing since 1972: “Dedicated women in every community must keep tally on every station and program so that you will have the *names and dates* with which to confront the station.”<sup>23</sup>

The “How to Cope with TV and Radio Bias” issue of *Phyllis Schlafly Report* urged pro-family Americans to either do something to influence broadcasting or “stop complaining about the steady stream of lib spokespersons who saturate the tube.” It also outlined the potential for conservatives to reform the news *and* entertainment media in a series of statements beginning with the phrase “It is time”: “It is time,” Schlafly wrote, “broadcasters become more sensitive to the glaring subject-matter omissions in most media programming and news coverage.” It was also time that broadcasters

- “seek out and respond” to the majority of Americans, who believed in and practiced “traditional moral and family values.”
- “stop permitting themselves to be a conduit for the constant portrayal of adultery, abortion, perversion, drugs, crime, and violence under the shibboleth that they are portraying ‘life as it really is’ and providing ‘entertainment.’”
- “stop acquiescing in the strident demands and negative attitudes of the women’s libbers who are seeking their own self-centered and special-interest goals.”

- “be made aware that *media programming itself* may be a major community problem because of the great influence television and radio have on our lives.”

Such statements demonstrate that Phyllis Schlafly and her supporters believed the news media and entertainment programming wielded tremendous power to influence the minds and morals of American adults and youths.<sup>24</sup>

While the April 1976 *Phyllis Schlafly Report* focused on media reform more so than any other issue of the *Report* during the 1970s, Schlafly often spoke out against the alleged bias of the liberal media in the *Report*. She argued that the liberal media were guilty of a number of biases and disservices to the American public. Echoing other anticommunists of the 1970s, she insisted that the press did not treat the communist threat with the appropriate seriousness. In 1977 she wrote that the biggest news story of the decade was neither space exploration, the Vietnam War, nor the Watergate scandal, but instead the Soviet Union gaining strategic military superiority over the United States—but because of their liberal bias and their desire to avoid “stale news,” the news media had avoided the issue. The *Report* also accused the liberal news media of making a “hullabaloo” about freedom of the press during the Pentagon Papers controversy but failing to report crucial news about U.S. economic foreign policy. And, echoing later complaints of antibusing activists in Detroit, Louisville, and Boston, in 1972 Schlafly praised the “brave” parents fighting busing in Pontiac and San Francisco who “had to endure the daily scorn of the news media, but they did not give up.”<sup>25</sup>

In the 1970s conservatives and liberals alike objected to sex and violence on television. Schlafly was typical of conservatives who complained that families and children were being exposed to immoral programming on network television. Such programming, Schlafly said, compromised the ability of parents “to train their children in obedience to the laws of God and country.” Christian anticommunists of the 1960s and 1970s made similar

claims, arguing that the news and entertainment media's immense power threatened traditional sources of information and authority such as parents, the Bible, and the church. Christian conservatives also waged battles against pornography that they believed threatened American children. *Phyllis Schlafly Report* backed the fight against smut on the airwaves, in Hollywood films, in bookstores, and on magazine racks. The March 1977 issue offered tips for readers on how to prevent children from watching inappropriate TV programs, encouraged viewers to write to their local affiliate stations to complain about such programs, and provided information about a directory of television sponsors that readers could purchase and then use to write letters of complaint to advertisers. The *Report* also attacked *Playboy* magazine, "perhaps the most militantly anti-marriage and anti-family force in the United States today"—not only because of its content but also because the magazine allegedly created a pro-ERA "front" organization called Housewives for ERA that provided tax-exempt foundation money to finance ERA supporters.<sup>26</sup>

In the 1970s antifeminists waged a campaign of criticism against women's magazines, which they argued were among the worst offenders of disseminating antifamily and pro-ERA propaganda. Phyllis Schlafly and other ERA opponents associated women's magazines with a New York-based elite sorority of women who were out of touch with the opinions of most American women. Schlafly argued that the reason women's magazines printed so many stories about ERA, almost all of them "blatantly" supporting the amendment, was because the editor of *Redbook* had persuaded other publishers of women's magazines to push the ERA—evidence, for Schlafly, of an elite liberal media conspiracy. She added that "thousands" of anti-ERA letters had been sent to women's magazines, but they had had no effect: "Most editors arrogantly used their freedom of the press to present only the pro-ERA side, and to distort, ridicule, or falsify the Stop ERA side." Again, Schlafly advised that



readers complain to advertisers, and in the August 1976 edition of the *Report* she included a list of magazine advertisers, their addresses, and a sample letter of complaint readers could send to companies that advertised in women's magazines.<sup>27</sup>

When Schlafly criticized the broadcast media, she drew from her own experiences as a frequent guest on radio and TV programs as a representative of ERA opposition. In October 1973 Schlafly appeared on NBC's *Today Show* with the president of the League of Women Voters for a debate on the proposed amendment. Writing in the November 1973 *Report*, Schlafly claimed that the pro-ERA forces had been "so badly hurt" by her performance that "they cooked up a scheme to secure extra time on the TODAY Show to attack Phyllis when she was not there to refute their misstatements." In addition, she took issue with *Today Show* host Barbara Walters, who had read "verbatim" a pro-ERA letter supposedly written by the attorney general of Pennsylvania that not only allegedly misrepresented Schlafly but, as it turned out, was actually written by a young female lawyer employed in the attorney general's office. Her experience on the *Today Show*, Schlafly argued, proved that ERA supporters were unfairly blocking opportunities by ERA opponents to state their case, because pro-ERA forces "can only score when the opponents of ERA are blacked out of the media." *Phyllis Schlafly Report* urged readers to write to NBC to protest and request time for Schlafly to respond as the Fairness Doctrine mandated.<sup>28</sup>

Schlafly's appearance on the *Today Show* prompted Elaine Donnelly, chair of the STOP ERA Michigan chapter and the future national media chair of STOP ERA, to file a complaint with the FCC, one of a number of complaints she filed in the early and mid-1970s. In July 1973 she had written to NBC to complain about an appearance by the feminist Gloria Steinem on the *Helen Reddy Show*, arguing that the network should allow equal time for Schlafly. NBC rejected Donnelly's suggestion, but Schlafly did appear on

NBC's *Today Show* in October. Donnelly agreed with Schlafly that the *Today Show* had treated her unfairly, and she submitted a complaint against NBC in January 1974, but the FCC ruled in favor of the network. In 1975 Donnelly submitted several complaints about media coverage of the ERA and the upcoming International Women's Year of 1977. Donnelly argued that NBC, ABC, and WXYZ had violated the Fairness Doctrine by presenting programming favoring the ERA and "women's lib." The FCC again ruled against Donnelly, arguing that the networks and WXYZ had all provided "contrasting viewpoints" on such issues. Donnelly was not the only STOP ERA member who tried to influence broadcast programming by petitioning the FCC. Philadelphia's STOP ERA chapter complained to the FCC in 1974 about a program on the ERA sponsored by the League of Women Voters and aired on WPVI-TV. The FCC ruled that STOP ERA did not establish that WPVI had failed to provide contrasting viewpoints in its overall programming.<sup>29</sup>

Other cultural conservatives and antifeminists took action against local and national media in the 1970s, but like Elaine Donnelly, they had little to no success. The pro-family group Happiness of Womanhood complained about liberal media bias and NOW agreements in its publications. In its June 1974 newsletter, HOW warned its members about TV stations signing contracts with NOW, and told readers to check with their local stations to determine if such agreements had been signed. Also in 1974, HOW's Houston chapter complained that radio station KIKK of Pasadena, Texas (a suburb of Houston), had failed to provide equal time for an opposing viewpoint to an editorial that praised NOW. Once again, the FCC ruled in favor of the broadcast station.<sup>30</sup>

Another pro-family activist, the popular singer Anita Bryant, received national attention for her efforts to overturn an ordinance protecting the rights of homosexuals in Dade County, Florida, in 1977. Her organization, Protect America's Children, was founded

by Bryant “to help put a stop to evils in our society that are threatening our children today”; those alleged evils included the ERA, sex education, secular humanism, “unrestrained sex and violence on television,” and homosexuality. Bryant indicted the liberal media for supporting “gay rights”—a term she pejoratively placed in quotes—and praised journalists who dismissed homosexual rights as a legitimate concept. In the 1978 book *At Any Cost*, co-written by Bryant and her husband Bob Green, the authors argued that the media hypocritically described Bryant as controversial but never described gays in the same way.<sup>31</sup>

### **“The Pictures the Press Didn’t Print”: Springfield and Houston**

In this section I provide an examination of three events in two cities: a 1976 pro-ERA rally in Springfield, Illinois, and the National Women’s Conference and Schlafly’s Pro-family Rally, which were held simultaneously in Houston in November 1977. These events, and the antifeminist reaction to and participation in them, once again demonstrated that ERA opponents made media criticism a key tactic in their movement. The Springfield and Houston events also showed that ERA opponents employed media criticism as a way to attract coverage from the very media they criticized. Like busing opponents in Boston and Louisville, antifeminists understood that they needed mainstream media coverage to attract attention and support.

In May 1976 supporters of the ERA gathered in the Illinois capital of Springfield to encourage the state legislature to ratify the amendment. Some media outlets estimated that twelve thousand gathered for the rally, but Schlafly countered in the June 1976 *Phyllis Schlafly Report* that the number was closer to 3,500. Schlafly’s claim was similar to those of antibusers in Louisville and Boston, who often complained that the news media grossly underestimated attendance at antibusing events and overestimated the attendance of probusing gatherings.

Schlafly also blamed full-page advertisements in “eastern newspapers” such as the *New York Times*, pro-ERA PSAs on television stations, and “free editorials and news articles in some metropolitan newspapers” for drumming up attendance at the Springfield rally. She wrote further:

The free media given to this rally was so tremendous that you would think it was the most important national event since an American walked on the moon. The day after the demonstration, the *New York Times* gave it a front-page picture plus a large inside story. There was extensive coverage all across the country, and newspapers whose readers never heard of Springfield, Illinois published large pictures of the rally. Some papers printed a full page of pictures. Of course, there was network television coverage.

Despite what she described as blanket coverage by the news media, Schlafly argued the media failed to report who actually organized the rally, and what kind of people participated in it. It was led by NOW, an organization that according to Schlafly used “radical and anti-family tactics” to push for abortion, taxpayer-funded child care, and “pro-lesbian” legislation “so that perverts will be given the same legal rights as husbands and wives.” Like antibusers who claimed that the news media portrayed civil rights protestors as courageous and heroic but portrayed busing opponents as bigots and racists, antifeminists believed that the news media refused to certify their movement as legitimate but happily legitimated the hippies, radicals, and lesbians who allegedly led NOW.<sup>32</sup>

Schlafly’s complaints about the media coverage given the Springfield rally appeared in a *Phyllis Schlafly Report* issue titled “The Pictures the Press Didn’t Print,” which included several pages of photographs taken by ERA opponents of the rally’s attendees. These were the photos, Schlafly wrote, that

the press failed to print. See for yourself the unkempt, the lesbians, the radicals, the Socialists, and the government employees who are trying to amend the U.S. Constitution to force us to conform to their demands. Even these pictures don’t tell it all, however, because they don’t reveal the obscene language and the foul four-letter words that are part of the everyday language of the women’s lib movement.

The photos showed ERA supporters marching under lesbian, socialist, and public-employee banners, women handing out the socialist newspaper the *Militant*, and bearded “hippie” types. Another photograph showed STOP ERA’s contribution to the rally: a hired plane that flew over the event with a large banner that read “Illinois Women Oppose ERA—Libbers Go Home.” The dismissive language used by the *Report* to characterize ERA supporters—libbers, perverts, hippies, unkempt, foul—was used to de-certify the ERA movement. On the other hand, *Phyllis Schlafly Report* characterized antifeminists as clean, happy, God-fearing, child-rearing, and patriotic women.<sup>33</sup>

Houston’s National Women’s Conference in November 1977 was the capstone of a series of state conferences marking the International Women’s Year (IWY) of 1977. Schlafly decided a pro-family conference was needed to counter the allegedly unfair and unrepresentative domination by feminists of the IWY leadership. The IWY conference attracted two thousand official delegates and twenty thousand attendees. Though about 20 percent of the elected delegates were social conservatives, the primary rallying location for antifeminists was the Astro Arena, where anywhere from fifteen thousand to twenty thousand conservatives attended Schlafly’s Pro-family Rally, which included conservative speakers voicing opposition to the ERA and abortion and defenses of traditional roles for women.<sup>34</sup>

The December 1977 *Phyllis Schlafly Report* declared that the Pro-family Rally “was one of the most amazing events that ever happened.” Schlafly contrasted the Pro-family Rally and the IWY conference: while the Pro-Family Rally was full of happy, loving, and God-fearing people, the IWY was made up of intolerant people with “a chip on their shoulders.” The *Report* sought to de-certify ERA supporters by suggesting they were atheists, bigots, and beyond reason, and by equating them, especially lesbians, with obscenity, perversion, and

pornography. Under the sub-headline “Lesbian Arrogance,” the December 1977 *Report* commented on the “total commitment” of the IWY organizers to the rights of homosexuals and lesbians. Schlafly noted that the IWY conference allowed lesbians to display and “peddle” lesbian “booklets, buttons, and devices which were offensive, obscene and pornographic” at the conference and around it. Offensive pamphlets, according to Schlafly, included *Our Bodies Ourselves*, *Good Vibrations*, and *What Lesbians Do*, while buttons displayed slogans such as “Trust in God, She Will Provide,” “F— Housework,” “A Woman without a Man Is Like a Fish without a Bicycle,” and “Mother Nature Is a Lesbian.” Schlafly also objected to the IWY conference’s failure to condemn “the worst exploitation of women— pornography. The reason is obvious: Women’s Lib has too big a stake in an alliance with pornographers. The lesbian pamphlets are just as pornographic as the smut peddled by the pornography profiteers in the adult bookstores.”<sup>35</sup>

The historian Marjorie J. Spruill writes that both the IWY conference and Schlafly’s Pro-family counter-event received “extensive” press coverage. Spruill also demonstrates that feminists and antifeminists in Houston believed that the news media exploited the idea of “American women engaged in a massive ‘cat fight.’” Schlafly believed that the vast majority of the media coverage centered on the IWY conference rather than the Pro-family Rally. In fact, the IWY conference was a “media event,” Schlafly argued, and “not an authentic convention at all. That means it was staged for the benefit of the media coverage.” Schlafly claimed that prominent IWY commission members including Bella Abzug put out “phony tips” to the media that suggested ERA opponents would create a confrontation that might include violence—predictions that Schlafly said did not have “a shred of truth in them” but instead were phony claims designed to attract press coverage. The IWY conference, Schlafly argued, was an inauthentic and pre-scripted event, while the “Pro-Family Rally was a

genuinely “authentic and exciting event. . . . Unfortunately, it didn’t get the coverage it deserved.” Once again, *Phyllis Schlafly Report* certified ERA opponents and de-certified ERA supporters by suggesting that antifeminists were honest, real, and courageous, while feminists by nature were manipulative, pre-scripted schemers.<sup>36</sup>

Antigay activist Anita Bryant echoed Schlafly’s characterization of the IWY conference and her claims that there was insufficient media coverage of the Pro-family Rally. Bryant wrote in 1978 that the events in Houston showed that feminists “have one aim: destroy the social structure on which America rests.” The majority of IWY conference delegates were “anti-male, antiwhite, antifamily, anti-Christian, and anti-American from start to finish.” And, in contrast, Schlafly’s Pro-family Rally was “well-ordered” but “largely ignored by the media.”<sup>37</sup>

## Conclusion

Marjorie Spruill wrote that the IWY conference represented a turning point “that sealed the fate” of the ERA and “gave rise to the ‘Pro-Family Movement,’” which shaped conservative politics in powerful ways in the 1980s and beyond. By 1980 the ERA was all but dead and Ronald Reagan, a political and cultural conservative, had captured the presidency. On June 30, 1982, the time limit for ratification of the ERA expired. Phyllis Schlafly and her supporters had won their decade-long battle, and it was won, in the view of conservatives, despite the fact that supporters of the ERA had “all—all—the nation’s media on their side.” Such claims are surely exaggerated. Even if we accept the contention of antifeminists that the IWY conference received too much attention from the media, the fact that the “Battle of Houston” received “enormous” media coverage offered “a rich opportunity for Phyllis Schlafly and the pro-family movement to air their differences with

feminists in a national forum,” according to Donald Critchlow. For ERA opponents and other conservatives of the 1970s, news media criticism was motivated by deeply held convictions about and frustrations with the “liberal news media,” but it was also a cool-headed strategy. They complained that the liberal news media would not portray them as they saw themselves—victims with legitimate grievances. By criticizing the news media, conservatives and alternative conservative news media certified themselves by portraying themselves as victims courageously waging—and in the case of ERA opponents, eventually winning—a noble cause.<sup>38</sup>

In the next chapter, I examine Cold War–era Christian anticommunists who made criticism of the news and entertainment media a significant component of their conservative activism. Like Phyllis Schlafly and her anti-ERA supporters, Christian anticommunists such as Billy James Hargis believed that the mass media wielded immense power to brainwash the American family and the nation’s children with liberalism, communism, and pornography.



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<sup>1</sup> Frank Judge, "Ch. 7 Caught in Middle of Women's Fight; Judging It," *Detroit News*, Oct. 17, 1973, n.p., clipping, "Clippings, 1973" folder, Carmen A. Roberts Papers, 1972–1981 (Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.).

<sup>2</sup> "Women's Lib Suppresses Freedom of Press," *Phyllis Schlafly Report*, Oct. 1973, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> On media certification, see Todd Gitlin, *The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making of the New Left* (Berkeley, 1980); and Ronald P. Formisano, *Boston against Busing: Race, Class, and Ethnicity in the 1960s and 1970s* (Chapel Hill, 1991), 150–58.

<sup>4</sup> On postwar conservatives and concerns about pornography, see Whitney Strub, *Perversion for Profit: The Politics of Pornography and the Rise of the New Right* (New York, 2011), esp. 116. On Cold War-era attitudes about homosexuality, see David K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (Chicago, 2004).

<sup>5</sup> On FCC complaints levied by feminists, see Allison Perlman, "Feminists in the Wasteland: The National Organization for Women and Television Reform," *Feminist Media Studies* 7 (no. 7, 2007), 413–31.

<sup>6</sup> "The Growing Momentum against Busing," *Phyllis Schlafly Report*, March 1972, pp. 1–4; Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism: A Woman's Crusade* (Princeton, 2005), 224. On reprints of *Phyllis Schlafly Report* articles and coverage of Schlafly's activism in conservative publications, see "A Reprint from The Phyllis Schlafly Report: Can a State Rescind Ratification of ERA?," *NAPF*, Feb. 5, 1976, p. 10; Phyllis Schlafly, "Biased Politics of the League of Women Voters," *South Boston Marshal*, May 1988, p. 3; Phyllis Schlafly, "Are You Paying for Women's Lib and the ERA? The Taxpayer Is Footing Much of the Bill, but There Are Ways to Stop It," *Human Events*, Feb. 23, 1974, pp. 12, 20; Phyllis Schlafly, "The Ominous Panama Treaty Terms," *Independent American*, Sept.–Oct. 1977, p. 3; Phyllis Schlafly, "Reagan Is Right, Panama Treaty Is U.S. Surrender," *American Patriot*, Oct. 1977, p. 8; and Phyllis Schlafly, "What SALT Means to America: 'Number 2' Tried Harder," *Manion Forum*, Aug. 27, 1972. *Citizens Informer* agreed with Schlafly that liberals and lesbians had controlled the 1977 International Women's Year Conference. See "Women's Conference Called Farce," *Citizens Informer*, Dec. 1977–Jan. 1978, p. 1. Vickie Harvey, an Eagle Forum member based in northern Missouri, wrote articles for *Citizens Informer*. A 1979 Harvey-written article on a Washington, D.C., anti-ERA event complained that network news as well as St. Louis and Washington, D.C., media outlets ignored the event and the anti-ERA cause generally. For Harvey, this was evidence that "the entire media is controlled." The article included a photograph of

*Citizens Informer* editor Fred C. Jennings interviewing a smiling Phyllis Schlafly. See Vickie Harvey, “Legal End of E.R.A. Created by Foes in Wash. D.C.” and photograph and caption, *ibid.*, May–June 1979, p. 12; and “Vickie Harvey Presents Anti-ERA Views,” *ibid.*, Nov.–Dec. 1978, p. 12.

<sup>7</sup> On conservatives of the 1970s and cultural issues, see Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism*, 2; and Marjorie J. Spruill, “Gender and America’s Right Turn,” in Bruce J. Schulman and Julian E. Zelizer, eds., *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s* (Cambridge, Mass., 2008), 71–89, esp. 80. On the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), see Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism*, 216–18; Spruill, “Gender and America’s Right Turn”; and Catherine E. Rymph, *Republican Women: Feminism and Conservatism from Suffrage through the Rise of the New Right* (Chapel Hill, 2006).

<sup>8</sup> Phyllis Schlafly’s anticommunist books of the 1960s included Phyllis Schlafly, *A Choice Not an Echo* (Alton, 1964); Phyllis Schlafly and Chester Charles Ward, *The Gravediggers* (Alton, 1964); and Phyllis Schlafly and Chester Charles Ward, *The Betrayers* (Alton, 1968). On Schlafly’s background, see Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism*, 3, 4, 7, 217, 219. On *Phyllis Schlafly Report* and the ERA, see “ERA Takes Away Rights from Wives; Pennsylvania and Colorado Courts Prove,” *Phyllis Schlafly Report*, Nov. 1973, p. 1. On Schlafly’s anti-ERA leadership and battles with Betty Friedan, see Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism*, 12.

<sup>9</sup> On women and conservative movements, see Rymph, *Republican Women*; Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism*, 7; Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton, 2001); and Mary C. Brennan, *Wives, Mothers, and the Red Menace: Conservative Women and the Crusade against Communism* (Boulder, 2008). On Irene McCabe, see Thomas J. Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North* (New York, 2008), 479; and Tamar Jacoby, *Someone Else’s House: America’s Unfinished Struggle for Integration* (New York, 1998), 259–61. On Joyce Spond and Sue Connor, see Chapter 1. On Louise Day Hicks and “Pixie” Palladino, see Formisano, *Boston against Busing*.

<sup>10</sup> Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism*, 9. On ERA opponents, religious beliefs, and anticommunism, see *ibid.*, 221; and Marjorie J. Spruill, “Gender and America’s Right Turn,” 79. On Schlafly and the contention that she avoided partisan politics, see Richard A. Viguerie and David Franke, *America’s Right Turn: How Conservatives Used New and Alternative Media to Take Power* (Chicago, 2004), 143–44. On *Phyllis Schlafly Report*’s coverage of issues besides the ERA, see Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism*, 4; “New Evidence on Marijuana,” *Phyllis Schlafly Report*, May 1975, pp. 1–4; “The Rise and Fall of Pruitt-Igoe,” *ibid.*, Aug. 1975, p. 4; “The Federal

Housing Fiasco,” *ibid.*, Aug. 1975, pp. 1–3; “The West Virginia Textbook Case,” *ibid.*, Jan. 1975, p. 1; “What’s in the West Virginia Textbooks?,” *ibid.*, Jan. 1975, pp. 2–3; and J. Fred Schlafly, “How to Stop Busing Now! Simple Majority Vote of Congress Can Strip Court Jurisdiction,” *ibid.*, Oct. 1971, pp. 1–4.

<sup>11</sup> On Northeast Mothers Alert (NEMA), Mothers Alert Detroit (MAD), and the Michigan chapter of Happiness of Womanhood (HOW), see Happiness of Womanhood, Inc., newsletter, Nov. 1974, “Happiness of Womanhood” folder, box 1, Shirley Wohlfield Papers, 1972–1988 (Bentley Historical Library); and “Mother’s Alert Detroit,” (directory of members), c. 1975, “Mothers Alert Detroit, 1975–1976” folder, Carmen A. Roberts Papers. On ERA opponents and opposition to sex education, abortion, and homosexuality, see Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism*, 217; Rebecca E. Klatch, *Women of the New Right* (Philadelphia, 1987), 86–88, 90–94; R. Klook, “Northeast Mother’s Alert Anti-bus March Successful,” *Northeast Detroiter*, June 19, 1975, n.p.; Douglas Ilka, “Bussing Foe Takes ‘Crusade’ to the Suburbs,” *Detroit News*, March 9, 1976, p. 2-B, clipping, “Clippings, Jan.–May 1976” folder, Carmen A. Roberts Papers; July 25, 1977 letter from James A. (Jim) Venema, president, National Association for Neighborhood Schools, Inc., to “All officers, directors, state membership chairmen, and local affiliate organizations,” July 25, 1977, “National Assoc. for Neighborhood Schools” folder, box 1, Shirley Wohlfield Papers; “Mother’s Alert Joins Suit to Halt State Sex Education; Parental Rights Is Issue Says Carmen Roberts,” *Northeast Detroiter*, Oct. 4, 1973, p. 1; and John Askins, “Diary of a Glad Housewife,” *Detroit Free Press*, Feb. 4, 1974, n.p., clipping, “Clippings, 1974” folder, Carmen A. Roberts Papers. Doris Allen, one of the leaders of the Orange County, California, antibusing group Bus-Bloc, was also active in antifeminist and antiabortion activism in the 1970s. See McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*, 240.

<sup>12</sup> On Carmen Roberts and her criticism of the news media, see Ilka, “Bussing Foe Takes ‘Crusade’ to the Suburbs.”

<sup>13</sup> Perlman, “Feminists in the Wasteland”; “Women’s Lib Suppresses Freedom of Press.”

<sup>14</sup> Perlman, “Feminists in the Wasteland,” 413–14; Sarah Slavin and M. Stephen Pendleton, “Feminism and the FCC,” in *Communications Policy and the Political Process*, ed. John J. Havick (Westport, 1983), 127–147, esp. 134.

<sup>15</sup> Perlman, “Feminists in the Wasteland,” 415–417, 420, 424; Ronald Garay, “Access: Evolution of the Citizen Agreement,” *Journal of Broadcasting* 22 (Winter 1978), 95–106, esp. 96; Phyl Garland, “Blacks Challenge the Airwaves,” *New Pittsburgh Courier*, Nov. 21, 1970, p. 9; “Coalition Challenges TV Licensing of Memphis’ WHBQ-TV Station; United Church Backed,” *Chicago Daily*

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*Defender*, July 11, 1970, p. 24; “Appendix 1: Selected NOW Media Reform Actions, 1972–1977,” in *Communications Policy and the Political Process*, ed. Havick, 145–46.

<sup>16</sup> Heather Hendershot, *What’s Fair on the Air? Cold War Right-Wing Broadcasting and the Public Interest* (Chicago, 2011), 17–19, 139–40, esp. 19; Slavin and Pendleton, “Feminism and the FCC,” esp. 95, 131; Garay, “Access,” 95. In 1971 the FCC issued a “primer” on how to ascertain community problems. See Hendershot, *What’s Fair on the Air?*, 91. Stations were required to keep a publicly accessible file of community problems and the station’s programming efforts to respond to those problems. See Slavin and Pendleton, “Feminism and the FCC,” 131.

<sup>17</sup> Tim Kiska, *A Newscast for the Masses: The History of Detroit Television News* (Detroit, 2009), 17, 88; Mike Maza, “New Battle of Sexes: Lib. vs. Anti-lib,” *Detroit News*, Oct. 2, 1973, n.p., clipping, “Clippings, 1973” folder, Carmen A. Roberts Papers; Frank Judge, “Ch. 7 Caught in Middle of Women’s Fight; Judging It,” *Detroit News*, Oct. 17, 1973, n.p., clipping, *ibid*.

<sup>18</sup> “Women’s Lib Suppresses Freedom of Press”; Maza, “New Battle of Sexes.”

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*; “In Re Application of WXYZ, Inc. for Renewal of License of Station WXYZ-TV, Detroit, Mich.,” Memorandum Opinion and Order, adopted Oct. 21, 1975, released Oct. 31, 1975, 56 F.C.C.2d 457 (1975–1976), 457–60, esp. 457n3; Judge, “Ch. 7 Caught in Middle of Women’s Fight.”

<sup>20</sup> “Text of Agreement between WXYZ-TV, and National Organization for Women (NOW),” *Phyllis Schlafly Report*, Oct. 1973, pp. 2–4, esp. 3; “Women’s Lib Suppresses Freedom of Press,” esp. 1. In February 1974 *Phyllis Schlafly Report* credited the Michigan HOW chapter and NEMA/MAD member Patt Barbour for exposing that Michigan tax money was being used to produce “women’s lib” literature. See “Are You Financing Women’s Lib and ERA?” *ibid*., Feb. 1974, p. 3.

<sup>21</sup> On the October 1975 FCC decision to renew WXYZ’s license, see “In Re Application of WXYZ, Inc. for Renewal of License of Station WXYZ-TV, Detroit, Mich.,” 459, 460. On the December 1975 FCC policy statement, see “In the Matter of Agreements between Broadcast Licenses and the Public,” F.C.C. 75-1359, Dec. 19, 1975, 57 F.C.C.2d, pp. 42–56, esp. 53; Garay, “Access,” 95; and Jared L. Burden, “Tying the Victim’s Hands: Curbing Citizen Group Abuse of the Broadcast Licensing Process,” *Federal Communications Law Journal*, 39 (no. 3, 1987), 259–96. The FCC invalidated agreements between broadcast stations in the 1970s that the commission believed relinquished too much power to citizen groups. For example, the FCC ruled that a September 1973

agreement between the National Association for Better Broadcasting and KTTV-TV of Los Angeles included overly “strict programming provisions.” See *ibid.*, 274n77; and Garay, “Access,” 100, 102.

<sup>22</sup> Viguerie and Franke, *America’s Right Turn*, 137–44, esp. 138–39; Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism*, 238.

<sup>23</sup> “How to Cope with TV and Radio Bias,” *Phyllis Schlafly Report*, April 1976, p. 1; “Have You Ever Been Ascertained?” *ibid.*, April 1976, p. 2.

<sup>24</sup> “Getting Our Fair Share of the ‘Fairness Doctrine,’” *ibid.*, April 1976, p. 4; “Have You Ever Been Ascertained?”

<sup>25</sup> “The Biggest News Story,” *ibid.*, Jan. 1977, pp. 1–4, esp. 1; “What’s Wrong with Red Trade,” *ibid.*, Aug. 1971, pp. 1–4, esp. 2; “The Growing Momentum against Busing,” *ibid.*, March 1972, pp. 1–4, esp. 1.

<sup>26</sup> On the complaints of liberals and conservatives about television programming, see Everett C. Parker, “Communities versus the TV Networks,” *New York Times*, Sep. 25, 1977, p. 97. On *Phyllis Schlafly Report* and TV entertainment programming, see “Obscenity and Violence in the Mails, Movies & TV,” *Phyllis Schlafly Report*, March 1977, pp. 1–3. In the same issue, Schlafly argued that the second-class mail privilege subsidized by the American taxpayer and provided by the federal government for publications should be denied to “outrageously obscene magazines” such as *Hustler*. See *ibid.*, 1.

<sup>27</sup> “Pro-ERA Propaganda in Women’s Magazines,” *ibid.*, Aug. 1976, pp. 1–3, esp. 1; “Major Advertisers in Women’s Magazines,” *ibid.*, p. 4; Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism*, 232.

<sup>28</sup> “UNEQUAL Time on NBC TODAY Show,” *Phyllis Schlafly Report*, Nov. 1973, p. 4.

<sup>29</sup> Rymph, *Republican Women*, 219; “In Re Complaint of Elaine Donnelly Concerning the Fairness Doctrine involving NBC,” April 1, 1974, 46 F.C.C.2d 43 (1974), 43–46, esp. 44–45; “In Re Complaint by Elaine Donnelly v. ABC and NBC Concerning Fairness Doctrine,” Oct. 10, 1975, F.C.C.2d 858 (1975–1976), 858–860, esp. 859; “In Re Complaint of Stop ERA Committee Concerning the Fairness Doctrine involving WPVI-TV, Philadelphia, Pa.,” June 27, 1974, 47 F.C.C.2d 706 (1974), 706–8. Catherine E. Rymph writes that Donnelly was national media chair of STOP ERA, but the finding aid for her papers at the University of Michigan Bentley Historical Library lists her as national media chair for the Eagle Forum. See Rymph, *Republican Women*, 219; and “Elaine Chenevert Donnelly Papers, 1973–2003, finding aid created by Bentley Historical Library staff,” <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/b/bhlead/umich-bhl-86998?rgn=main;view=text>.

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<sup>30</sup> Happiness of Womanhood, newsletter, June 1974, p. 4, “Happiness of Womanhood” folder, box 1, Shirley Wohlfield Papers; “In Re Complaint by Happiness of Womanhood, Inc., Houston, Tex., Concerning Fairness Doctrine Re Station KIKK, Pasadena, Tex.,” Sept. 25, 1974, F.C.C.2d 1016 (1974), 1016–18. The San Diego chapter of Happiness of Womanhood (HOW) chapter filed a \$2 million libel suit against the San Diego Sentinel Publishing Company after HOW objected to a *Sentinel* story that allegedly mischaracterized a HOW march and rally against “dirty” city newsstands that sold adult publications. See Happiness of Womanhood, newsletter, June 1974, p. 4; and “Newspaper Loses HOW Suit Move,” reprint of *San Diego Evening Tribune* article, Feb. 15, 1974, Happiness of Womanhood, newsletter, June 1974, p. 2.

<sup>31</sup> Anita Bryant and Bob Green, *At Any Cost* (Old Tappan, 1978), 24, 21, 29–30, 94, 93–94.

<sup>32</sup> “The Pictures the Press Didn’t Print,” *Phyllis Schlafly Report*, June 1976, p. 1. On Boston and Louisville antibusers and the news media, see Chapters 1 and 3.

<sup>33</sup> “The Pictures the Press Didn’t Print”; photos and captions, *ibid.*, 2–4.

<sup>34</sup> On the International Women’s Year, see Spruill, “Gender and America’s Right Turn,” 76.

<sup>35</sup> “Pro-family Rally Attracts 20,000,” *Phyllis Schlafly Report*, Dec. 1977, p. 2; “House Proves Radicals and Lesbians Run IWY,” *ibid.*, 3. The feminist Andrea Dworkin, a Jewish woman, attended the 1977 IWY rally in Houston as a representative of the women’s magazine *Ms.* Dworkin reported that a significant number of right-wing conservatives attended the IWY rally, and found that many of them harbored anti-Semitic views. She wrote that some of the conservatives associated Jews with abortions, lesbianism, communism, and New York–based intellectuals. The Mississippi IWY delegation included at least one member of the Ku Klux Klan, who when interviewed by Dworkin expressed anti-Semitic views. See Andrea Dworkin, *Right-Wing Women* (New York, 1983), 31, 33, 112–15. For more on anti-Semitism and its role in news media criticism, see Chapter 6.

<sup>36</sup> Spruill, “Gender and America’s Right Turn,” 85; “What Really Happened in Houston,” *Phyllis Schlafly Report*, Dec. 1977, p. 1.

<sup>37</sup> Bryant and Green, *At Any Cost*, 124.

<sup>38</sup> Marjorie J. Spruill, “Gender and America’s Right Turn,” 72; Viguerie and Franke, *America’s Right Turn*, 138–39; Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism*, 247.

## Chapter 5

### *Christian Crusade Weekly*, Christian Anticommunism, and the Liberal Press

In a 1977 article titled “The Leftwing Propaganda War against America,” the Christian anticommunist preacher Billy James Hargis wrote, “Are we being brainwashed by our own free press and by a controlled TV, presided over by a handful of men in the three TV networks, and by a left-wing press battalion that perverts the truth? More and more each day the answer appears to be a deafening **yes**.” Hargis’s question—and his answer to it—appeared in the newspaper *Christian Crusade Weekly*, the flagship publication of Christian Crusade, an organization founded by Hargis in 1947. Throughout the 1970s *Christian Crusade Weekly* critiqued the news media in front-page articles such as “The Biased Liberal News Media,” “The Fourth Estate That Became the Third Reich,” and “The Unfairness of News Media.” Like other Christian anticommunists of the 1960s and 1970s, *Christian Crusade Weekly* argued that the news media published slanted, biased news that favored liberal policies and ideals, promoted domestic and international communism, and encouraged liberal permissiveness that endangered the American family.<sup>1</sup>

According to *Christian Crusade Weekly* the most flagrant disseminators of liberal propaganda were also the most powerful members of the news media: the three major television networks; daily newspapers including the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *Los Angeles Times*; and national magazines such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Life*, and *Look*. *Christian Crusade Weekly* also indicted the wider mass media; it accused network television entertainment programming of foisting “sex and violence” into American living rooms, blamed Hollywood for corrupting American youth, and attacked “smut peddlers” such as *Playboy* magazine.<sup>2</sup>

*Christian Crusade Weekly* was one of many Christian anticommunist publications of the 1970s that criticized the news media. Why did Christian anticommunists insist that newspapers, magazines, and TV news were participants in an anti-American conspiracy? First, Christian anticommunists believed that international communism was as dangerous a threat to the United States in the 1970s as it was at any time during the Cold War. They believed that the news media offered Americans distorted and inaccurate reporting on the communist menace, and the airing and printing of such alleged misinformation was tantamount to treason. For Hargis and the Christian conservatives who shared his worldview, the news media's slanted coverage of the U.S. military effort against communism in Southeast Asia was proof that the liberals who owned, managed, edited, and wrote for major news media outlets favored America's communist enemies.<sup>3</sup>

Second, as the historian Daniel K. Williams has noted, Christian conservatives believed that they were ignored by the mainstream news media. Yet they noted the attention news media outlets provided to the civil rights and antiwar movements, which many Christian anticommunists believed were communist conspiracies. Furthermore, Christian anticommunists believed that on those rare occasions when they received attention from the "establishment" news media, they were characterized as paranoid laughingstocks. For example, Hargis was stung by news articles that ridiculed his weight and his southern drawl. However, the criticism of the news media by Christian anticommunists was far more than just about personal vendettas. *Christian Crusade Weekly* sometimes made hyperbolic claims about a Marxist, Satanic conspiracy in the news media. But just as often, the newspaper marshaled factual evidence in an effort to prove that magazines, newspapers, wire services, and TV networks were guilty of distorting the news through a liberal prism.<sup>4</sup>



Third, Christian anticommunists believed that “liberal propaganda” threatened traditional sites and sources of information and authority: God, the Bible, the church, and parents. Though mainstream media outlets claimed that they objectively and fairly provided the facts, Christian conservatives complained that the liberal press published and aired misinformation that undermined the moral absolutes of God and family. To check the power of the alleged leftwing propaganda, Christian anticommunists produced their own newspapers, magazines, and radio and television programs. While liberal newspapers, magazines, and TV networks allegedly brainwashed Americans with liberal distortions and lies that denied God, conservative publications such as *Christian Crusade Weekly* positioned themselves as truth-telling alternatives to the “liberal” news media by promising their readers Christian truth and the “pro-American facts.”<sup>5</sup>

*Christian Crusade Weekly* shared many of the same traits as most of the conservative media critics analyzed in this dissertation, the majority of whom were men and women who considered themselves conservatives, patriots, and Christians. For example, the St. Louis-area editors of and writers for the pro-segregationist monthly *Citizens Informer*, the “pro-family” activists in Phyllis Schlafly’s STOP ERA organization, and antibusing activists in Boston, Detroit, and Jefferson County, Kentucky, often indicated that their activism was closely linked to their faith in a Christian God. Christian anticommunists were unique, however, because they believed that liberalism and communism were not just dangerous threats, but literal evils. Conservative anticommunists such as Hargis believed that end times were near, and they also believed that the news media’s liberal and communist propaganda, if unchecked, would literally deliver a “death blow” to America. When Hargis wrote in the January 25, 1970, edition of *Christian Crusade Weekly* that he wanted the news media to become “more objective and more pro-American,” he was demanding *the truth*. Hargis and

likeminded Christian anticommunists believed in a world of binaries: God versus Satan, good versus evil, and American freedom versus communist slavery, and though Hargis said he wanted objectivity from the news media, what he really wanted was the absolute, God-given truth as he saw it.<sup>6</sup>

Hargis's and Christian Crusade's worldview and their criticism of the news media were also partially founded on racially conservative beliefs. As media scholar Heather Hendershot argues, in the late 1960s and 1970s Hargis adeptly masked "the racist foundations of his cold war activism." In the 1950s and 1960s Hargis had advocated racial segregation, partnered with other Christian anticommunists who also advocated it, and associated with anticommunists on the anti-Semitic right. In the 1970s, however, he denied he was a racist, and *Christian Crusade Weekly* was a strong supporter of Israel during that decade. *Christian Crusade Weekly* did not employ explicitly racist rhetoric in the 1970s, but at times the newspaper was racially paternalistic. I argue that Hargis's segregationist past helped shape his views on civil rights, communism, liberalism, and the news media. In the 1970s, he maintained that the news media had never recognized the truth that the civil rights movement was a communist conspiracy.<sup>7</sup>

Determining precisely what Hargis or any of the conservatives profiled in this dissertation actually believed—as opposed to what they said they believed—is always difficult. I suggest that most conservatives who criticized the allegedly liberal news media in the 1970s did believe, and believed passionately, that the news media were biased. But conservatives also used media criticism as a rhetorical tactic to build up a conservative audience, to frame themselves as victims of bias, and to seek attention from the very news media they criticized. It is no easy task, then, to draw lines between political strategy and political belief. That task is even more difficult when studying Billy James Hargis, a man who

portrayed himself as a committed Christian and anticommunist but someone who his critics argued was as a charlatan who called himself a doctor but received his degrees from dubious degree mills, built his personal wealth from the donations of gullible Christian Crusade supporters, and took sexual advantage of male and female students at the college he founded.<sup>8</sup>

Christianity looms large in any analysis of postwar conservatism and in my analysis of conservative critiques of the news media during the 1970s. This chapter on *Christian Crusade Weekly* and other Christian anticommunist publications of the 1970s offers a detailed examination of the news media criticism of Christian anticommunists—who played a vital and ever-growing role in 1970s conservatism and helped lay the foundations for the immense political influence of Christian conservatives in the 1980s and beyond.

### **Christian Crusade and Christian Anticommunism**

Billy James Hargis founded Christian Echoes National Ministry, Inc., popularly known as Christian Crusade, in 1947. Along with Billy Graham, Carl McIntire, John R. Rice, Bob Jones Jr., Major Edgar Bundy, Fred Schwarz, and Robert Schuller, Hargis was one of America's most prominent "celebrity preachers" of the Cold War era. By the early 1960s he had built Christian Crusade into what was probably the largest anticommunist organization in the country. Hargis and his brethren believed communists were enemies of Christ and the United States because they prohibited the worship of God, free enterprise, and property ownership, the very principles on which America had been built. Christian anticommunists argued that God was on America's side in the struggle against communism, called for an aggressive containment of the Soviet Union and other communist nations, advocated for the

rights of Christians “enslaved” in such nations, and demanded that communist subversives in the United States be rooted out.<sup>9</sup>

Historians such as Daniel K. Williams, Darren Dochuk, Lisa McGirr, and William Martin have demonstrated that growing numbers of Christians began to embrace conservative political activism during the Cold War era. Such Christian conservatives believed that liberals had replaced faith in a Christian God with a misguided faith in the federal government, a faith apparent in the widespread acceptance of liberal programs associated with the New Deal and the Great Society. Decisions by the Supreme Court that prohibited prayer and Bible reading in public schools also signified to Christian anticommunists that America’s Christian heritage was under siege. Christian anticommunists were often racially conservative; Hargis and other prominent Christian conservatives argued in the 1950s and 1960s that the civil rights movement was a communist conspiracy. Concerns about social and cultural issues also became more salient during the 1960s for Christian anticommunists as well as Cold War conservatives generally. Increasingly, conservatives fretted about sex education in the public schools, sexual promiscuity, premarital cohabitation, the women’s movement, homosexuality, drug use, and rock and roll—all of which, they believed, were the inevitable byproducts of liberal permissiveness. However, in the 1970s Christian Crusade and other Christian anticommunists on the Right never abandoned their belief that communism was at the root of America’s decline.<sup>10</sup>

### ***Christian Crusade Weekly* Battles the “God Killers”**

*Christian Crusade Weekly* represented just one piece of Christian Crusade’s media empire, which also included books, audio tapes, a syndicated radio program, and “Billy James Hargis and His All-American Kids,” a syndicated television show that featured

Hargis's commentary and patriotic songs performed by American Christian College (a college founded by Christian Crusade) students. Hargis's trendsetting ventures into Christian anticommunist book publishing, direct-mail fundraising, and cable TV broadcasting provided fundraising and media models for Christian conservatives of the 1980s. Christian Crusade books (some of which were authored or coauthored by Hargis) reached hundreds of thousands of readers, and focused on subjects including the news media, the Left, urban disorder, the control of public schools by the federal government, abortion, and the hidden communist brainwashing messages in the music of the Beatles.<sup>11</sup>

Though Christian Crusade's influence peaked in the early 1960s, it remained one of the most prominent anticommunist organizations in the United States in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In 1969 it replaced its monthly magazine and weekly newsletter with a single national weekly newspaper designed to reach a wider conservative audience. Christian Crusade printed 65,000 copies of the debut issue of *Christian Crusade Weekly*, and by 1973 the newspaper's circulation reached a peak of 190,000. Though he was not the editor, Hargis's voice and personality were predominant in *Christian Crusade Weekly*, and his articles often featured colorful titles such as "Satanic Conspiracy to Thwart American Dream." In the debut issue Hargis promised that *Christian Crusade Weekly* would provide its readers the facts denied to Americans by network television, national magazines, and liberal newspapers. The legitimacy of *Christian Crusade Weekly* and the illegitimacy of the liberal news media were often stressed by the newspaper. In 1971 Hargis echoed other editors of conservative periodicals who viewed their publications as fact-finding, truth-telling alternatives to the liberal media by declaring that at *Christian Crusade Weekly*, "We tell it like it is."<sup>12</sup>

Readers of *Christian Crusade Weekly* were frequently reminded that Christians were engaged in a "fight to the finish" with the forces of the "slave-world" of communism—a

fight that pitted God against Satan. The newspaper wrote about the persecution of Christians in the Soviet Union, North Korea, and other communist nations, and when President Richard M. Nixon visited communist China in 1972, *Christian Crusade Weekly* called the visit the “political blunder of the 20th century.” The newspaper’s commitment to anticommunism was also seen in its calls for U.S. victory in Vietnam, opposition to the “giveaway” of the Panama Canal, and insistence that the United Nations (UN) was a communist conspiracy.<sup>13</sup>

In his 2010 book *God’s Own Party: The Making of the Christian Right*, Daniel K. Williams wrote that the “sexual revolution, sex education, race riots, the counterculture, increases in drug use, and the beginning of the feminist movement convinced [conservative Christians] that the nation had lost its Christian identity and that the family was under attack.” *Christian Crusade Weekly* was committed to protecting families and their children from communist subversives as well as liberals and secular humanists—the “God killers.” Christian Crusade’s preoccupation with dangers to 1970s-era American youth was reflected in Hargis’s 1973 *Christian Crusade Weekly* article, “Let’s Quit Kidding about Today’s Youth.” *Christian Crusade Weekly* often focused on issues of sexual morality such as sex education, sexual promiscuity, homosexuality, and abortion. The newspaper supported Christian parents who wanted to maintain family authority and protect their children, and it backed grassroots campaigns against sex education and “anti-Christian, anti-American, Communist, filthy-language” public school textbooks. For example, *Christian Crusade Weekly* voiced support of parents fighting a sex education curriculum in Anaheim, California, as well as parents fighting the implementation of “liberal” textbooks in Kanawha County, West Virginia. The newspaper blamed the news media for portraying such parents as ignorant and uneducated, and it published articles written by West Virginia anti-textbook leaders. There were further threats

to the family, the home, and children that required Christian vigilance: Drug use, urban and campus disorder, the Beatles and the Rolling Stones, and “hippie” rock festivals all threatened America’s future, according to *Christian Crusade Weekly*, as did welfare assistance, government-subsidized housing, affirmative action, metro government, and court-ordered busing, all of which the newspaper deemed as assaults on “homes and neighborhoods.” *Christian Crusade Weekly* characterized its readers as “silent majority” Americans who were fed up seeing their tax dollars wasted on un-American liberal schemes.<sup>14</sup>

### **“The Unfairness of News Media”**

Christian Crusade’s belief that the news media were waging a propaganda war dated back to the 1950s, when Hargis accused the news media of undermining Sen. Joseph McCarthy’s efforts to combat domestic communism and giving the senator and other loyal patriots a bad name. Hargis’s 1965 book, *“Distortion by Design”: The Story of America’s Liberal Press*, accused the news media of promoting socialist world rule, undermining free enterprise, and “repudiating the Faith upon which this nation is built.” Soon after *Christian Crusade Weekly* began publishing in October 1969, Vice President Spiro Agnew attracted widespread attention for speeches denouncing the news media, in particular network television news and “eastern establishment” newspapers and magazines. *Christian Crusade Weekly* was among the many conservative publications that backed the vice president. In the January 25, 1970, front-page article “The Unfairness of News Media,” Hargis wrote, “Vice President Agnew is right. The American people should put the news media of the United States on trial. We must put pressure on the national news media until they become more objective and hopefully pro-American.”<sup>15</sup>

For *Christian Crusade Weekly*, the national mass-circulation magazines *Life* and *Look* were flagrantly biased and anti-American, and the financial struggles of both magazines in the early 1970s delighted Hargis. In July 1970 Hargis argued that *Look* championed “hippies, beatniks, far-out social outcasts, antichrist New Left, plus the amoral, immoral and degenerate representatives of today’s society,” yet failed to promote anticommunism, free enterprise, or Bible morality. When *Look* went out of business in 1971, Hargis gloated in a front-page article in *Christian Crusade Weekly*. Hargis celebrated, too, the fact that other “left-liberal” magazines, including the *Saturday Evening Post*, the *Reporter*, and *Show*, had closed their doors in the 1960s.<sup>16</sup>

Following *Look*’s demise Hargis directed much of his ire toward *Time* magazine. “No one,” Hargis wrote in 1972, “has contributed more to destroying basic Americanism and Bible Christianity than has *Time* magazine.” Hargis’s attack on *Time* included his analysis of the current state of American journalism:

In a day when bad news outranks good news in the newspapers, and when American television commentators cannot hide their ultra-left-wing sympathies and anti-American sentiments, it is staggering to realize how much of the news is bad news, anti-American news, antichrist news and antimoral news.

Satan must be happier today than he has ever been in the six-thousand-year history of the world. Never has he had such a good press as he has now.

Despite that pessimistic forecast, Hargis argued that Christian Americans could fight back against liberal and satanic propaganda. He asked *Christian Crusade Weekly* readers to stop subscribing to magazines committed to the destruction of Bible morality and to write to companies that advertised in such magazines to ask them to pull their advertisements. Hargis believed that Christians must “devise new ways and means of effective protest,” and letters of protest to advertisers was one way Christians could fight back against “anti-American propaganda.”<sup>17</sup>



*Christian Crusade Weekly* also targeted major newspapers, particularly daily papers in major cities such as the *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *Chicago Tribune*, and it argued that they wielded more political power and produced more propaganda than did the U.S. government. The syndicated columnists who appeared in hundreds of newspapers nationwide were also criticized by *Christian Crusade Weekly*. Syndicated columnists were of a “single ilk,” Hargis wrote in February 1977; they were “liberal, far-out, anti-FBI, anti-CIA, and anti-business.” Like other conservative publications, *Christian Crusade Weekly* criticized the muckraking syndicated columnist Jack Anderson and his brand of “advocacy reporting,” which the newspaper said betrayed the principle of journalistic objectivity.<sup>18</sup>

*Christian Crusade Weekly* alleged that untruthful reporting about the communist threat by the news media endangered Americans and their freedoms. “I am American,” the front page of the February 9, 1975, *Christian Crusade Weekly* declared. “I believe in the right of access to the truth about the enemies of my country, and not have to rely on slanted versions through mass media.” In a charge that continues to be levied by contemporary conservatives, Hargis argued that the news media were to blame for the U.S. failure in Vietnam, in part because they made “such a hue and cry” about the 1969 My Lai massacre (in which U.S. troops massacred hundreds of Vietnamese civilians), but ignored communist atrocities such as those perpetrated by the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia. *Christian Crusade Weekly* also blamed the news media for brainwashing the American public into believing the UN was a legitimate, successful, and benevolent organization when it was, in the opinion of the newspaper, a socialistic form of world government. Why was the news media’s reporting on international communism so distorted? Hargis believed it was because members of the press were either active agents of the Communist party or liberal dupes of the Reds.

Whether a journalist was an active communist agent or an unknowing dupe represents a significant difference, but Hargis did not seem to notice, or perhaps care, about his inconsistency on the subject.<sup>19</sup>

Though *Christian Crusade Weekly* was a critic of President Nixon—Hargis was dismayed by the president’s 1972 visit to China—the newspaper argued that coverage of the Watergate scandal demonstrated that the major print and broadcast news media had cast aside any standards of fairness and objectivity and were committed to destroying Nixon. *Christian Crusade Weekly* speculated that the news media were taking revenge on Agnew’s criticisms of the press by taking aim at the president. A 1973 *Christian Crusade Weekly* article written by Hargis argued that the news media’s “shameful” Watergate performance proved that they were seizing “an opportunity to deal America a deathblow.”<sup>20</sup>

### **“Satan Controls the Airwaves”**

*Christian Crusade Weekly* reserved much of its criticism of the news media and the wider mass media for the three major television networks, which it believed wielded more power than did newspapers and magazines. After Agnew attacked network news in November 1969, Hargis argued that the majority of Americans shared Agnew’s view that the TV news networks favored liberals and liberal positions. Like most conservative media critics of the 1970s, *Christian Crusade Weekly* singled out CBS more often than NBC and ABC for alleged liberal bias. The Watergate scandal provided *Christian Crusade Weekly* with ammunition to take aim at CBS News commentators such as Walter Cronkite, Dan Rather, and Daniel Schorr who the newspaper felt were eager to topple the president. *Christian Crusade Weekly* also criticized documentaries produced by CBS News. While NBC and ABC received less attention from *Christian Crusade Weekly* than did CBS, the newspaper noted the

“dovish” views of NBC News anchor David Brinkley and accused the network of hiring a “Red” as a Middle East correspondent. *Christian Crusade Weekly* also publicized critics of the networks and the print media such as Edith Efron, author of the 1971 network news expose *The News Twisters* and a news-critic columnist for *TV Guide*.<sup>21</sup>

It was not only the news programs and documentaries of the television networks that irked Christian Crusade and other Christian conservatives. The entertainment programs and films regularly aired by the networks, *Christian Crusade Weekly* argued, promoted sex and violence and threatened the morals of America’s youth. In 1972 Hargis wrote in *Christian Crusade Weekly* that

Satan controls the airwaves, and a great many of the programs spoon-fed the American people by CBS, NBC, and ABC television are anti-God, antichrist, anti-moral, anti-American, and anti-truth. Both network radio and television are used to undermine young people’s faith in God and their country, to destroy parental respect, to encourage immorality, to discredit Bible virtues and to hypnotize youth with the satanic beat of music that undermines their rationale and builds anti-heroes such as the Rolling Stones, the Beatles and their ilk.

In particular, *Christian Crusade Weekly* objected to the CBS sit-com *Maude* after a controversial 1972 episode in which the title character chooses to have an abortion. Another mass media threat to America was the Hollywood film industry, which *Christian Crusade Weekly* called “a devious, money-making, international conspiracy that is destroying the morality of our nation and undermining the patriotism of our youth.” Unfortunately for *Christian Crusade Weekly*, Hollywood films originally rated R or X were now being aired in edited form on network TV. The newspaper urged readers to complain to the networks and companies that planned to run advertisements during the airings of such films. When CBS announced in 1972 that it planned to air an edited version of *Woodstock*, a film that documented the enormous 1969 rock festival, *Christian Crusade Weekly* alerted readers that the film was a “subculture glorification of drugs, promiscuity, nudity and subversion of law and order.”

Readers wrote to the newspaper to thank it for alerting them about *Woodstock*; Peggy Smith of East Orange, New Jersey, commented, “Maybe CBS stands for Constant Blatant Sickness.”<sup>22</sup>

According to the historian Whitney Strub, author of the 2011 book *Perversion for Profit: The Politics of Pornography and the Rise of the New Right*, beginning in the 1960s Christian conservatives increasingly saw pornography as a massive threat to the country’s morals, especially those of children. Like the news media, television entertainment, and Hollywood films, Christian conservatives such as Hargis saw pornography as a threat to family authority. Worse still, pornography was tolerated by liberals. A 1972 article in *Christian Crusade Weekly* claimed that “reliable” estimates indicated that 75 percent of pornography eventually found its way to children. To protect America’s children, *Christian Crusade Weekly* argued that all Christians must fight back against “smut” publications such as *Playboy* (which Hargis described as “an antichrist, anti-God, anti-American publication that appeals to the bestial qualities of man”) by writing to businesses to ask them to stop running advertising in such magazines. *Christian Crusade Weekly* argued further that the “smut business” had ties to the mafia, and kept readers abreast of legal actions against newsstands charged with selling obscene materials.<sup>23</sup>

Like other Christian anticommunists, *Christian Crusade Weekly* believed that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) was biased against Christian and conservative broadcasters. Hargis’s personal experience with the FCC contributed to his wholly negative attitude opinion of the commission. In 1964 a Christian Crusade syndicated radio program that featured Hargis’s attack on the investigative reporter Fred J. Cook eventually led to the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1969 decision in *Red Lion Broadcasting Co. Inc. v. FCC* that vindicated the FCC’s use of the Fairness Doctrine (which required broadcasters to offer its viewers

balanced viewpoints). Hargis insisted that the FCC never punished Fairness Doctrine violations and incidents of indecency by liberal broadcasters. *Christian Crusade Weekly* regularly ran articles about FCC action—or more often, lack of action—in response to complaints regarding alleged Fairness Doctrine violations and incidents of indecency. The newspaper also urged readers to write letters to the FCC to ask the commission to uphold the Fairness Doctrine.<sup>24</sup>

### **The Christian Anticommunist Press and Criticism of the News Media**

In his 1965 book *“Distortion by Design,”* Hargis thanked Christian “truth” broadcasters such as Carl McIntire, Dan Smoot, and Dean Clarence Manion, without whom “the American people would have no access to conservative and anti-communist truths from a strictly pro-American viewpoint.” In the 1960s and 1970s the Christian anticommunist viewpoint was expressed by many kinds of news media, including professional newspapers, glossy magazines, and typewritten, mimeographed, and hand-stapled newsletters, as well as syndicated radio and TV programs. Producers of Christian anticommunist news were also surprisingly diverse. The Christian anticommunist Right, though dominated by white evangelicals and fundamentalists, also included Catholics, Lutherans, and other denominations, as well as African Americans.<sup>25</sup>

Christian anticommunist newspapers and magazines of the 1960s and 1970s that criticized the news media included *News and Views*, published by Edgar C. Bundy’s Church League of America; *Militant Truth*, published by the Citizens Crusade of Atlanta, Georgia; *Through to Victory*, a cheaply produced monthly published by Our Savior’s Lutheran Church in Ridgecrest, California, that featured syndicated columns by conservatives including Fred Schwarz, Victor Lasky, John R. Rarick, John G. Schmitz, Don Bell, E. P. Thornton, and

Phyllis Schlafly; and anti-Semitic Christian anticommunist publications including *National Christian News* and the *Cross and the Flag*.<sup>26</sup>

Despite the diversity among Christian anticommunists and the kinds of news media they produced, publishers of Christian anticommunist publications and producers of Christian anticommunist radio and TV programs shared nearly all the same views on international and domestic communism, liberal permissiveness, and the sins of the liberal news media. A closer look at two Christian anticommunist publications of the 1970s bears out that point. Founded in 1958, the St. Louis–based Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation was a Catholic anticommunist organization and a frequent critic of the news media via its monthly magazine. Like *Christian Crusade Weekly*, the *Mindszenty Report* called for aggressive containment of international communism and spoke out against the persecution of Christians in communist nations. The *Mindszenty Report* also echoed Hargis’s regular calls for the protection of the American family and the nation’s youth. (Among the Mindszenty Foundation’s members was the prominent anticommunist Phyllis Schlafly, a resident of nearby Alton, Illinois, a pro-family opponent of the Equal Rights Amendment, and a strident critic of the news media.) Like *Christian Crusade Weekly*, the *Mindszenty Report* backed Spiro Agnew’s criticisms of the news media and urged its readers to fight liberal bias in the news media by sending letters of complaint to sponsors and advertisers. Of special interest to the *Mindszenty Report* and its Catholic readers was the issue of abortion, and it argued that the news and entertainment media brainwashed Americans with pro-choice propaganda. Recalling complaints later levied by antibusing protestors in Louisville and Boston, the *Mindszenty Report* accused major newspapers and magazines of drastically undercounting the attendance at a 1972 antiabortion march.<sup>27</sup>

Another publication that demonstrated the breadth of Christian anticommunism of the 1970s and the pervasiveness of the news media critique among Christian conservatives was the *Star News*, a newspaper published by the North Star Mission, a Chicago-based African American church led by Henry Mitchell. Throughout the 1970s the *Star News* criticized familiar liberal targets, including secular humanism, abortion, gun control, the ERA, welfare, and the Supreme Court. According to the *Star News*, the African American civil rights movement was a communist conspiracy and had made conditions for blacks worse in the United States, and it argued that the “left wing press” ignored “constructive” black conservatives and instead provided coverage to “opportunist” civil rights leaders such as Jesse Jackson. The *Star News* opposed court-ordered busing and blasted the news media for depicting antibusing protestors in Kentucky and Boston as bigots and racists. Like other Christian anticommunists, the *Star News* also objected to TV network entertainment programming such as the 1977 ABC miniseries *Roots*, which Mitchell claimed aided the communist cause. Mitchell also called on Americans to write to the FCC to demand equal time for programming on “all the good things America has accomplished.”<sup>28</sup>

### **Race, Color-Blind Conservatism, and News Media Criticism**

To be sure, many conservatives who criticized the news media during the 1970s would have distanced themselves from some of the views of Hargis and likeminded Christian anticommunists, such as their beliefs that end times were approaching and that communism was literally Satanism. Yet there were more similarities than differences among 1970s conservative critics of the news media. The evangelicals, fundamentalists, Catholics, and other Christians that comprised the Christian anticommunist Right; Christian conservatives on the racist and anti-Semitic Right; grassroots conservatives fighting busing

and “liberal” textbooks; pro-family women and men who opposed the ERA; and Republican party stalwarts such as Jesse Helms, Pat Buchanan, and Spiro Agnew all agreed that the news media were hopelessly biased and abjectly failed at meeting the journalistic standards of fairness and objectivity that they claimed to uphold. Conservatives also agreed that the news media were part of a liberal, eastern establishment elite that wielded far too much power and threatened the American institutions and principles valued and revered by conservatives—the Constitution, free enterprise, the family, and the nation’s Christian heritage. The critiques made by 1970s conservatives about the liberal news media and the eastern establishment echo in the contemporary conservative activism of the Tea Party.<sup>29</sup>

Just as journalists and historians have examined the role that racial resentments play in the politics of the Tea Party, addressing the racial conservatism of Billy James Hargis and other Christian anticommunists of the Cold War era expands our understanding of Cold War-era Christian anticommunism and the criticisms levied by Christian anticommunists of the allegedly liberal news media. Racial resentments certainly played a role in the news media criticism levied by southerners who resented news coverage by “northern” and “eastern” newspapers and TV news networks of civil rights demonstrations; by the explicitly racist editors and writers of the St. Louis *Citizens Informer*, a Citizens’ Council publication that regularly blasted the news media; and by grassroots antibusing protestors in Boston, Louisville, and Detroit who criticized the news media for allegedly favoring African Americans over whites.<sup>30</sup>

Yet even explicitly racist publications such as the *Citizens Informer* employed the “color-blind language” of constitutional rights and freedoms far more often than the explicit rhetoric of white supremacy during the 1970s. The historian Darren Dochuk wrote in his 2011 book *From Bible Belt to Sun Belt: Plain-Folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Rise of*



*Evangelical Conservatism* that conservatives of the mid-1960s began to embrace a color-blind conservatism in which racial signifiers, code words such as “blight,” “crime,” “welfare,” and “law and order,” were emphasized. The use of color-blind language by conservatives was so widespread in the 1970s that it can be difficult to determine to what degree racial resentments influenced the conservative activism of a wide range of conservatives, including Christian anticommunists.<sup>31</sup>

In the 1970s racially specific rhetoric was largely non-existent in *Christian Crusade Weekly*, which instead employed color-blind language when it criticized civil rights, busing, welfare, and other issues that touched on race. Yet, as the media scholar Heather Hendershot argues, Hargis’s use of color-blind rhetoric allowed him to conceal that his conservatism was rooted in racism and resistance to integration. Indeed, in the 1950s Hargis was an advocate of racial segregation; in a pamphlet titled *The Truth about Segregation*, Hargis argued that God had “ordained” segregation (Hargis later repudiated the pamphlet). In the 1960s he collaborated with outspoken segregationists such as the retired army general Edwin A. Walker, with whom he organized the anticommunist national speaking tour Operation Midnight Ride. Both Walker and Hargis warned audiences that civil rights activists were fifth columnists working for the Kremlin to destroy America’s social fabric. Even in the early 1970s Hargis argued that there were inherent differences between races. In his 1971 book *Billy James Hargis Speaks Out on the Issues!* he opined that slavery may have been “a blessing in disguise” because it introduced blacks to “Christianity, education, and personal hygiene.”<sup>32</sup>

There is also evidence that Hargis maintained anti-Semitic views, or at the very least did not mind associating with anti-Semitic conservatives such as Carl McIntire and Gerald Burton Winrod. In the 1960s Hargis blamed the news media for portraying him as an anti-Semite and a racist. Yet during that decade he served on the board of Liberty Lobby, an

explicitly anti-Semitic anticommunist organization, as did Ned Touchstone, the publisher of the white-supremacist Citizens' Council newspaper the *Councilor*. Hargis also contributed articles to the *Defender*, an anti-Semitic magazine published by Winrod. In the 1970s Hargis was an outspoken supporter of Israel, yet in *Billy James Hargis Speaks Out on the Issues!* Hargis opined that Jews "have uncanny ability in finances and economics" and argued that it was "ridiculous to contend that all people are born equal in all things." In the end, though I believe that anti-Semitism played a role in creating the idea of an eastern liberal news media establishment among conservatives, there is insufficient evidence to argue that Hargis's low opinion of the news media was motivated by anti-Semitism. In the next chapter, I analyze in detail the role of anti-Semitism in creating the idea of a liberal news media.<sup>33</sup>

Whether *Christian Crusade Weekly's* use of color-blind language in the 1970s reflected new attitudes about race on the part of Hargis and Christian Crusade is also unclear. Hargis may have realized that color-blind language was the only way *Christian Crusade Weekly* could build a wide base of conservative support; like his "personal friend," Alabama governor George Wallace, Hargis perhaps saw that explicit arguments for racial segregation and inherent racial differences were no longer politically tenable. Hendershot suggests that Hargis may have been motivated to tone down his views about segregation in the late 1960s and 1970s because of his battles with the FCC and the Internal Revenue Service. That said, *Christian Crusade Weekly's* conservative views on civil rights and issues involving race such as busing were evident even when the language was color blind. For example, a 1969 article linking the civil rights movement with communism placed "civil rights" in quotation marks. Yet the newspaper used the language of civil rights when it defended conservative positions on racial issues such as busing by emphasizing Constitutional rights, the rights and freedoms of parents, and even "children's civil rights" in a 1971 antibusing article. *Christian Crusade*

*Weekly*'s tone toward African Americans could also be paternalistic. In his 1977 "Leftwing Propaganda War against America" article, Hargis objected to ABC's *Roots*, which Hargis argued had "created dissensions, disturbances and racial unrest because hours of this film indict and convict today's white citizenry for crimes against Blacks hundreds of years ago. It is ridiculous to create such distortions in the minds of Blacks."<sup>34</sup>

How much, then, did racism play in the media criticism of Christian conservatives such as Hargis? I believe that the racially conservative backgrounds of Christian anticommunists such as Hargis certainly helped form their worldview. In the 1970s, their views on issues of race such as civil rights, busing, and affirmative action suggest that preexisting beliefs about racial differences, segregation, and the civil rights movement still lingered, even if they were expressed in color-blind language.

## Conclusion

In late 1974 Hargis announced that he was restricting his Christian Crusade activities because of illness. Two years later Hargis's least-favorite news magazine, *Time*, reported that Hargis had taken leave because he had engaged in sexual relations with male and female American Christian College students and, after he was confronted, had admitted his guilt to Christian Crusade's leadership. *Christian Crusade Weekly* claimed that Hargis had taken leave because he had suffered a stroke. Hargis returned to Christian Crusade and *Christian Crusade Weekly* in 1976, but he severed his ties with American Christian College. He claimed that *Time*'s article about his alleged sexual misdeeds was "the most vicious article ever written about me in my entire ministry." While other Christian conservatives such as Jerry Fallwell emerged in the late 1970s to play prominent roles in national politics, Christian Crusade receded from the national scene. The sex scandal was probably the major factor in the

organization's decline. Hargis continued to run his ministry from his farm in Missouri in the 1990s. He died in 2004.<sup>35</sup>

Though Christian Crusade was a shadow of its former self by the end of the 1970s, a growing New Christian Right built upon Hargis's pioneering work as a direct-mail fundraiser and producer of radio and TV programs, as well as his efforts to coordinate Christian conservatives of various denominations for political action on shared causes. The New Christian Right also embraced Christian Crusade's never-flagging belief that international communism and the Soviet Union were major threats to the United States. By 1980 anticommunism was no longer a relic of the McCarthy era or the province of a fringe right wing. In the 1980s Christian conservatives battled many of the same liberal threats identified by Hargis and Christian Crusade in the 1960s and 1970s: secular humanism and atheism; sex education; pornography and smut in print, on TV, and in Hollywood films; the American Civil Liberties Union; the Supreme Court; the UN; and the liberal news media.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Billy James Hargis, "The Leftwing Propaganda War against America; Part I," *Christian Crusade Weekly*, Feb. 27, 1977, pp. 1–2. Bold face in original. Bruce Herschensohn, "The Biased Liberal News Media," *ibid.*, April 28, 1974, pp. 1, 4, 6; Billy James Hargis, "The Fourth Estate That Became the Third Reich; The National News Media," *ibid.*, Aug. 29, 1976, 1–2; Billy James Hargis, "The Unfairness of News Media," *ibid.*, Jan. 25, 1970, pp. 1, 6. All copies of *Christian Crusade Weekly* were accessed at the Wilcox Collection of Contemporary Political Movements. See *Christian Crusade Weekly*, RH WL G1373, Wilcox Collection (Kansas Collection, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence Kansas).

<sup>2</sup> "Mid-America Protests X-Rated Films Via TV," *ibid.*, March 12, 1972, pp. 1, 4; Billy James Hargis, "That's Entertainment?," *ibid.*, Jan. 30, 1977, pp. 1–2; Billy James Hargis, "For and Against," *ibid.*, Jan. 25, 1970, pp. 1, 6, esp. 1; "Smut Business Is Mafia Linked," *ibid.*, Aug. 6, 1972, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Hargis, "Unfairness of News Media."

<sup>4</sup> On Christian conservatives and attitudes toward the news media, see Daniel K. Williams, *God's Own Party: The Making of the Christian Right* (New York, 2010), 48; and Heather Hendershot, *What's Fair on the Air? Cold War Right-Wing Broadcasting and the Public Interest* (Chicago, 2011), 172. For an example of *Christian Crusade Weekly's* effort to provide evidence of liberal news media bias, see Billy James Hargis, "'As the World Turns'; A Look of One Issue of 'Time,'" *Christian Crusade Weekly*, Nov. 5, 1972, pp. 1, 4, 10.

<sup>5</sup> "Announcing a New National Christian Weekly Newspaper," *ibid.*, Oct. 19, 1969, pp. 1–2, esp. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Billy James Hargis, "Communists Achieve Major Goal in Aftermath of Watergate 'Show,'" *ibid.*, July 22, 1973, pp. 1, 3–4, esp. 1; Hargis, "Unfairness of News Media," 6.

<sup>7</sup> Hendershot, *What's Fair on the Air?*, 174; On racially paternalistic language, see Hargis, "The Leftwing Propaganda War against America; Part I." On the civil rights movement and communism, see Julian Williams, "Intelligence Digest: Is 'Civil Rights' the 'Key' to Red Conquest?," *Christian Crusade Weekly*, Nov. 23, 1969, p. 7.

<sup>8</sup> John George and Laird Wilcox, *American Extremists: Militias, Supremacists, Klansmen, Communists, and Others* (Amherst, 1996), 173–85, esp. 174, 181; Ronald Lora and William Henry Longton, eds., *The Conservative Press in Twentieth-Century America* (Westport, 1999), 471–78, esp. 471.

<sup>9</sup> On postwar “celebrity preachers,” see Darren Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt: Plain-Folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism* (New York, 2011), 151–53; Williams, *God’s Own Party*, 21–24, 34–47; and Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton, 2001), 106. On Christian Crusade and the beliefs of Christian anticommunist generally, see Williams, *God’s Own Party*, 41, 21; John Harold Redekop, *The American Far Right: A Case Study of Billy James Hargis and Christian Crusade* (Grand Rapids, 1968), 51, 17; George and Wilcox, *American Extremists*, 173; McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*, 169, 106; and Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*, 183–87.

<sup>10</sup> On Christian conservative and political activism, see Williams, *God’s Own Party*; Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*; McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*, 157; William Martin, *With God on Our Side: The Rise of the Religious Right in America* (New York, 1996); and Redekop, *American Far Right*, 46, 49. On the belief that the civil rights movement was a communist conspiracy, see Clive Webb, *Rabble Rousers: The American Far Right in the Civil Rights Era* (Athens, Ga., 2010), 148–49. On Christian conservatives and social and cultural issues, see Williams, *God’s Own Party*, 5; and Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*, 299.

<sup>11</sup> On Christian Crusade’s media empire, see George and Wilcox, *American Extremists*, 177; Redekop, *American Far Right*, 24; Williams, *God’s Own Party*, 40–41; “Power Stations Carry Crusade Daily Broadcasts,” *Christian Crusade Weekly*, Nov. 23, 1969, pp. 1, 6; “Christian Crusade Television Network,” *ibid.*, March 12, 1972, p. 4; and “Telecast Meets Issues Head-On,” *ibid.*, Sept. 24, 1972, pp. 1, 3, 10. On Christian Crusade book publishing, direct-mail fundraising, and cable TV ventures, see Hendershot, *What’s Fair on the Air?*, 173, 182; Redekop, *American Far Right*, 24; “America’s Sick Kids . . . It’s No Laughing Matter!” Christian Crusade fundraising letter, Jan. 1965, Christian Crusade, ephemeral materials [1957–], RH WL Eph 2101, Wilcox Collection; “Do You Want These Communists Writing Your Children’s Schoolbooks,” Christian Crusade fundraising letter, Nov. 1968, *ibid.*; and “Because You Are My Special Friend Let Me Warn You,” Christian Crusade fundraising letter, n.d. [probably 1978], *ibid.* Books published by Christian Crusade in the 1960s and 1970s included Billy James Hargis, *The Far Left* (Tulsa, 1964); Julian E. Williams, *Burn, Baby Burn! Is Your City Next?* (Tulsa, 1968); Billy James Hargis, *That Chicago Revolution!* (Tulsa, 1968); Gordon V. Drake, *Blackboard Power: NEA Threat to America* (Tulsa, 1968); David A. Noebel, *The Beatles: A Study in Drugs, Sex, and Revolution* (Tulsa, 1969); David A. Noebel, *Communism, Hypnotism, and the Beatles: An Analysis of the Communist Use of Music, the Communist Master Music Plan* (Tulsa, 1965); and Dan Lyons and Billy James Hargis, *Thou Shalt Not Kill—My Babies* (Tulsa, 1977).

<sup>12</sup> On Christian Crusade's influence, see George and Wilcox, *American Extremists*, 175. On *Christian Crusade Weekly* circulation figures, see Lora and Longton, eds., *Conservative Press in Twentieth-Century America*, 476. On *Christian Crusade Weekly*'s tone and content, see Billy James Hargis, "Satanic Conspiracy to Thwart American Dream," *Christian Crusade Weekly*, Oct. 13, 1974, pp. 1–2; and "Announcing a New National Christian Weekly Newspaper," 1. On *Christian Crusade Weekly*'s truth-telling claims, see Billy James Hargis, "The Timely Demise of Look Magazine," *ibid.*, Oct. 31, 1971, p. 1. Antibusing newspapers in Boston and Jefferson County, Kentucky, made similar claims that they "tell it like it is." See "The South Boston Marshal Really Tells It Like It Is—Page after Page," box, *South Boston Marshal*, Sept. 11, 1980, p. 8; Albert L. "Dapper" O'Neil, "Telling It Like It Is," *ibid.*, Jan. 29, 1981, p. 19; and cartoon, *NAPF*, Nov. 23, 1975, p. 1.

<sup>13</sup> "A Fight to the Finish with International Communism," *Christian Crusade Weekly*, Oct. 26, 1969, pp. 1, 3, esp. 1; David A. Noebel, "Communism's War against God," Oct. 29, 1972, *ibid.*, pp. 1, 4; Paul Voronaeff, "Mass Arrests of Christians in Russia; An Alarming Inside Report," *ibid.*, Nov. 17, 1974, pp. 1, 4; "U.S. Withdrawal from Korea an Invitation to Communist Invasion," *ibid.*, Oct. 8, 1972, p. 1; Billy James Hargis, "Political Blunder of 20th Century; Nixon's Visit to China," *ibid.*, May 14, 1972, pp. 1, 6; "Atrocities by Reds Increasing in Vietnam," *ibid.*, Oct. 15, 1972, pp. 1, 4; Charles Secrest, "When Will We Stop Giving Everything Away?" *ibid.*, July 27, 1975, p. 1, 3; David A. Noebel, "United Nations—Threat to the West," *ibid.*, Feb. 9, 1975, pp. 1, 8; Julian Williams, "The Truth about UNICEF," *ibid.*, Oct. 21, 1973, p. 1, 4.

<sup>14</sup> On Christian conservatives and concerns about the family, see Williams, *God's Own Party*, 5. On *Christian Crusade Weekly* and concerns about families and children, see Billy James Hargis, "American Civil Liberties Union: Number One Enemy of Christianity in America," *Christian Crusade Weekly*, Jan. 23, 1977, pp. 1–2, esp. 1; and Billy James Hargis, "Let's Quit Kidding about Today's Youth," *ibid.*, May 6, 1973, pp. 1–2. On *Christian Crusade Weekly* and parents in Anaheim, California, and Kanawha County, West Virginia, see "Anaheim Story Provides Example of Informed and Determined Action," *ibid.*, Feb. 8, 1970, pp. 1, 6; "Parents Anger Justifiable in Textbook Controversy," *ibid.*, Nov. 3, 1974, p. 5; Marvin Horan, "How I Got Involved in the W. Va. Textbook Protest," *ibid.*, Feb. 23, 1975, pp. 1, 4; Linda Paul, "Legally Adopted Sin in the West Virginia Schools," *ibid.*, Feb. 9, 1975, pp. 1, 4; Charles Secrest, "W. Va. Battle over Books; Firsthand, On-the-Scene Report," *ibid.*, Feb. 16, 1975, pp. 1, 2; and Polly Graham, "Communists Enter the Textbook Controversy," *ibid.*, March 30, 1975, p. 4. On *Christian Crusade Weekly* and threats to the family, see "Total Permissiveness Seen as Liberal Aim in Society," *ibid.*, Nov. 23, 1969, pp. 1, 6; David A. Noebel, "How Rock-and-Roll Began," *ibid.*, Oct. 21, 1973, p. 1, 4; "Rural America Is Invaded by

Rock Festival Revolutionaries” and photos and captions, *ibid.*, Oct. 4, 1970, p. 4; Haywood B. Kelly, “Blackmail Is What It Is,” *ibid.*, Sept. 24, 1972, pp. 1, 8; Gerald S. Pope, “Guaranteed Wage Is Here; Revolutionary Experiment,” *ibid.*, Oct. 8, 1972, p. 1, 4; “The Demise of a Nation via Abortion, Population Control, Social Security,” *ibid.*, March 2, 1975, pp. 1, 2; Julian Williams, “Intelligence Digest: Property Rights Are Human Rights,” *ibid.*, Jan. 11, 1976, pp. 9–10; Charles Secrest, “Counterpoint,” *ibid.*, Nov. 19, 1972, p. 2; and “Anaheim Story Provides Example of Informed and Determined Action,” 1.

<sup>15</sup> Williams, *God's Own Party*, 41; Billy James Hargis, “*Distortion by Design: The Story of America's Liberal Press* (Tulsa, 1965), 7; Hargis, “Unfairness of News Media,” 1–2. Christian Crusade's direct-mail fundraising letters of the 1960s also indicted the news media. A May 1968 mailing declared that there was “not a single pro-American, conservative newscaster left on any of the three TV networks.” The letter also blasted the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for persecuting “any radio or television station that steps out of line by promoting the traditional Christian or Americanism viewpoint.” See “Burn Baby, Burn! Is Your City NEXT?,” Christian Crusade fundraising letter, May 1968, p. 2, Christian Crusade, ephemeral materials, RH WL Eph 2101, Wilcox Collection.

<sup>16</sup> Billy James Hargis, “Look Magazine May Bite the Dust,” *Christian Crusade Weekly*, July 5, 1970, pp. 1, 6, esp. 1; Hargis, “Timely Demise of Look Magazine,” 1; Billy James Hargis, “Government ‘War’ on My Broadcasts,” *ibid.*, May 4, 1975, pp. 1, 4, 12.

<sup>17</sup> Hargis, “As the World Turns,” 4, 1; Hargis, “Look Magazine May Bite the Dust,” 6.

<sup>18</sup> Hargis, “Fourth Estate That Became the Third Reich,” 1; Hargis, “Leftwing Propaganda War against America; Part I,” 2; Edward Hunter, “What Jack Anderson Teaches Us,” *ibid.*, Oct. 15, 1972, pp. 1, 4, 10, esp. 1. On criticism of Jack Anderson levied by other conservatives of the 1970s, see Mark Feldstein, *Poisoning the Press: Richard Nixon, Jack Anderson, and the Rise of Washington's Scandal Culture* (New York, 2010).

<sup>19</sup> “I Am American,” *Christian Crusade Weekly*, Feb. 9, 1975, p. 1; Billy James Hargis, “Our Vietnam Defeat! What Happened? . . . A Study in International Defeat, Shabby Betrayal, and Shameful Retreat,” *ibid.*, June 15, 1975, pp. 1, 3, 6; “Press Silent on ‘Keelhaul’ Case,” *ibid.*, June 20, 1971, pp. 1–2, esp. 1; Billy James Hargis, “The Paris Peace Talks—An Effort in Futility,” *ibid.*, June 22, 1975, pp. 1, 3; Noebel, “United Nations—Threat to the West”; Charles Secrest, “Intelligence Digest: The Truth about World Government,” *ibid.*, Oct. 26, 1975, pp. 9–10; Hargis, “Unfairness of News Media,” 1.



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<sup>20</sup> Victor Lasky, "Media Gone Ape Says Archibald Cox; (Of All People)," *ibid.*, March 24, 1974, p. 1, 5; Hargis, "Fourth Estate That Became the Third Reich," 2; Billy James Hargis, "Communists Achieve Major Goal in Aftermath of Watergate 'Show,'" *ibid.*, July 22, 1973, pp. 1, 3–4, esp. 1..

<sup>21</sup> Billy James Hargis, "In Spite of Spiro Agnew Network TV Worsens," *ibid.*, Feb. 8, 1970, pp. 1–2; Hargis, "Fourth Estate That Became the Third Reich," 1; "A Mother Disputes CBS Program Claims," *ibid.*, Sept. 23, 1973, p. 1, 4; Billy James Hargis, "David Brinkley Has a Good Idea; For a Change," *ibid.*, July 5, 1970, p. 7; "NBC Accused of Hiring Red," *ibid.*, Sept. 12, 1971, pp. 1, 2; James D. Lofton, Jr. "CBS News Coverage Blasted," *ibid.*, Nov. 10, 1974, p. 1, 3. On Edith Efron, see Edith Efron, *The News Twisters* (Los Angeles, 1971).

<sup>22</sup> Billy James Hargis, "A Satanic Conspiracy Undermines the U.S.A.," *Christian Crusade Weekly*, Aug. 6, 1972, pp. 1–6, esp. 2; "'Gross Insensitivities' Lose Viewers," *ibid.*, May 6, 1973, p. 9; "CBS Withdraws Abortion Film," *ibid.*, May 14, 1972, p. 1; Billy James Hargis, "Continuing Violence on TV and Movies," *ibid.*, June 4, 1972, pp. 1, 8, esp. 8; "Movies with 'Bolder Themes' Due on TV Networks This Fall," *ibid.*, Oct. 8, 1972, pp. 1, 4; "Television Sponsors Directory," advertisement, *ibid.*, Feb. 18, 1973, p. 4; "An Open Letter to CBS Television," *ibid.*, Nov. 19, 1972, pp. 1, 10, esp. 1; "CBS to Show 'Woodstock,'" *ibid.*, Oct. 29, 1972, p. 1.

<sup>23</sup> Whitney Strub, *Perversion for Profit: The Politics of Pornography and the Rise of the New Right* (New York, 2011), 178; "Mid-America Protests X-Rated Films Via TV," 4; Billy James Hargis, "For and Against," *ibid.*, Jan. 25, 1970, pp. 1, 6, esp. 1; "Smut Business Is Mafia Linked"; "City Follows High Court in 'Obscene Material' Case," *ibid.*, March 11, 1973, pp. 1, 10.

<sup>24</sup> On Hargis and the *Red Lion* case, see Fred W. Friendly, "What's Fair on the Air? The Red Lion Case; A Landmark Court Decision . . . Democratic Dirty Tricks . . . Government as Editor of Last Resort," *New York Times Magazine*, March 30, 1975, pp. 11–12, 37–43, 46–48; Hendershot, *What's Fair on the Air?*, 141, 144; and Billy James Hargis, "A Review of the March 30, 1975, Issue of the New York Times on Christian Crusade's 'Fight for Freedom of Speech!': March 30, 1975, New York Times Agrees That Presidents Kennedy and Johnson Conspired to Suppress 'Freedom of Speech' for Billy James Hargis," *Christian Crusade Weekly*, April 27, 1975, pp. 1, 5–8. On *Christian Crusade Weekly* and the FCC, see "Obscene Language Being Aired by Certain Radio Stations," *ibid.*, Feb. 8, 1970, p. 2; and Hargis, "In Spite of Spiro Agnew Network TV Worsens." Hargis and Christian Crusade also battled with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) over the tax-exempt status of

the organization. Hargis believed the IRS was unfair to Christian conservatives. See Billy James Hargis, "For and Against," *ibid.*, Sept. 12, 1971, p. 2.

<sup>25</sup> Hargis, "Distortion by Design," 182.

<sup>26</sup> On *News and Views*, see "Who Is Winning, and Why? (Part II)," *News and Views*, 33 (Oct. 1970), pp. 11–14; and Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*, 152. On *Militant Truth*, see Strom Thurmond, "Mr. Hoover and His Critics," and photo and caption, *Militant Truth*, 27 (no. 11 [1972?]), p. 1; "Spiro Spells It Out," reprint of undated *Peoria (Ill.) Journal-Star* editorial, *ibid.*, 25 (no. 11, [1970?]), 1; and "Unions Spend Vast Sums for Organizing and Propaganda Activities," *ibid.*, 28 (no. 2, [1972?]), 1, 3. On *Through to Victory*, see untitled cartoon, *Through to Victory*, July 1970, p. 2; untitled cartoon, *ibid.*, Oct. 1973, p. 12; "You Can't Do Business with Communists," *ibid.*, July–Aug. 1973, p. 6; Dr. Fred Schwarz, "The Black Panthers Promote Communism," *ibid.*, July 1970, pp. 1–2; E. P. Thornton, "A Conservative Speaks Out: Withdrawn from Circulation," *ibid.*, Oct. 1973, p. 2; John R. Rarick, "Land Use Control: The Quiet Revolution," *ibid.*, 8; Don Bell, "Our New Socialism: Regional Government," *ibid.*, 8–9; Victor Lasky, "Ask a Liberal Where His Kids Go to School," *ibid.*, Feb. 1973, p. 10; John G. Schmitz, "Schmitz Newsletter: Unpublicized Facts about Cesar Chavez and His Union," *ibid.*, July–Aug. 1973, p. 3; and "The Phyllis Schlafly Report: Why Brezhnev Came to America," *ibid.*, 6–7. On *National Christian News*, see "The Controllers," *National Christian News*, 16 (no. 8, 1977), pp. 1–4. On *The Cross and the Flag*, see Glen Jeansonne, *Gerald L. K. Smith: Minister of Hate* (New Haven, 1988), 107.

<sup>27</sup> "Why We Must Keep the Panama Canal," *Mindszenty Report*, Dec. 1976, p. 1; "The Family: An Endangered Species?" *ibid.*, Feb. 1977, p. 1; "Beyond the Equal Rights Amendment," *ibid.*, May 1978, p. 1; "Women's Magazines and the Anti-family Revolution," *ibid.*, Dec. 1979, pp. 1–4. As of 2012 Phyllis Schlafly's sister-in-law, Eleanor Schlafly, was the Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation's president. See Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation, [http://www.mindszenty.org/About\\_us.aspx](http://www.mindszenty.org/About_us.aspx). On the *Mindszenty Report* and the news media, see "What to Do about Television?" *Mindszenty Report*, Dec. 15, 1969, pp. 1–3; "The Media Is the Movement," *ibid.*, April 1974, pp. 1–3; "Can You Do Anything about TV?" *ibid.*, Dec. 1975, p. 4; "TV: Selling the New Morality," *ibid.*, Dec. 1978, pp. 1–4; and "The Media and the Anti-life Movement," *ibid.*, Jan. 1973, pp. 1–4.

<sup>28</sup> "Abortion Is a Religious Issue," *Star News*, Feb.–Mar. 1978, pp. 1–3; "When Guns Are Outlawed Only Outlaws Will Have Guns," *ibid.*, Jan. 1976, p. 4; Doris Cooper, "E.R.A. Is Not the Way," *ibid.*, Jan. 1978, p. 8; Henry Mitchell, "U.S. Supreme Court Supports Communist Control in America," *ibid.*, 1–2; "Who Need Free Enterprise? The American People," *ibid.*, Feb.–Mar. 1978, p. 8;

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Henry Mitchell, "PUSH Example Creates Bad Image," *ibid.*, Dec. 1973, pp. 1–2, esp. 1; Henry Mitchell, "Better Schools, Better Facilities, Better Understanding, without Bussing," *ibid.*, Aug.–Sep. 1977, p. 2; H. Mitchell, "'Roots' Is Dead: Communist Slavery Is Alive," *ibid.*, Feb. 1977, pp. 1–3, esp. 2.

<sup>29</sup> On the Tea Party, see Jill Lepore, *The Whites of Their Eyes: The Tea Party's Revolution and the Battle over American History* (Princeton, 2010).

<sup>30</sup> David Greenberg, "The Idea of 'the Liberal Media' and Its Roots in the Civil Rights Movement," *The Sixties: A Journal of History, Politics, and Culture*, 1 (Dec. 2008), 167–86; Thomas Bugel and Gordon Lee Baum, "Federal Judge Imposes Police State in Boston," *Citizens Informer*, March 1975, 1, 9; William Gillis, "Say No to Busing and the Liberal Media: Backlash against the *Louisville Courier-Journal* and *Louisville Times*, 1975–76," *Journalism History*, 35 (Winter 2010), 216–28.

<sup>31</sup> Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*, 274–75.

<sup>32</sup> Hendershot, *What's Fair on the Air?*, 174; George and Wilcox, *American Extremists*, 179; Webb, *Rabble Rousers*, 148–49; Billy James Hargis, *Billy James Hargis Speaks Out on the Issues!* (Tulsa, 1971), 16.

<sup>33</sup> George and Wilcox, *American Extremists*, 176–79; Joseph Crespino, *In Search of another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution* (Princeton, 2007), 58; Hargis, "Distortion by Design," 5; George Michael, *Willis Carto and the American Far Right* (Gainesville, 2008), 265n33; Lora and Longton, eds., *Conservative Press in Twentieth-Century America*, 447; Hargis, *Billy James Hargis Speaks Out on the Issues!*, 18.

<sup>34</sup> Billy James Hargis, "Victim of Assassin's Plot; Governor Wallace," *Christian Crusade Weekly*, June 4, 1972, pp. 1, 5, esp. 1; Billy James Hargis, "'Kids' and I Visit Gov. George Wallace," *ibid.*, Aug. 5, 1973, pp. 1, 4; Hendershot, *What's Fair on the Air?*, 172; Williams, "Intelligence Digest: Is 'Civil Rights' the 'Key' to Red Conquest?"; Julian Williams and Billy James Hargis, "Forced Busing . . . Immoral and Un-American," *ibid.*, Sept. 28, 1971, pp. 3–6, esp. 6; Hargis, "The Leftwing Propaganda War against America; Part I," 2.

<sup>35</sup> "Secrest Assumes Executive Duties," *ibid.*, Jan. 26, 1975, pp. 1, 4; Billy James Hargis, "God's Miracle Voice—Radio," *ibid.*, Oct. 19, 1975, p. 1; "Religion: The Sins of Billy James," *Time*, Feb. 16, 1976; Lora and Longton, eds., *Conservative Press in Twentieth-Century America*, 476; George and Wilcox, *American Extremists*, 184.

<sup>36</sup> Hendershot, *What's Fair on the Air?*, 194; Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*, 389.

## Chapter 6

### Anti-Semitism and Criticism of the News Media

*National Christian News*, a newspaper dedicated to preserving “our White Race, our Christian Faith, and our Nation,” published an article series in 1977 titled “The Controllers.” Across three issues, *National Christian News* listed hundreds of U.S. television networks and stations, magazines, and daily newspapers; each media outlet was accompanied by a select list of its owners, directors, managers, editors, and reporters who *National Christian News* believed were Jewish, based on the last names of the individuals. For the anti-Semitic publishers and readers of *National Christian News*, the hundreds of supposedly Jewish individuals identified in “The Controllers” proved that Jews controlled nearly every news media organization in the country—all part of a calculated conspiracy by communist Jews to brainwash the American people with distorted news.<sup>1</sup>

Since the early twentieth century anti-Semites in the United States have argued that Jews controlled and manipulated the news media. In the 1920s and 1930s organizations and figures such as the Ku Klux Klan, Henry Ford, Father Charles Coughlin, Charles Lindbergh, and the German American Bund argued that Jewish communists were in control of the nation’s news and entertainment media. During the Cold War era, an anti-Semitic, racist Far Right continued to charge that Jews, particularly those based in New York and other East Coast cities, distorted the news in order to pave way for communist world government.<sup>2</sup>

This chapter analyzes the ways the postwar Right associated the news media with Jews and the role anti-Semitism played in creating the idea of a “liberal news media.” I demonstrate that explicitly anti-Semitic and racist Far Right publications of the 1970s regularly argued that Jews controlled the news consumed by the majority of Americans. Like

so many other conservative publications that criticized the allegedly liberal news media during the 1970s, anti-Semitic publications characterized themselves as truth-tellers with the courage to report the facts denied to Americans by the mainstream news media, which they believed brainwashed Americans with Jewish lies and distortions. Anti-Semitic critiques of the news media must be understood in the context of Cold War–era anticommunism, Christian conservatism, and reaction to the civil rights movement by white conservatives. The vast majority of anti-Semites of the postwar era were fervent Christian anticommunists who believed that Jews were the secret masterminds behind the international communist conspiracy to destroy the Anglo-Saxon, Christian United States. Most anti-Semites also believed that communist Jews controlled the civil rights movement, a conspiracy designed to promote racial miscegenation and unrest.<sup>3</sup>

The historian and media scholar David Greenberg has demonstrated that resentment of “eastern” and “northern” television networks among southern whites was crucial in creating the idea of a “liberal news media.” Proponents of racial segregation in the Deep South believed that television networks such as CBS and newspapers such as the *New York Times* unfairly covered civil rights activity and racial conflict. I argue that anti-Semitic beliefs also contributed to the idea that an East Coast–based news media was biased in favor of African Americans, civil rights, and all things liberal. Though many southern whites who resisted racial integration distanced themselves from anti-Semitism, some of the most vocal proponents of massive resistance maintained anti-Semitic views and accused the “Jewish news media” of favoring blacks over whites. Ideas about the Jewish news media and their bias against southern whites were not exclusive to the Deep South. Anti-Semitic “hate sheets” throughout the country argued that the civil rights movement and racial integration were communist plots, and blamed the “Jewish news media” for brainwashing Americans.<sup>4</sup>

I suggest that ideas about the “eastern establishment,” “East Coast liberals,” and “New York elites,” terms widely used by conservatives of the 1960s and 1970s, particularly when they criticized the allegedly liberal news media, were in part planted by anti-Semites for whom such terms meant one thing: powerful Jews, including the Jews who they believed controlled the broadcast and print news media. Such code words were used intentionally by anti-Semites and unintentionally by non-anti-Semites, who had absorbed ideas and rhetoric about East Coast liberals that originated from anti-Semitic beliefs but over time had lost explicit anti-Semitic connotations.

In their 1967 book *The Radical Right: Report on the John Birch Society and Its Allies*, Benjamin R. Epstein and Arnold Forster used the term “hazy borderlines” to describe the gray areas where the explicit anti-Semitic Right and the supposedly non-anti-Semitic anticommunist Right intersected. I employ the term “hazy borderlines” to describe conservative columnists, publications, and organizations that rarely used explicit anti-Semitic language, but instead used coded rhetoric such as “international cabals,” “New York bankers,” and “East Coast elites” to associate Jews with communism, finance, and the news media. Anti-Semitic hate sheets and the writers, publications, and organizations that straddled the hazy borderlines also employed the kind of “color-blind” language increasingly used by racial conservatives in the late 1960s and 1970s. Proponents of racial segregation largely abandoned explicit racist rhetoric in the 1970s because it was no longer politically advantageous. Similarly, I suggest that anti-Semitic publications of the 1970s such as the *Councilor* and *National Spotlight* opted to downplay explicit anti-Semitic rhetoric because such rhetoric would not appeal to a wide conservative audience. In some right-wing publications, explicit anti-Semitism, anti-Semitic code words, and color-blind language emphasizing

constitutional rights and freedoms co-existed, and all three kinds of rhetoric were employed by the Far Right to criticize the news media.<sup>5</sup>

Beliefs about the “Jewish news media” existed outside of the Far Right. After Vice President Spiro Agnew made widely publicized critiques of the East Coast news media in 1969, he was accused by Jewish groups of making coded references to Jewish control of the news media. Indeed, the anti-Semitic Far Right interpreted Agnew’s remarks as validation of their long-held beliefs about Jewish control of the news media. Agnew and White House staffer Patrick J. Buchanan, who co-wrote Agnew’s November 1969 speech in Des Moines in which he attacked the news media (the other co-writer was William Safire, a Jewish man and a White House speechwriter), denied accusations of anti-Semitism. Yet historians of the Richard M. Nixon administration have shown that the president privately used anti-Semitic rhetoric and often complained bitterly about the powerful “Jewish” news media, which he considered an enemy of his administration. In 1976 Agnew again raised the specter of anti-Semitism when he alleged that Jews in the news media wielded the power to dictate U.S. policy on Israel.<sup>6</sup>

This dissertation demonstrates that criticism of the news media was prevalent throughout the wide spectrum of conservatism of the 1970s. The anti-Semitic Far Right represents yet another point on the conservatism spectrum of the 1970s that charged that the mainstream news media aired and printed distorted and biased news. Certainly, this chapter does not argue that a majority of conservatives who criticized the news media in the 1970s were anti-Semites who intentionally used coded anti-Semitic language about New York news media elites. However, I do believe that the deeply held conviction of a majority of conservatives about East Coast news media bias originated, in part, with anti-Semitic ideas about New York Jews and their alleged control of finance and the press.

### **“Absolute Masters of the Press”**

Anti-Semitism has a long and ugly history in the United States, and indeed, the world. Dating back to the eleventh century, Jews in Europe were “despised minorities” and “Christ killers” in the eyes of the Christian majority. Anti-Semitic ideas migrated to America along with European immigrants. By the nineteenth century, beliefs about “parasitic Jewish bankers” that preyed on Christians became increasingly common in the United States. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Jews were often linked with communism, radicalism, anarchism, and labor upheaval. Anti-Semitism in the United States has waxed and waned over time, but it has never gone away.<sup>7</sup>

While anti-Semites most often associated Jews with banking and radicalism, they also associated Jews with the press. According to Stephen J. Whitfield, a scholar of anti-Semitism, the idea of a Jewish news media “has long been an obsession of their enemies, and the vastly disproportionate power that Jews are alleged to wield through the media has been a staple of the anti-Semitic imagination.” Whitfield suggests that the Jewish news media conspiracy concept originated with *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a widely disseminated document (since proven to be a forgery) that anti-Semites claimed was proof of a secret Jewish conspiracy for ruling the world. The *Protocols* included a section in which a rabbi instructs his fellow Jews to be “absolute masters of the press,” and thus become “the arbiters of public opinion [to] enable us to dominate the masses.”<sup>8</sup>

In the late nineteenth century ideas about Jewish control of the press in New York City became increasingly common, especially after Joseph Pulitzer purchased the *New York World* in 1883 and his brother Albert founded the *New York Morning Journal* in 1882. In an 1889 article the *Los Angeles Times* described New York City as a “new Jerusalem” where “the Semitic race has a powerful control in everything, especially in finance and journalism.” The



article suggested that Jews also controlled finance and the press in cities such as London, Paris, Vienna, and Berlin. In the 1890s rival newspaper editors attacked Joseph Pulitzer with anti-Semitic nicknames such as “Jewseph” and “Judas” Pulitzer.<sup>9</sup>

In the years following the First World War, some Americans argued that British propagandists had conspired with Jews in the news media to push the United States into war. In the 1920s the Ku Klux Klan and other anti-Semitic organizations portrayed Jews as a disease that endangered the moral, social, and racial order of Anglo-Saxon, Christian America. The Klan reached the pinnacle of its twentieth-century popularity in the early 1920s, with as many as four million members. Klan newspapers accused both Catholics and Jews of controlling and manipulating the news to encourage further immigration of Catholics and Jews. One such newspaper, the *Searchlight*, wrote in 1921 that the William Hearst-owned *New York World* was “Jew-owned, as is every newspaper in New York City except the Tribune,” while in the same year Klan leader William Joseph Simmons testified before the House of Representatives that New York-based, Jewish-owned newspapers unfairly attacked the Klan. Klan newspapers of the 1920s also complained about immoral films being produced by the “Jew-controlled” Hollywood film industry, foreshadowing 1970s criticism of Hollywood “smut” allegedly produced by Jewish filmmakers.<sup>10</sup>

Other publishers of anti-Semitic propaganda disseminated the idea that Jews owned, controlled, and manipulated the news media during the 1920s. The *Dearborn Independent*, a newspaper owned by automobile magnate Henry Ford, began publishing a series of anti-Semitic articles titled “The International Jew” in 1920 that argued that Jews were engaged in a secret conspiracy to rule the world. The *Independent* characterized itself as an Anglo-Saxon newspaper ever vigilant against the Jewish disease, as opposed to Jewish publications, which it said dominated and controlled the flow of the world’s news. The *Independent* excerpted *The*

*Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and in 1922 Ford's Dearborn Publishing Company published the *Protocols* as a four-volume set sold in the United States and abroad. Like the Klan, the *Independent* complained of "Jewish supremacy" in the motion picture industry, which was under control of "the Jewish manipulators of the public mind."<sup>11</sup>

In the 1930s fundamentalist Christian leaders were "quick to blame Jews for the depression," according to the historian Matthew Avery Sutton. As the decade progressed, American admirers of fascist rulers in Europe absorbed anti-Semitic ideas about Jewish bankers and the Jewish news media. In Adolf Hitler's memoir *Mein Kampf*, he wrote that his book was intended "to destroy the foul legends about my person dished up in the Jewish press." Fascists in Great Britain of the 1930s also blamed "Jewish Money Power" and Jewish news media power for defaming fascist leaders. Father Charles Coughlin, the anticommunist Catholic "radio priest" who reached as many as thirty million people with his Sunday afternoon radio broadcasts, accused Jews in the news media of exaggerating news about Nazi suppression of and violence against German Jews. Other anti-Semitic demagogues of the 1930s included the German American Bund, the Defenders of the Christian Faith, the Christian Front, and the Silver Legion. Such fascists and anticommunists opposed U.S. entry into World War II and often referred to the "New Deal" as the "Jew Deal." Another prominent anti-Semite of the interwar period was the celebrated aviator Charles Lindbergh, who insisted that Great Britain, President Roosevelt, and Jews were pushing the United States toward war. In a 1939 radio speech, Lindbergh said that Jews' "greatest danger to this country lies in their large ownership and influence in our motion pictures, our press, our radio and our government."<sup>12</sup>

### Anti-Semitic Hate Sheets and the “Jewish News Media”

The explosive growth of Christian anticommunism during the Cold War period transformed postwar conservatism in the United States. While Christian anticommunists believed that communists sought to rule the world by destroying capitalism, the United States, and Christianity, anti-Semites argued that it was Jews who secretly directed the international communist conspiracy. Anti-Semites and many non-anti-Semitic Christian conservatives also believed that communist subversion was behind Americans' apparent acceptance of liberalism and the civil rights movement. For anti-Semites, liberalism and civil rights of the Cold War era were signs that the Jewish communist conspiracy threatened the very existence of the Christian United States and the Anglo-Saxon race. Prominent anti-Semitic Christian anticommunists of the Cold War years included Carl McIntire, Bob Wells, and the Church of the Open Door of Los Angeles. Anti-Semitism also existed in more subtle ways in the anticommunist political and cultural landscape. During the peak years of McCarthyism in the 1950s, Jews were often associated with Godless communism by anticommunists.<sup>13</sup>

The publications produced by Cold War anti-Semites were called “hate sheets” by their critics. Anti-Semitic hate sheets of the 1960s and 1970s included *National Christian News*; the *Cross and the Flag*; *S.O.S., U.S.A.*, *Ship of State*; *Common Sense*; *Thunderbolt*; the *Defender*; *Liberty Bell*; *White Life*; *Point-Blank*; and the *Klansman*. Hate sheets agreed that liberalism and civil rights were masterminded by communist Jews and that the “Jewish news media” distorted and manipulated the news. The most influential hate sheet of the Cold War period was the *Cross and the Flag*, published by Gerald L. K. Smith of the Christian Nationalist Crusade. The *Cross and the Flag* insisted that “Communism is Jewish,” and believed that

liberalism was the byproduct of a Jewish conspiracy. Smith coined the term “treason machine” to describe “the Jew-controlled” electronic and print news media.<sup>14</sup>

Other anti-Semites grounded in Christian anticommunism included the rabidly anti-Semitic Catholic newspaper *S.O.S., U.S.A., Ship of State*, published by Josef Mlot-Mroz of the Confederation of Polish Freedom Fighters in the U.S.A, who referred to television as the “Electric Jew”; and *National Christian News*, which published “The Controllers” in 1977. *National Christian News* insisted that *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* was authentic, denied that six million Jews died in the Holocaust, and charged that President Franklin D. Roosevelt had sent American boys to fight in World War II for the “greedy Jew,” while Americans “swallowed lies on radio and in the daily news” about the war.<sup>15</sup>

One of the most virulent and prominent hate sheets of the Cold War period was Conde J. McGinley’s *Common Sense*, published in Union City, New Jersey, from the late 1940s until 1972. In its January 1, 1971, issue, *Common Sense* declared that it was a racist paper committed to defending the white race. “The Negro is only a minor enemy, and sometimes not even an enemy at all,” it said. “THE REAL ENEMY OF THE WHITE RACE IS THE JEW, who is the enemy of every race except his own.” *Common Sense* blamed the “Zionist-controlled media” for promoting racial mongrelization and the “big lie” that six million Jews died in the Holocaust. *Common Sense* targeted news media outlets large and small; in 1971 it explained that WDSU-TV in New Orleans promoted “interracial harmony” because a Jewish man owned the station. Like non-anti-Semitic conservatives, *Common Sense* accused the news media of promoting civil rights and blowing the massacre of Vietnamese civilians by U.S. troops at My Lai out of perspective, but made it clear that the alleged distortions were masterminded by Jews in the news media. Indeed, anti-Semitic and non-anti-Semitic critics

of the news media often identified the same news media organizations and the same kinds of “distorted news” when they criticized the news media.<sup>16</sup>

*Common Sense* and other anti-Semitic newspapers of the 1960s and 1970s often claimed that they were truth-tellers that printed the facts that the Jewish news media refused to print and broadcast. Although hate sheets often painted themselves as paragons of journalistic integrity, their tactics included “fabrications, distortions of truth, and out-of-context quotations,” according to Morris Kominsky, author of the 1970 book *The Hoaxers: Plain Liars, Fancy Liars, and Damned Liars*. Far-right newspapers often changed the order of paragraphs in articles reprinted from other publications, omitted sentences, mismatched headlines, and doctored photographs. Those kinds of techniques, ironically enough, provided them ammunition with which to claim that readers would not be able to find such “truths” in mainstream daily newspapers, magazines, and on television. Anti-Semitic publishers also printed identical material such as maps, cartoons, and articles, suggesting that a right-wing, anti-Semitic print network existed during the Cold War years.<sup>17</sup>

### **“Jews and Negroes Are Tops”**

Most anti-Semitic anticommunists of the Cold War period believed that African Americans were members of an inferior race. Anti-Semitic hate sheets usually agreed with proponents of white supremacy in the Deep South who resisted racial integration. During the civil rights era some segregationists, including some Citizens’ Council chapters and members, distanced themselves from anti-Semitic persons and views. Yet some proponents of massive resistance to integration believed that a cabal of communist Jews pulled the strings of the civil rights movement and civil rights organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.<sup>18</sup>

The historian Clive Webb has demonstrated that some of the most extreme and violent proponents of massive resistance held anti-Semitic beliefs and had ties with anti-Semitic anticommunist organizations and figures. Avid segregationists whose worldview was rooted in anti-Semitism included J. B. Stoner, head of the National States' Rights Party (Stoner was succeeded by Oren Potito, who went on to publish *National Christian News* in the 1970s), and Bryant Bowles of the National Association for the Advancement of White People, who maintained close ties with Conde J. McGinley, publisher of *Common Sense*. Another *Common Sense* reader was the segregationist Edwin A. Walker, a retired U.S. Army general who maintained ties with the anti-Semitic anticommunist organization Liberty Lobby; Ned Touchstone, the publisher of the Citizens' Council newspaper the *Councilor*; and the Christian anticommunist Billy James Hargis.<sup>19</sup>

The links between massive resistance to racial integration and anti-Semitism help explain why the idea of a liberal news media was embraced by white conservatives of the 1960s and 1970s. The historian and media scholar David Greenberg has argued that the idea of the liberal news media was rooted in southern reaction to news media coverage of racial integration and conflict in the South during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Greenberg and other scholars have shown how reporters, photographers, and camera operators representing northeastern newspapers and television networks were resented by southern whites, who believed that such news media outlets did not report on racial issues in the South fairly or objectively. Segregationists in the South complained that the East Coast press portrayed them as ignorant racists, when they in fact had legitimate grievances about the alleged usurpation of states' rights by the federal government. Derisive nicknames such as the "Nigger Broadcasting Company" and the "Communist Broadcasting Company" were used by white southerners who resented the New York-based networks, and on occasion

violence was directed at newspaper and television reporters in the Deep South. While I agree with Greenberg's argument that the early civil rights era was an important moment in the diffusion of the liberal media bias idea, I argue that deeply rooted anti-Semitic ideas held by whites inside and outside of the Deep South also helped to solidify the idea of a northeastern, urban, and liberal news media.<sup>20</sup>

Though few Jews called the Deep South home before and during the Cold War era, anti-Semitism was a strain in the fundamentalist Protestantism that dominated the post-Civil War South. During the Populist era of the 1880s and 1890s, when the South was in the midst of an agricultural depression, some farmers believed that a Jewish financial conspiracy based in New York was to blame; in the 1930s, during another era of economic woe, Jews were accused of communist "agitation." The Klan's anti-Semitic worldview also played a role in seeding ideas among southern whites about Jews and communism. During the civil rights era, Jews were increasingly associated with communism, liberalism, and civil rights. In Philadelphia, Mississippi, in 1964, local whites murdered three civil rights workers, including two young Jewish men from New York City, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner. Before the murders, a white mob burned down a black church in Meridian, Mississippi, where Schwerner had spoken, and someone in the mob shouted, "Keep that Red Jew nigger-lover out of here."<sup>21</sup>

Jews were seen by integration opponents as liberal/radical outside agitators because they played direct, active roles in civil rights activism and also because some Jews owned, edited, or worked for the news media outlets that many southerners blamed for portraying their region negatively. The belief that Jews in television and the print media were responsible for distortions and bias on racial issues was one held by whites on the far right in the Deep South and outside of it. For example, in 1971 *Common Sense* printed a front-page

cartoon that depicted a television news camera labeled “Propaganda,” while a man behind the camera with the Star of David emblazoned on his shirt held up a cue card that read “Jews and Negroes are Tops”; the “Stupid Goyim” being interviewed dutifully repeats the phrase verbatim.<sup>22</sup>

The fact that the nation’s largest and most powerful news media were based in New York was a major reason that Jews were associated with print and electronic journalism. In the 1970s New York City was seen by many on the Right as the headquarters of liberalism. New York City was home to the nation’s and world’s major financial institutions; the United Nations (UN), regarded by many anticommunists as a communist-driven world government conspiracy and by anti-Semites as an insidious institution committed to Jewish/Communist world government; the nation’s most powerful newspaper, the *New York Times*; the three television networks; major magazines; and book publishers. For anti-Semites, then, New York was the headquarters for the Jewish banking, world government, and news and entertainment media conspiracy. New York’s reputation as a city of sin, vice, and perversion also did little to endear it to conservatives, anti-Semitic and non-anti-Semitic alike, who thought of New York as “Sodom on the Hudson.” For example, the California anticommunist preacher J. Vernon McGee found it appropriate that the despised UN was located in such a “sordid” and sinful city. In addition, many anti-Semites believed that Jews were “smut peddlers” who controlled the pornography business from New York.<sup>23</sup>

The *New York Times* was seen by anti-Semites as the epitome of Jewish news media power. It was owned by a Jewish family and employed many Jewish editors and reporters on its staff (though some editors and writers downplayed their Jewishness by changing the spellings of their last names or using initials instead of first names). The apparent eagerness of the *Times* to send reporters south to cover civil rights protests and acts of white-on-black



violence was criticized by most southern proponents of segregation, but for those who held anti-Semitic views, the attention the *Times* paid the civil rights movement was proof that the Jewish news media were active conspirators in a communist conspiracy. When *Times* education reporter Benjamin Fine covered the integration of Little Rock Central High School in 1957, he comforted a frightened female African American student. A Little Rock news editor said later that Fine had, in the eyes of segregationists, proven that New York Jewish reporters were conspiring to destroy the South's racial order. Other East Coast-based news media outlets, including the major television networks, the *Washington Post*, and the national magazines *Time* and *Newsweek*, were also identified by anti-Semites as Jewish owned and controlled.<sup>24</sup>

By the 1960s the Ku Klux Klan had split into a number of independent organizations. One such organization, the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, published the monthly newspaper the *Klansman*, which it claimed was the world's most widely read "White oriented newspaper." As befitting a Klan newspaper, the *Klansman* of the 1970s was outspokenly anticommunist, antiliberal, anti-Semitic, and racist. It blamed the "powerful, Jew-controlled, media of television," which included New York-based news networks as well as TV stations owned by Jews, for news and entertainment programming that it claimed defamed the white race. The *Klansman* found it appropriate that the so-called Jewish news media was headquartered in a city of sin and perversion. In 1979 it noted that Klan Imperial Wizard Bill Wilkinson had appeared on a New York City television program, which the *Klansman* said was hosted by "a particularly vicious New York Jew." The *Klansman* declared victory. "We showed the Communists, Jews and other perverts of New York City that the Ku Klux Klan is not afraid to take them on in their most formidable capital."<sup>25</sup>

Like so many conservative newspapers that criticized the news media, the *Klansman* supported busing opponents in locations such as Boston, San Francisco, and Jefferson County, Kentucky. And like explicitly racist newspapers such as *Citizens Informer*, it argued that antibusers were fighting for the rights of whites. In May 1978 the *Klansman* ran a reprint of an article declaring opposition to affirmative action that originally appeared in *Pax Centurion*, the official newspaper of the Boston Police Patrolman's Association and a strident opponent of busing. The *Klansman* called *Pax Centurion* "a newspaper with guts!" *Citizens Informer* also reprinted articles originally published in *Pax Centurion* in the late 1970s, which raises questions about links between Boston's antibusing movement and white-supremacist newspapers such as *Citizens Informer* and the *Klansman*. It should be noted, however, that anti-Semitic rhetoric was mostly absent in *Citizens Informer* (the newspaper did publish an article titled "The Bilderbergers" in February 1976, but it avoided explicit anti-Semitic language). Unlike the *Citizens Informer*, the *Klansman* made explicit anti-Semitic charges by blaming the "Jewish news media" for favoring blacks over whites in their coverage of busing.<sup>26</sup>

Another anti-Semitic hate sheet of the 1970s that supported busing opponents in explicitly racist terms and targeted the "Jewish news media" was *Liberty Bell*, a monthly founded in the early 1970s by George P. Deitz of Reedy, West Virginia. *Liberty Bell* was originally affiliated with the John Birch Society (JBS), but Deitz split from the JBS in the mid-1970s because it refused to embrace an anti-Semitic worldview. *Liberty Bell* criticized the news media before and after the JBS split, but following the break it used explicit anti-Semitic language to do so. The front cover of the June 1979 issue depicted the skeleton of Uncle Sam sitting in front of a television set with the Star of David on its side—Uncle Sam, the cartoon indicated, had been killed by Jewish TV propaganda. (The same cartoon was also used by the anti-Semitic Polish Freedom Fighters of the U.S.A., publishers of *S.O.S., U.S.A.*,

*Ship of State*.) *Liberty Bell* advertised stickers sold by Deitz such as “Jews Control the Media,” “6 Million Dead Jews? Find Them in New York,” “The Jews Created Communism,” “Buy Christian,” and “Hitler Was Right.” It also used explicitly racist and anti-Semitic language when it backed antibusers in Boston and Jefferson County and criticized the news media’s coverage of busing. In 1976 *Liberty Bell* printed a photograph of a teenaged Jefferson County antibusing protestor holding a sign that read, “You ain’t bad, You ain’t cool, Get the niggers, Out of our school.” The caption accompanying the photograph declared, “THESE ARE OUR WHITE PEOPLE. All they need is WHITE POWER LEADERSHIP!” In another caption accompanying a photograph of busing protestors scuffling with Louisville police, *Liberty Bell* blamed Jews for “pitting White man against White Man!”<sup>27</sup>

### **The Hazy Borderlines**

In 1967 Benjamin R. Epstein and Arnold Forster of the Anti-defamation League published the book *The Radical Right: Report on the John Birch Society and Its Allies*. Epstein and Forster used the term “hazy borderlines” to describe the gray areas that existed between right-wing organizations such as the JBS, which tried to distance itself from anti-Semitism but sometimes tolerated it, and “the peddlers of overt or disguised anti-Semitism.” I use the term hazy borderlines to describe publications and columnists of the Far Right that avoided, for the most part, explicit anti-Semitic rhetoric but alluded to Jewish banking and news media power through the use of coded language.<sup>28</sup>

During the late 1960s and 1970s white conservatives increasingly used “color-blind” rhetoric rather than explicit rhetoric about racial differences and white supremacy. Color-blind rhetoric included language emphasizing constitutional rights and allusions to the American Revolution, as well as coded racial signifiers such as urban “blight,” “crime,”

“welfare,” and “law and order.” In much the same way, some anti-Semites on the far right employed the same kind of color-blind rhetoric used by many busing opponents of the 1970s. Newspapers and writers who navigated the anti-Semitic hazy borderlines in the 1970s employed code words such as “invisible government,” “international finance,” and “international cabal” to allude to a communist world conspiracy, but usually avoided making explicit references to Jews. (Even explicit anti-Semitic hate sheets such as *Common Sense* used color-blind language about rights and freedoms that co-existed with anti-Semitic coded language and explicit anti-Semitism. As the historian Clive Webb suggests, the name *Common Sense* was indicative of how the anti-Semitic and racist Far Right could take the moral high ground “by maintaining that they were acting in the interest of protecting individual liberty against a despotic government.”) Publications and columnists that straddled the hazy borderlines also wrote about topics that reflected their beliefs about secret and nefarious international conspirators: the Council for Foreign Relations (CFR), the Federal Reserve, the Bilderbergs (or Bilderbergers), the Rothschilds, and the Zionist lobby were topics given frequent coverage by explicit anti-Semites as well as publications and syndicated columnists that employed color-blind language and anti-Semitic code words when they criticized the news media. Terms such as the “eastern establishment,” “New York elites,” and “East Coast liberals” were used to describe the allegedly biased news media by both explicit anti-Semites and publications and columnists that straddled the hazy borderlines.<sup>29</sup>

The hazy borderlines of color-blind rhetoric and anti-Semitic code words were best exemplified by two Far Right newspapers of the 1970s. The first, the *Councilor*, was a fortnightly tabloid founded in 1962 that was published and edited by Ned Touchstone of the Citizens’ Council of Louisiana, an organization rooted in white supremacy and opposition to racial integration. Unlike other Citizens’ Council leaders who distanced themselves from

anti-Semites and even cast them from the Council's ranks, Touchstone never abandoned his anti-Semitic worldview. The second newspaper, *National Spotlight*, was a twice-weekly tabloid founded in 1975 by Liberty Lobby, an anticommunist organization with a long tradition of anti-Semitism (*National Spotlight* soon changed its name to *Spotlight*). Both the *Councilor* and *National Spotlight* were widely read by conservatives in the 1970s; the newspapers both reported a circulation of about 250,000.<sup>30</sup>

Criticism of the news media was a major theme in both the *Councilor* and *National Spotlight*. The debut issue of *National Spotlight* included a front-page editorial that argued that the mainstream news media were hopelessly biased. With few exceptions, *National Spotlight* argued, "American newspapers, radio and TV news reporting is not merely inaccurate, it is often deliberately distorted and selective." The *Councilor* regularly argued that the television networks and daily newspapers brainwashed Americans with lies about the Vietnam War, international communism, the UN, and the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Both newspapers relied on coded language to suggest, rather than explicitly state, that Jewish control of the news media was the reason why the news was distorted. For example, *National Spotlight* declared in its debut issue that the liberal media, including newspapers, radio and TV networks, and wire services, were unable to provide the truth because they were "controlled by big multinational business organizations and certain 'minority' pressure groups which censor your news just as effectively as any governmental censorship body that ever existed in Nazi Germany or Soviet Russia." In 1973, the *Councilor* examined why the truth was kept out of newspapers, and concluded that New York was the tail that wagged the American dog, and "a very small group of men in New York control the wagging."<sup>31</sup>

*National Spotlight* also used other methods besides coded language to navigate the hazy borderlines and allude to alleged Jewish control of the news media. A 1975 cartoon

depicted a newspaper managing editor, drawn in a Jewish caricature, ordering a reporter to play down a story about an international disarmament conference. The *Councilor* and *National Spotlight* also focused on issues that implied a secret, “invisible government” controlled finance and diplomacy. Both newspapers ran article after article on “secret meetings” being held by international bankers, the CFR, the UN, the Rothschilds, and the Bilderbergs, as well as the machinations of secretary of state Henry Kissinger, a Jewish man. Secret meetings by secret groups of powerful men, readers were told, were determining the future of the free world. *National Spotlight* and the *Councilor* regularly warned against the influence and power of the “Zionist lobby,” but usually stopped short of explicitly arguing for the existence of a Jewish world conspiracy.<sup>32</sup>

The *Councilor* and *National Spotlight* stressed that they were truth-tellers offering the facts denied to Americans by the mainstream news media. The *Councilor*’s outspoken promotion of its journalistic courage and integrity was embodied in its slogan, “If You Read It in the Councilor, It Has to Be True.” A June 1971 cartoon in the *Councilor* depicted a news editor explaining to a reporter that he must “control” the news that appeared in newspapers and other publications. On the next panel, an angry man holding a copy of the *Councilor* declared, “I like to get my information straight—*without censorship!*” Like the *Councilor*, *National Spotlight* used a front-page slogan, “The Paper You Can Trust,” to position itself as an honest, responsible, and independent news source that provided the truth that the mainstream news media denied to their readers, listeners, and viewers. Both the *Councilor* and *National Spotlight* called attention to their independent research on issues allegedly ignored or distorted by the mainstream news media, such as Chappaquiddick (the 1969 incident in which Massachusetts senator Edward “Ted” Kennedy left the scene of a car accident in which a young woman was killed), marijuana use, Internal Revenue Service harassment,

secret U.S. deals with Israel, the crime epidemic, the Rothschilds, the Bilderbergs, and the CFR. Among the *National Spotlight* readers who believed the newspaper provided the truth was Ned Touchstone of the *Councilor*. In a January 1976 letter published in *National Spotlight*, Touchstone wrote that the newspaper had “taken the biggest step toward journalism truth taken by anybody in this world during the last 13 years.”<sup>33</sup>

By using code words such as “international cabal” rather than “international cabal of Jews,” and “Zionists” instead of “Jews,” *National Spotlight* and the *Councilor* sought to appeal to a broad consensus of anticommunist conservatives. Yet those who chose to read between the lines could detect the anti-Semitic beliefs that rooted the worldviews of *National Spotlight* and the *Councilor*. Both newspapers ran advertisements for anti-Semitic books available directly from the bookstores affiliated with the newspapers. The *Councilor* also pointed readers to explicitly anti-Semitic publications. In 1970 the *Councilor* printed a photograph of a street vendor offering copies of *Common Sense* for sale and praised the newspaper without mentioning its virulent anti-Semitism. Similarly, *National Spotlight* reported in October 1975 that the Ku Klux Klan was becoming increasingly “respectable” and noted Klan leader David Duke’s criticism of the news media, but did not mention that Duke’s newspaper, the *Crusader*, published explicitly anti-Semitic material. Liberty Lobby also chose other print venues, namely its publication *America First*, for more explicit anti-Semitism than was found in *National Spotlight*. An *America First* advertisement in *National Spotlight* declared that *America First* called attention to issues such as Zionist control of Congress and Zionist atrocities; the advertisement copy lamented “the sad truth . . . that because of a combination of ignorance and misinformation spread by the Zionist-controlled American press, too few Americans understand what Zionism is all about.”<sup>34</sup>

On occasion both the *Councilor* and the *National Spotlight* allowed the veils that covered their anti-Semitic beliefs fall. In a 1971 article that praised Charles Lindbergh, the *Councilor* accused the Anti-defamation League and “sinister non-Christian” international bankers of using newspapers such as the *New York Times* to smear Lindbergh. At the end of the article, the *Councilor* referred to the immense power wielded by the “jewelry business, the publishing industry, the budding radio networks and other profitable and influential segments of American commerce.” The article then concluded with the following: “Editor’s Note: And anybody who doesn’t know what that means is stupid.” Oddly enough, *National Spotlight*’s anti-Semitism was most explicit when it criticized the entertainment media, particularly Hollywood films. Anthony J. Hilder, the newspaper’s entertainment editor, usually employed coded language by blaming the “Bilderberger bank barons” for manipulating the masses with liberalism via movies and television. In a 1975 review of the “anti-Christ” films *Dog Day Afternoon* and *Day of the Locust*, however, Hilder blamed Jews’ control of Hollywood and the mass media for “anti-Christian and anti-American pictures” and levied a warning to Jews in Hollywood: “The Jews are a minority in America. Though they control the mass media, many positions in government, much money, and the motion picture industry . . . their position is still precarious. Anglo-American people can be angered by these continual attacks upon their culture and Christianity, and turn upon them as a whole with violence and vengeance.”<sup>35</sup>

*National Spotlight* regularly covered issues of civil rights such as busing using a mixture of “color-blind” rhetoric as well as periodic statements about the need for whites to protect their rights. As a Citizens’ Council publication, the *Councilor* was less reticent to state explicitly racist views. Both newspapers attacked the “deification” of the “troublemaker” Martin Luther King Jr. and blamed the liberal news media for anointing King with



sainthood. *National Spotlight* demonstrated its support of the antibusing movement in a 1975 issue that included a photograph of members of the Jefferson County antibusing group Union Labor against Busing (ULAB). The ULAB members posed for the camera at a Washington, D.C., antibusing rally, proudly holding copies of *National Spotlight*. The ULAB members surely would have appreciated *National Spotlight's* strident criticism of busing and the news media, but it is unknown if they were aware of the newspaper's anti-Semitic views. *National Spotlight* also backed Boston antibusers and criticized what it believed was biased reporting on busing and school violence by the *Boston Globe*. A 1975 article on busing in Boston quoted outspoken busing opponents and news media critics such as the Boston city councilor Dapper O'Neil and Chester Broderick, editor of the Boston Police Patrolman's Association newspaper *Pax Centurion* (Broderick's *Pax Centurion* articles also appeared in *Citizens Informer* and the *Klansman*).<sup>36</sup>

Several right-wing syndicated columnists of the 1960s and 1970s navigated the same careful paths taken by *National Spotlight* and the *Councilor* through the hazy borderlines between explicit anti-Semitism and color-blind conservatism. Many of the columnists who straddled the hazy borderlines criticized the news media for alleged liberal distortions. Hazy borderlines columnists included John R. Rarick, a U.S. Representative and member of the Louisiana Citizens' Council, who contributed to *National Spotlight* and the *Councilor* and argued the news media were controlled by the CFR; and Tom Anderson, who served on the Liberty Lobby board, wrote for the *Councilor*, and was the American Party vice presidential candidate in 1972. Other right-wing syndicated columnists who straddled the hazy borderlines included Dan Smoot, Daniel Lyons, Jeffrey St. John, and E. P. Thornton.<sup>37</sup>

It would be incorrect, however, to assume that all references by conservatives in the 1970s to an eastern establishment or even New York "cabals" were coded references to

Jews. In the 1975 book *Power Shift: The Rise of the Southern Rim and Its Challenge to the Eastern Establishment*, Kirkpatrick Sale characterized the East Coast elite establishment as “Yankees,” primarily a white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, and Ivy League—educated patrician elite. That elite was also not necessarily a liberal one: Barry Goldwater’s 1964 run for the presidency represented a challenge by a fledgling southwest Republican party power base of the traditional East Coast G.O.P. nexus. Even Jewish conservatives of the 1970s employed the kinds of language found in publications such as *National Spotlight*. In 1973 the conservative Jewish journal *Ideas* accused an “anti-Nixon cabal” of conspiring to destroy the president. A retired Massachusetts rabbi, Baruch Korff, founded the National Citizens’ Committee for Fairness to the Presidency and ran advertisements in newspapers including the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* that accused the news media of lies and treason.<sup>38</sup>

### **“Say It Again, Spiro”**

Controversial uses of anti-Semitic code words to criticize the news media also occurred in the political mainstream during the late 1960s and 1970s. Spiro Agnew’s criticisms of the news media in 1969 and again in 1976 sparked a debate about whether he had intentionally used coded rhetoric to suggest that Jews controlled the news media. To be sure, Agnew’s colorful, strident speeches that attacked the liberal news media as well as other liberal targets in 1969 transformed him into a hero whom conservatives believed spoke for the so-called silent majority; one conservative newspaper, the stridently anticommunist and frequent news media critic *Point-Blank*, printed an illustration of a button that declared “Say It Again, Spiro,” and deemed it a “tell-it-like-it-is” button. White House staffer Patrick J. Buchanan, who co-wrote (with William Safire) Agnew’s Des Moines speech, later reflected

that it was Agnew “who put the issue of supposed news-media liberalism and elitism on the national radar, where it stays to this day.”<sup>39</sup>

For many conservatives, Agnew’s criticisms of the news media validated what they had long believed about liberal bias. In fact, some conservatives on the right accused Agnew of being an opportunist who was late to the media-criticism game. But, overwhelmingly, the vice president’s criticisms were greeted with enthusiasm throughout the conservative publishing spectrum. Among the publications that praised Agnew’s press attacks were daily newspapers such as the *Peoria (Ill.) Journal-Star* and William Loeb’s *Manchester (N.H.) Union Leader*; the Raleigh, North Carolina, television station WRAL-TV, whose executive vice president Jesse Helms regularly criticized the news media in on-air editorials; right-wing periodicals including *Independent American*, *Free Enterprise*, and *Louisiana Freedom Review*; and Christian anticommunist newspapers such as *Christian Crusade Weekly*. Some newspapers ran the text of Agnew’s Des Moines speech in its entirety; the influential conservative weekly *Human Events* printed the transcript on its November 22, 1969, front page.<sup>40</sup>

Agnew’s news media criticism was also welcomed by publications of the racist and anti-Semitic Far Right. For example, Gerald L. K. Smith of the Christian Nationalist Crusade congratulated Agnew for pointing out the existence of a “mindwashing establishment operating tyrannically” in New York City. Agnew’s references to “a small band of network commentators,” a “little group of men,” and the “geographical and intellectual confines of Washington, D.C., or New York City,” were interpreted by explicit anti-Semites as well as “hazy borderlines” publications such as the *Councilor* as references to Jewish news media and financial power. *Thunderbolt*, the newspaper of the National States’ Rights Party, was among the anti-Semitic publications that saw in Agnew’s remarks “code words” for Jews in the news media. Daniel Lyons, a Catholic anticommunist syndicated columnist who allied

himself with Billy James Hargis and Christian Crusade in the mid-1970s, praised Agnew's criticisms of the news media and took the opportunity to complain about alleged overrepresentation of Jews at the three TV news networks while doing so. At a January 1970 speech in St. Louis co-sponsored by the Catholic anticommunist organization the Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation, Lyons said, "Not 5 per cent of the directors of the three networks are Catholic. Only 10 to 15 percent are Protestant. The rest have very Jewish names." Indeed, the American Jewish Committee said that anti-Semites used Agnew's comments "to justify their hate programs," and following Agnew's speeches, news media outlets and professionals across the country received anti-Semitic hate mail. Norman E. Isaacs of the *Louisville Courier-Journal* and *Louisville Times*, the president of the American Society of News Editors and the first Jew to serve in that position, rebutted Agnew's criticisms of the news media on national television; afterward, he received a flood of anti-Semitic hate mail. Television stations in Los Angeles reported that they received scores of calls complaining about "Jew-Commies on the air" in late 1969.<sup>41</sup>

Some observers accused Agnew of intentionally using anti-Semitic code words, while others, including the syndicated columnists Frank Mankiewicz and Tom Braden, said he had done so unintentionally. Stephen D. Isaacs wrote in the 1974 book *Jews and American Politics* that Agnew's references to the East Coast, big city, liberal news media "have long been code words to many Americans: each of them means Jew, or under Jewish influence." Agnew denied that he implied anything anti-Semitic in his speeches, directed his staff to answer any letters expressing anti-Semitic opinion by disclaiming anti-Semitic views, and met with New York media and business executives to declare that he did not mean anything anti-Semitic in his remarks (Isaacs wrote that Agnew's protestations "did not go over" with the news media representatives). Agnew's denials are complicated by the well-established existence of anti-

Semitism in the Richard M. Nixon administration. Nixon had long maintained resentments against “eastern establishment” elites that he felt never accepted him, and he used explicit anti-Semitic language and slurs to describe Jewish elites, including Jews in the news media. According to his secretary of state, Henry Kissinger, Nixon believed that Jews controlled the news media, in particular newspapers such as the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* and magazines such as *Newsweek*, and considered such publications powerful and dangerous enemies. Comments about Jewish media power were also made shortly after Nixon’s resignation by George S. Brown, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who said that Jews “own, you know, the banks in this country, the newspapers. Just look at where the Jewish money is.” Nixon’s deep resentment of the press and his administration’s active campaign to harass the news media has also been well established.<sup>42</sup>

Agnew resigned the vice presidency in 1973 after pleading no contest to charges of tax evasion. He re-emerged in 1976 to promote his novel *The Canfield Decision*. The novel’s main character and hero was a vice president who battled with the news media, including a powerful newspaper owned by Jews. Agnew soon attracted controversy for making explicit arguments about Jewish news media power in appearances on national television to promote his novel. In a May 11, 1976, appearance on NBC’s *Today Show*, Agnew told host Barbara Walters that Zionist influences in “the nationwide, impact media” helped to shape U.S. policy on Israel. Agnew’s comments came at a time when Zionism was being debated nationally and internationally. In November 1975, the UN General Assembly declared that Zionism was a “form of racism and racial discrimination,” which touched off a wave of criticism of the UN and support for Israel among Americans (ironically, anti-Semites believed the UN was a Jewish-Zionist conspiracy).<sup>43</sup>

Agnew's remarks were widely criticized, and he was denounced by the Anti-defamation League, the American Jewish Committee, and President Gerald Ford. Writing in the *New York Times*, former Agnew speechwriter William Safire, a Jewish man, suggested that the former vice president blamed Jews in the news media for forcing his resignation. Safire said that Agnew's "diatribes" against the press had brought him fame in 1969, and now he was pushing a new angle of news media criticism, a "crusade to persuade the American people that they are being manipulated by a cabal of Jews who sit astride most of the channels of communication, and thereby encouraging an irrational hatred of Jews." Safire insisted, however, that the Agnew of 1969 who criticized the news media was not an anti-Semite. Patrick J. Buchanan wrote in his syndicated column in July 1976 that Jews had "overreacted—badly" to Agnew's comments. Buchanan also denied anything anti-Semitic in Agnew's 1969 news media speeches, which he said "were delivered to rally national opinion, not against the ethnic background of those who own the networks, but against the anti-conservative bigotry and bias" of the networks.<sup>44</sup>

Agnew's remarks about Jews and the news media in 1976 "struck a particularly sensitive and painful nerve among Jews in the media," according to Stephen Birmingham, the author of the cover story "The Jews in Agnew's 'Cabal'" in the July–August 1976 issue of *More: The Media Magazine*. Birmingham concluded that though Jews in the news media dismissed Agnew's accusations "as absurd and unfounded, they are nonetheless sensitive—very sensitive—to them." Once again, the debate over the idea of a "Jewish news media" had moved outside the Far Right, anti-Semitic fringe and into the mainstream.<sup>45</sup>

## Conclusion

There is a central assumption behind the kinds of claims about Jewish influence in the news media, such as those made by Spiro Agnew in 1976: because large numbers of Jews own, manage, edit for, and report for news media organizations, then it follows that there must be some level of “Jewish influence” on news media reporting. There are two fallacies in that assumption. First, in the 1970s debates did not also rage about the numbers of Christians that owned or worked for news media organizations or if there was a pronounced Christian bias in news media reporting. Second, there was little truth to the idea that Jews dominated the press. As Stephen J. Whitfield wrote in *American Space, Jewish Time*, as of 1988 Jews owned less than 3 percent of the 1,700 daily papers in United States, a percentage that matched the proportion of American Jews to the total U.S. population. In the 1970s, of the eight hundred members of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, only twenty were Jewish. What was true, and what provided ammunition for those who argued that Jews wielded too much power in the news media, was that in cities such as Washington, D.C., and New York City—the cities identified by Agnew as the centers of the East Coast liberal media establishment in his November 1969 speeches—Jews were overrepresented in the print and broadcast journalism ranks. Jews were also “conspicuous at the top” in executive and editor roles at the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, and many magazines. Despite charges by Agnew and the explicitly anti-Semitic Far Right, the Jews who owned and managed powerful East Coast news media organizations usually “bent over backwards to try to keep their products from having a Jewish cast,” as Stephen Birmingham wrote in his 1976 article on the “Jewish news media” debate. Editors, columnists, and reporters in the news media industry also often downplayed their Jewishness; at the *New York Times*, for example, several Jewish staffers opted to use initials rather than their first names in article bylines.

Anti-Semites such as the publishers of *National Christian News*, however, would have interpreted such choices as deliberate attempts to conceal the fact that the *Times* was in fact a Jewish news media conspiracy.<sup>46</sup>

Ideas about Jewish news media control have not gone away, nor has “hazy borderline” rhetoric about East Coast news media elites that raises questions about the presence of coded anti-Semitism on the right. An anti-Semitic Far Right continues to argue that Jewish news media control is responsible for the hopeless liberal bias of the mainstream news media. In 1989, for example, a *Seattle Times* photographer was attacked at an Aryan Nations meeting after he was identified as a Jew. In 2010 a CNN anchor was fired for suggesting that Jews controlled the news media, and comments on Internet message boards indicate that conservatives on the right continue to hold beliefs about Jewish control of the news media, the entertainment media, and international finance. The popular conservative commentator and frequent news media critic Glenn Beck attacks the Federal Reserve and the CFR, and he cites anti-Semitic books about Jewish financial conspiracies without mentioning their anti-Semitic content. Today, the World Wide Web and social media networks such as Twitter offer anti-Semites a relatively anonymous vehicle for communicating anti-Semitic beliefs, including the idea that Jews control the news media and the entertainment industry.<sup>47</sup>



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<sup>1</sup> “What We Believe,” *National Christian News*, 8 (no. 9, 1969), 3; Ben Klassen and Austin Davis (revised by Oren Fenton Potito), “Fifty Phoney Arguments: Exposed,” *ibid.*, 10 (no. 1, 1971), 1; “The Controllers,” *ibid.*, 16 (no. 8, 1977), 1–4; “The Controllers: Part 2,” *ibid.*, 16 (no. 9, 1977), 1–4; “The Controllers: Part 3,” *ibid.*, 16 (no. 10, 1977), 1–4.

<sup>2</sup> Stephen J. Whitfield, *American Space, Jewish Time* (Hamden, 1988), 129–50.

<sup>3</sup> Clive Webb, *Rabble Rousers: The American Far Right in the Civil Rights Era* (Athens, Ga., 2010).

<sup>4</sup> David Greenberg, “The Idea of ‘the Liberal Media’ and Its Roots in the Civil Rights Movement,” *The Sixties: A Journal of History, Politics, and Culture*, 1 (Dec. 2008), 167–86.

<sup>5</sup> On hazy borderlines, see Benjamin R. Epstein and Arnold Forster, *The Radical Right: Report on the John Birch Society and Its Allies* (New York, 1967), 60, 64–66. On color-blind and racially coded language, see Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, “The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past,” *Journal of American History*, 91 (March 2005), 1233–63; and Darren Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt: Plain-Folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism* (New York, 2011), 274–75.

<sup>6</sup> Tim Kiska, “Nixon and the Media,” in *A Companion to Richard M. Nixon*, ed. Melvin Small (Malden, 2011), 292; “Agnew, on Zionists, His Novel,” *New York Times*, May 12, 1976, p. 39; Deirdre Carmody, “Zionism ‘in Media’ Decried by Agnew: On TV for First Time since Resignation, He Says U.S. Is Swayed on Mideast,” *ibid.*, May 12, 1976, p. 15.

<sup>7</sup> Frederic Cople Jaher, *A Scapegoat in the New Wilderness: The Origins and Rise of Anti-Semitism in America* (Cambridge, Mass., 1994), 1, 6; Leonard Dinnerstein, *Antisemitism in America* (New York, 1994), viii, x, xviii–xxviii.

<sup>8</sup> Stephen D. Isaacs, *Jews and American Politics* (Garden City, 1974), 49; Whitfield, *American Space, Jewish Time*, 129, 130; Victoria Saker Woeste, “Insecure Equality: Louis Marshall, Henry Ford, and the Problem of Defamatory Antisemitism, 1920–1929,” *Journal of American History*, 91 (Dec. 2004), 882.

<sup>9</sup> On Joseph and Albert Pulitzer and anti-Semitism, see “Filthy Lucre: The Almighty Dollar’s ‘Florence’ in Gotham,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 28, 1889, p. 12; James McGrath Morris, *Pulitzer: A Life in Politics, Print, and Power* (New York, 2010), 260–63; David Nasaw, *The Chief: The Life of William Randolph Hearst* (Boston, 2000), 53, 96, 106; and Denis Brian, *Pulitzer: A Life* (New York, 2001), 129.

<sup>10</sup> On the belief that British propagandists and Jews in the news media pushed the United State into World War I, see Colin Holmes, *Anti-Semitism in British Society, 1876–1939* (New York, 1979), 174, 65, esp. 125; and Whitfield, *American Space, Jewish Time*, 131. On the Ku Klux Klan and anti-Semitism in the 1920s, see David M. Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism: The History of the Ku Klux Klan*, 3rd ed. (Durham, N.C., 1987), 110; Tom Rice, “Protecting Protestantism: The Ku Klux Klan vs. the Motion Picture Industry,” *Film History*, 20 (no. 3, 2008), 367; Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton, 2001), 272; “Solomon Was a Mere Piker in Wiseness,” *Fiery Cross*, July 13, 1928, p. 5; “New York Papers in Frenzy Print Many Ridiculous Stories,” *ibid.*, July 24, 1924, p. 6; “Newspapers Contradict Own Stories,” *ibid.*, Nov. 23, 1923, pp. 1, 8; “Catholicism and the Press,” *ibid.*, July 4, 1924, p. 8; and “Excessive Propaganda a Boomerang,” *ibid.*, March 29, 1924, pp. 1, 5. On the *Searchlight* and “Jew-owned” newspapers, see Ezra Asher Cook, *Ku Klux Klan Secrets Exposed: Attitude toward Jews, Catholics, Foreigners, and Masons: Fraudulent Methods Used, Atrocities Committed in Name of Order* (1922), n.p. Accessed at [http://books.google.com/books?id=eb\\_71\\_rTZ0AC](http://books.google.com/books?id=eb_71_rTZ0AC). On William Joseph Simmons and New York newspapers, see “Statement of Mr. William Joseph Simmons, of Atlanta, Ga.,” in *The Ku-Klux Klan: Hearings before the Committee on Rules, House of Representatives, Sixty-seventh Congress, First Session* (Washington, 1921), pp. 67–77, esp. 75. On anti-Semites and criticism of Hollywood, see Rice, “Protecting Protestantism,” 367–80; and “Films Reflect on All Jews,” *National Spotlight*, Dec. 1, 1975, p. 8.

<sup>11</sup> Neal Baldwin, *Henry Ford and the Jews: The Mass Production of Hate* (New York, 2001), 59, 119–20, 295; Woeste, “Insecure Equality,” 877, 882, 890; Rice, “Protecting Protestantism,” 372.

<sup>12</sup> Matthew Avery Sutton, “Was FDR the Antichrist? The Birth of Fundamentalist Antiliberalism in a Global Age,” *Journal of American History*, 98 (March 2012), 1052–74, esp. 1066; Whitfield, *American Space, Jewish Time*, 130; David Greenberg, *Nixon’s Shadow: The History of an Image* (New York, 2003), 48. The 1970s Far Right U.S. publication *Sons of Liberty* sold racist and anti-Semitic books including a volume titled *Jewish Press Control in England*, written by Arnold Leese. See “Books for Patriots 1974,” undated advertising insert, Sons of Liberty (Brisbane, Calif.), ephemeral materials, [1976–], RH WL Eph 2232, Wilcox Collection of Contemporary Political Movements (Kansas Collection, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas). England’s Imperial Fascist League produced a pamphlet in the late 1930s that argued “Jewish Money Power” controlled the news media. See *Jewish Press-Control: The London Newspapers* (London, 1939). On Father Charles Coughlin, see Ronald Modras, “Father Coughlin and Anti-Semitism: Fifty Years Later,” *Journal of Church and State*, 31 (no. 2, 1989), 231, 232, 234. On anti-Semites of the 1930s, see Webb, *Rabble Rousers*, 2; Greenberg, *Nixon’s Shadow*, 47–48; and Whitfield, *American Space, Jewish Time*, 131.

Charles Lindbergh was widely denounced after his Des Moines speech. See Dinnerstein, *Antisemitism in America* (New York, 1994), 130.

<sup>13</sup> On anti-Semites and opposition to liberalism and civil rights, see Frederic Cople Jaher, *A Scapegoat in the New Wilderness: The Origins and Rise of Anti-Semitism in America* (Cambridge, Mass., 1994), 2; “What We Believe,” 3; Klassen and Davis (revised by Potito), “Fifty Phoney Arguments: Exposed,” 3; “The E.R.A. Trap; Poisoned Bait,” *National Christian News*, 16 (no. 2, 1977), pp. 1, 3. On Carl McIntire, Bob Wells, and the Church of the Open Door, see Heather Hendershot, *What’s Fair on the Air? Cold War Right-Wing Broadcasting and the Public Interest* (Chicago, 2011), 102–5, 160; McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*, 104, 183; and Dinnerstein, *Antisemitism in America*, 163. On McCarthyism and anti-Semitism, see Greenberg, *Nixon’s Shadow*, 48.

<sup>14</sup> On hate sheets, see Dinnerstein, *Antisemitism in America*, 163; John George and Laird Wilcox, *American Extremists: Militias, Supremacists, Klansmen, Communists, and Others* (Amherst, 1996), 212–13; and Ronald Lora and William Henry Longton, eds., *The Conservative Press in Twentieth-Century America* (Westport, 1999), 381–90. On Gerald L. K. Smith and the *Cross and the Flag*, see Michael Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right: The Origins of the Christian Identity Movement* (Chapel Hill, revised edition, 1997), 55; Arnold Forster and Benjamin R. Epstein, *The New Anti-Semitism* (New York, 1974), 19–20; George and Wilcox, *American Extremists*, 278; and Glen Jeansonne, *Gerald L. K. Smith: Minister of Hate* (New Haven, 1988), 127–28.

<sup>15</sup> “The Bondage of the Free,” Dec. 1969 mailing, p. 2, Polish Freedom Fighters, ephemeral materials [Letters 1969–], RH WL Eph 616, Wilcox Collection; Klassen and Davis (revised by Potito), “Fifty Phoney Arguments: Exposed,” 1; “The Controllers,” 2.

<sup>16</sup> Webb, *Rabble Rousers*, 23; Morris Kominsky, *The Hoaxers: Plain Liars, Fancy Liars, and Damned Liars* (Boston, 1970), 121–26. For more on anti-Semitic distortions used by the racist Right, see *ibid.*, 117–223. On the *Protocols* hoax, see *ibid.*, 202–14. On *Common Sense*, see Fred Farrel, “For the Lack of Knowledge Our People Will Be Destroyed: Race Is the Important Thing,” *Common Sense*, Jan. 1, 1971, pp. 1–3, esp. 1; Fred Farrel, “White Majority Enslaved by the Racial Minority Racket: Racial Minority Dynamism Most Powerful Single Factor in American Political Life,” *ibid.*, May 1, 1971, p. 1; “Zionist ‘6,000,000’ Big-Lie Disproved: Zionist Plotting to Again Drag USA into World War,” *ibid.*, Oct. 1, 1966, pp. 1–2; Fred Farrel, “Calley Thrown to the Wolves; Shame on Alien-Controlled Defense Department!,” *ibid.*, April 15, 1971, pp. 1–2; and “Cover-up for Real Massacre,” *ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> On distortions by hate sheets, see Kominsky, *Hoaxers*, 7. For an example of identical material used in different anti-Semitic publications, see “The Octopus (with 1970 calendar),” [1969],

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Polish Freedom Fighters (Misc.), RH WL Eph 616, file 2, Wilcox Collection; and Oren Fenton Potito, "The Octopus," *National Christian News*, 8 (no. 9, 1969), 1.

<sup>18</sup> Webb, *Rabble Rousers*, 59.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 22–24, 29, 50–53, 59, 141–42, 159–63.

<sup>20</sup> Greenberg, "The Idea of 'the Liberal Media' and Its Roots in the Civil Rights Movement," 168–69, 176; Webb, *Rabble Rousers*, 36–37. On violence against reporters, see Joseph Crespino, *In Search of another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution* (Princeton, 2007), 138; John Nerone, *Violence against the Press: Policing the Public Sphere in U.S. History* (New York, 1994), 157–58; and Greenberg, "The Idea of 'the Liberal Media' and Its Roots in the Civil Rights Movement," 177.

<sup>21</sup> Dinnerstein, *Antisemitism in America*, xi, 178, 186, 192; Daniel K. Williams, *God's Own Party: The Making of the Christian Right* (New York, 2010), 219; Gil Troy, *Moynihan's Moment: America's Fight against Zionism as Racism* (New York, 2013), 177. In the early 1950s the *Richmond News Leader* warned the Anti-defamation League to not stir up trouble in the South. See Dinnerstein, *Antisemitism in America*, 190–93.

<sup>22</sup> "Modern 'Thinking'" (cartoon), *Common Sense*, May 1, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>23</sup> On New York and associations with liberalism and Jews, see Stephen D. Isaacs, *Jews and American Politics* (Garden City, 1974), 53–55, 58. New York was also seen as the locus of liberal Jewish political power. In the 1960s and 1970s New York's senior senator was Jacob K. Javits, a Jewish man, and in 1974, Arthur Beame became the first Jewish mayor of New York City. See *ibid.*, 19. On New York and associations with vice, perversion, and pornography, see Jenkin Lloyd Jones, "New York City: A Triumph of Liberalism," *Human Events*, Feb. 22, 1975, p. 9; Peter Shapiro, *Turn the Beat Around: The Secret History of Disco* (New York, 2005), 237; Jefferson Cowie, *Stayin' Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class* (New York, 2010), 323; Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sun Belt*, 161, 363; and "National Media Concentrating Attacks on Invisible Empire," *Klansman*, May 1979, p. 6.

<sup>24</sup> Dinnerstein, *Antisemitism in America*, 234; Stephen Birmingham, "Does a Zionist Conspiracy Control the Media? Agnew Envisions Jewish Media Barons Meeting to Plot Favorable Coverage of Israel; Does Paley Talk to Punch and Does Mrs. Graham Keep Kosher?," *More: The Media Magazine*, July–Aug. 1976, 15; Gene Roberts and Howard Klibanoff, *The Race Beat: The Press, the Civil Rights Struggle, and the Awakening of a Nation* (New York, 2006) 154, 161, esp. 162.

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<sup>25</sup> “Subscribe to the Klansman,” advertisement, *Klansman*, May 1978, p. 3; “Klan Rally Set for Tupelo, MS.,” *ibid.*, May 1978, pp. 1, 4; “National Media Concentrating Attacks on Invisible Empire.”

<sup>26</sup> On the *Klansman*, see “Busing Fails in San Francisco,” *ibid.*, April 1977, p. 1. “Affirmative Action’=Reverse Discrimination,” reprint of undated *Pax Centurion* article, *Klansman*, May 1978, pp. 2–3. On *Citizens Informer*, see “The Bilderbergers,” *Citizens Informer*, Feb. 1976, p. 8.

<sup>27</sup> “A New Face—A New Policy,” *Liberty Bell*, pp. 3–4, esp. 4. On the anti-Semitic front-cover cartoon, see front cover, *ibid.*, June 1979. On bumper stickers, see “Envelope and Bumper Stickers,” advertisement, *ibid.*, June 1976, p. 39. On Jefferson County, Kentucky, busing protestors, see photos and captions, *ibid.*, May 1976, pp. 23, 24.

<sup>28</sup> On the hazy borderlines, see Epstein and Forster, *Radical Right*, 64. While the John Birch Society (JBS) claimed it was not anti-Semitic, it maintained links with outspoken anti-Semites such as Eric Butler, whom the JBS published in its publication *American Opinion* in 1965. Butler, an Australian, wrote a book arguing that the *Protocols* were authentic, and often spoke of links between Jews and communism. Epstein and Forster argued in *The Radical Right* that the JBS tolerated anti-Semitism in its ranks and that the anti-Semitic views of Gerald L. K. Smith were popular among some Birchers. See *ibid.*, 128–37.

<sup>29</sup> On color-blind and coded racial language, see Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*, 274–75. On anti-Semites and efforts to take the moral high ground, see Webb, *Rabble Rousers*, 23. The 1971 Gary Allen book *None Dare Call It Conspiracy* also straddled the hazy borderlines. Like John Stormer’s 1964 book *None Dare Call It Treason*, Allen’s book sold millions of copies and was widely circulated on the Right. It argued that a secret group of insiders that included the Council on Foreign Relations, the Federal Reserve, the Bilderbergs, and the Rothschilds controlled the news media and manipulated U.S. government policy. It argued that NBC, CBS, *Time*, *Life*, *Newsweek*, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, *New York Post*, *Denver Post*, *Minneapolis Tribune*, and *Louisville Courier-Journal* were under CFR control. Allen claimed *None Dare Call It Conspiracy* was not anti-Semitic, but it was repudiated by conservatives such as William Loeb of the *Manchester Union Leader* and the conservative weekly *Human Events*. *None Dare Call It Conspiracy* was heavily publicized by the John Birch Society (Allen was a contributor to the John Birch Society publication *American Opinion*). See Gary Allen, *None Dare Call It Conspiracy* (Rossmoor, 1971); John Stormer, *None Dare Call It Treason* (Florissant, 1964); McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*, 157; Lora and Longton, eds., *Conservative Press in Twentieth-Century America*, 507; and Forster and Epstein, *New Anti-Semitism*, 287–90.

<sup>30</sup> Touchstone served on the Liberty Lobby board and contributed to Liberty Lobby publications. See George and Wilcox, *American Extremists*, 213; and George Michael, *Willis Carto and the American Far Right* (Gainesville, 2008), 102. As of 1973 the *Councilor* boasted a circulation of 264,000, while in 1979 Liberty Lobby claimed that it printed 250,000 copies of every issue of *Spotlight* (which had since changed its name from *National Spotlight*). See *Councilor*, May 3, 1973, p. 1; and “Dear Friend” Liberty Lobby/*Spotlight* mailing, Sept. 28, 1979, Liberty Lobby, ephemeral materials, 1957–, RH WL Eph 2212, Wilcox Collection.

<sup>31</sup> “Editorial,” *National Spotlight*, Sept. 17, 1975, pp. 1, 9, 11, esp. 1; “NBC and Red China Offer Brainwash Film,” *Councilor*, Jan. 12, 1973, p. 25; “TV Viewer Writes Angry Letter to Harry Reasoner,” *ibid.*, Dec. 1–22, 1970, p. 45; “Crime Facts That You Don’t Hear on NBC, CBS, or ABC,” *ibid.*, March 16, 1971, p. 97; “TV Brainwash Policies Seem to Be Working,” *ibid.*, Dec. 21, 1972, p. 1, 3; “How Are Some Truthful News Stories Kept Out of the Daily Newspapers?” *ibid.*, Feb. 4, 1973, p. 31; “Hushed-up Speech Is Now Available to Public,” *ibid.*, Oct. 26, 1970, pp. 1–2; “The Untold Story of the Calley Case,” *ibid.*, May 1, 1971, p. 111; “‘Biggest News Story’ Goes Unnoticed by Press: Congress Votes to Award Wealth of 70% of Earth to UN Plotters,” *ibid.*, May 3, 1973, p. 1–2; “The Secret of Who Ordered Kennedy’s Death,” advertisement, *ibid.*, Sept. 4, 1972, p. 145; “Editorial,” *National Spotlight*, Sept. 17, 1975, pp. 1, 9, 11, esp. 9; “How Are Some Truthful News Stories Kept Out of the Daily Newspapers?” *Councilor*, Feb. 4, 1973, p. 31.

<sup>32</sup> “Press Covers Up Sellout . . . to Reds at Helsinki,” *National Spotlight*, Sept. 17, 1975, pp. 4–5; cartoon, *ibid.*, Sept. 17, 1975, p. 4. “Dan Smoot Warned Americans about Bilderbergers in 1962,” *Councilor*, July 3–24, 1971, p. 147; “Councilor Has Proof That False Churchman Is Rothschild Kin,” *ibid.*, Jan. 12, 1971, pp. 1–2; “Look Who Writes the News,” *ibid.*, April 5, 1972, p. 73; “Reported Truth about New York Papers Way Back in 1914,” *ibid.*, Dec. 21, 1972, p. 3. On Kissinger, see “A Special Supplement to the National Spotlight,” *National Spotlight*, Nov. 14, 1975, unnumbered pages. On explicit anti-Semitic criticism of Kissinger, see “The Brothers Nixinger,” photo and caption, *Common Sense*, April 1, 1972, p. 1. On “Zionist lobby,” see cartoon, *National Spotlight*, Oct. 31, 1975, p. 4; and George DeRosa, “Zionist Lobby Assures Sinai OK,” *ibid.*, Oct. 17, 1975, p. 7.

<sup>33</sup> On the *Councilor* and truth-telling claims, see *Councilor* [unknown date; vol. 10, n. 12], 1973, p. 158; “Socialist Plan for Conquest” (cartoon), *ibid.*, June 12, 1971, p. 126; “A Paper Can Report without Fear UNLESS It Is the First to Report,” *ibid.*, Dec. 1–22, 1970, p. 68; and Ned Touchstone, “What the Councilor Is Trying to Do,” *ibid.*, Feb. 22, 1972, p. 56. On “The Paper You Can Trust,” see front page, *National Spotlight*, Sept. 17, 1975. On the *Councilor* and *National Spotlight* and stories

allegedly covered up by the mainstream news media, see “Kopechne Death, Busing May Prod Kennedy to Run,” *ibid.*, Dec. 8, 1975, n.p.; “Untold Truths about Effects of Marijuana,” *ibid.*, Nov. 24, 1975, p. 1; “Crime Facts That You Don’t Hear on NBC, CBS or ABC”; John R. Rarick, “CBS, CFR, and the People’s Right to Know,” *ibid.*, Aug. 14, 1971, p. 160; “Councilor Has Proof That False Churchman Is Rothschild Kin,” *ibid.*, Jan. 12, 1971, front page; and “Ford’s Secret Agreement with Israel,” *National Spotlight*, Oct. 8, 1975, p. 11. On Ned Touchstone and praise of *National Spotlight*, see “Letters: Ardent Admirer,” *National Spotlight*, Jan. 12, 1976, p. 8. In the early 1970s Touchstone served as a witness on behalf of Gen. Edwin Walker, the Far Right opponent of integration who had ties with Billy James Hargis in the 1960s, in a \$3 million libel suit against the Associated Press and *New Orleans Times Picayune*. Touchstone commented that the news media coverage of Walker’s trial was inaccurate. See “News Reporters Helped Prove a Point: Trial Testimony Helped Prove a Point,” *Councilor*, Sept. 4, 1971, p. 171.

<sup>34</sup> On advertisements for anti-Semitic books, see “Books Presently in Stock and Available to Councilor Readers,” *Councilor*, May 1, 1971, p. 111; “Liberty Library” (advertisement), *National Spotlight*, Dec. 15, 1975, n.p. On photograph of *Common Sense* vendor, see “Two Points of View,” photo and caption, *Councilor*, Dec. 1–22, 1970, p. 33. On *National Spotlight* and David Duke, see Frank P. Mintz, *The Liberty Lobby and the American Right: Race, Conspiracy, and Culture* (Westport, 1985), 104; and “Klan No Longer ‘Invisible Empire’; Issues Aired Publicly,” *National Spotlight*, Oct. 31, 1975, n.p. On *America First*, see “Zionism,” advertisement, *National Spotlight*, Dec. 1, 1975, p. 9.

<sup>35</sup> “N.Y. Times Was Silent When Government Suppressed Book by Charles A. Lindbergh,” *Councilor*, July 3–24, 1971, p. 1; Anthony J. Hilder, “Porno Films Reach Depths as Women Are Murdered,” *National Spotlight*, Oct. 31, 1975, pp. 7, 11, esp. 7; “Films Reflect on All Jews”; Anthony J. Hilder, “Films Ridicule U.S., Christians,” *ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> On *National Spotlight* and color-blind and race-specific language, see “Bias Laws Not Black and White,” *ibid.*, Oct. 1, 1975, p. 13. On *National Spotlight* and the *Councilor* on Martin Luther King Jr., see “Liberals Seek Sainthood for King, a Thief, Sex Deviate, and Threat to U.S.,” *National Spotlight*, Dec. 22, 1975, p. 4; and “The Councilor Was Right about King Organization,” *Councilor*, Feb. 22, 1972, p. 56. On *National Spotlight* and busing, see P. Douglas Johnston, “Union Busing Foes Buck Chief,” *National Spotlight*, Nov. 7, 1975, n.p.; photos and captions, *ibid.*, n.p.; “Busing Judge Is Immune to Boston Turmoil,” *ibid.*, Dec. 1, 1975, p. 4; and Douglas Johnston, “Judge Orders Integration, Lives Segregation While Refusing to Hear Foes,” *ibid.*, Jan. 5, 1976, p. 4.

<sup>37</sup> On conservative columnists and accusations of anti-Semitism, see Forster and Epstein, *New Anti-Semitism*, 106. On John R. Rarick, see Drew Pearson, "Neo-Nazi Group Seeks U.S. Control," *Toledo Blade*, April 17, 1969, p. 25; John R. Rarick, "Equal Rights for Homos?," *National Spotlight*, Oct. 31, 1975, n.p.; John R. Rarick, "You've a Right to Know," *Councilor*, May 1, 1971, p. 109; John R. Rarick, "Congress Hoodwinks Americans with Aid of Mass Media," *ibid.*, Sept. 4, 1971, p. 171; and Rarick, "CBS, CFR, and the People's Right to Know." On Anderson, see Tom Anderson, "Wallace for President!," *Independent American*, July–Aug. 1968, p. 1; Tom Anderson, "The People Own the Airwaves," *Councilor*, May 22, 1972, p. 120; Mike Newberry, *The Yaboos* (New York, 1964), 17, 20; and Kominsky, *Hoaxers*, 17, 24–25, 106–7, 115–16. On Dan Smoot, see "Dan Smoot Warned Americans about Bilderbergers in 1962," *Councilor*, July 3–24, 1971, p. 147. On Daniel Lyons, see "Lyons Raises Anti-Semitism in 2nd Speech," *Group Research Report*, April 20, 1970, p. 30; and "Defense of Agnew by Lyons Brings Racial Protest," *ibid.*, Jan. 6, 1970, p. 2. On Jeffrey St. John, see Forster and Epstein, *New Anti-Semitism*, 313. On E. P. Thornton, see E. P. Thornton, "A Conservative Speaks Out," *Liberty Bell*, Oct. 1975, p. 3. Racist and anti-Semitic language could be found in the Far Right columns of "Cassandra" in the *Northeast Detroiter*. Cassandra argued that Jews were manipulators who worked behind the scenes. See Cassandra, "Minority Political Power Blamed for Butz Dismissal," *Northeast Detroiter*, Oct. 14, 1976, p. 6.

<sup>38</sup> Kirkpatrick Sale, *Power Shift: The Rise of the Southern Rim and Its Challenge to the Eastern Establishment* (New York, 1975), 13, 110–11, 4–5; Lora and Longton, eds., *Conservative Press in Twentieth-Century America*, 578; "The Assassins," advertisement, *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 18, 1973, p. G6; "The Rape of America," advertisement, *New York Times*, Dec. 2, 1973, p. 274; John Saar, "Rabbi Begins Drive: Be Fair to Nixon," *Washington Post*, Aug. 25, 1973, p. A1.

<sup>39</sup> Justin P. Coffey, "Nixon and Agnew," in *Companion to Richard M. Nixon*, ed. Small, 331; "Tell-It-Like-It-Is Buttons," *Point-Blank*, Jan. 1970, p. 11; "Mass Murder: Facts Withheld by the Self-Appointed News Censors," *ibid.*, Sept. 1971, pp. 1, 4–15; Kiska, "Nixon and the Media," 292.

<sup>40</sup> On conservatives who believed Spiro Agnew was an opportunist, see "The People Speak: Vice President's Speech Seen as Political Ploy," *Louisiana Freedom Review*, March, April, and May 1970, p. 9. On conservatives who backed Agnew's criticisms of the news media, see Coffey, "Nixon and Agnew," 332; "Spiro Spells It Out," reprint of undated *Peoria* (Ill.) *Journal-Star* editorial, *Militant Truth*, 25 (no. 11, [probably 1970]), 1; "Litany of Grievances; Slanted TV," reprint of undated *Manchester* (N.H.) *Union Leader* editorial, *Independent American*, Jan. 1970 (including Nov.–Dec. 1969), 5; "WRAL-TV Viewpoint," Dec. 12, 1969; Cong. Richard L. Roudebush, "Misleading Press and TV Coverage of



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Moratorium March,” *Independent American*, Jan. 1970 (including Nov.–Dec. 1969), 1; “1970—Time to Tell the Truth,” *Free Enterprise*, Jan. 1970, p. 1; and Frank Mankiewicz and Tom Braden, “Agnew Unintentionally Triggers Renewed Round of Anti-Semitism,” *Washington Post*, Dec. 30, 1969, p. A15. On conservative publications that printed the full text of Agnew’s Des Moines speech, see Spiro T. Agnew, “Public Should Demand TV Fairness: Network News Biased,” *Human Events*, Nov. 22, 1969, pp. 1, 12; and “Full Text of Agnew’s Speech on TV Bias,” *Neighbor-to-Neighbor News/Free Enterprise*, Dec. 1, 1969, pp. 1, 8.

<sup>41</sup> On the anti-Semitic Far Right and Agnew’s criticism of the news media, see “Agnew Draws Right-Wing Applause,” *Group Research Report*, Dec. 18, 1969, p. 85; and Mankiewicz and Braden, “Agnew Unintentionally Triggers Renewed Round of Anti-Semitism.” For the text of Agnew’s November 13, 1969, speech in Des Moines, see John R. Coyne Jr., *The Impudent Snobs: Agnew vs. the Intellectual Establishment* (New Rochelle, 1972), 265–70, esp. 266–67. On *Thunderbolt*, see “Agnew Draws Right-Wing Applause”; and “News Service for Conservatives?,” *Group Research Report*, Jan. 6, 1970, p. 3. On Daniel Lyons, see “Lyons Raises Anti-Semitism in 2nd Speech.” Lyons made similar remarks at a December 1969 speech before the American Legion in St. Paul, Minnesota. A local Catholic priest said his comments were “very thinly veiled anti-Semitism.” See “Defense of Agnew by Lyons Brings Racial Protest,” *ibid.*, Jan. 6, 1970, p. 2. On Norman E. Isaacs and anti-Semitic letters and remarks directed at news media organizations, see Stephen D. Isaacs, *Jews and American Politics* (Garden City, 1974), 51–52; and Mankiewicz and Braden, “Agnew Unintentionally Triggers Renewed Round of Anti-Semitism.”

<sup>42</sup> On Agnew’s alleged use of anti-Semitic code words, see Isaacs, *Jews and American Politics*, 51; Mankiewicz and Braden, “Agnew Unintentionally Triggers Renewed Round of Anti-Semitism”; and “News Service for Conservatives?” On Agnew’s denials of anti-Semitism and his meeting with news executives, see Isaacs, *Jews and American Politics*, 50–52; Mankiewicz and Braden, “Agnew Unintentionally Triggers Renewed Round of Anti-Semitism”; and Birmingham, “Does a Zionist Conspiracy Control the Media?” On Richard M. Nixon and anti-Semitism, see Dinnerstein, *Antisemitism in America*, 232; Si Sheppard, *The Partisan Press: A History of Media Bias in the United States* (Jefferson, 2008), 270; Greenberg, *Nixon’s Shadow*, 275; and Whitfield, *American Space, Jewish Time*, 145. Nixon’s “enemies list” included several prominent Jewish print and broadcast journalists. See *ibid.* Nixon allegedly told an Egyptian newspaper reporter in 1974: “Jews in the U.S. control the entire information and propaganda information machine, the large newspapers, the motion pictures, radio and television, the big companies.” The White House denied that Nixon had made the comments. See Dinnerstein, *Antisemitism in America*, 232–33. On George S. Brown, see *ibid.*, 233.

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<sup>43</sup> Spiro T. Agnew, *The Canfield Decision* (Chicago, 1976), 5; John Kenneth Galbraith, "The Canfield Decision; The Hero Is, You Guessed It, the Vice President," *New York Times*, June 6, 1976, p. 218. *The Canfield Decision* reached the *New York Times* fiction bestseller Top 10 list. See "Best Seller List," *New York Times*, July 11, 1976, p. 187. Agnew also appeared on CBS's Dinah Shore show, where he also made explicit comments about Zionism and the news media. See Carmody, "Zionism 'in Media' Decried by Agnew." On the November 1975 United Nations statement on Zionism, see Troy, *Moynihan's Moment*, 3, 158.

<sup>44</sup> Carmody, "Zionism 'in Media' Decried by Agnew"; Whitfield, *American Space, Jewish Time*, 132; William Safire, "Spiro Agnew and the Jews: Essay," *New York Times*, May 24, 1976, p. 28; Patrick Buchanan, "Dividing Line: American Jews Overreact to Agnew Remarks," (Greenville, Miss.) *Delta Democrat-Times*, July 27, 1976, p. 4.

<sup>45</sup> Birmingham, "Does a Zionist Conspiracy Control the Media?"

<sup>46</sup> On Jews and the journalism industry, see Whitfield, *American Space, Jewish Time*, 133–35, esp. 133, 135; Isaacs, *Jews and American Politics*, 48; Birmingham, "Does a Zionist Conspiracy Control the Media?," 15.

<sup>47</sup> On anti-Semitic violence directed against the news media, see Nerone, *Violence against the Press*, 204–5. In 1974 *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* editorial page editor Reg Murphy was kidnapped by a man who made comments about Jewish domination of the press and the government. See Reg Murphy, "Murphy Story: 49 Hours of Tension and Bizarre Politics," *New York Times*, Feb. 24, 1974, p. 26. On the CNN anchor fired in 2010 and latter-day anti-Semitic rhetoric, see Brian Palmer, "Do Jews Really Control the Media? Only the Fun Parts," *Slate.com*, Oct. 5, 2010, [http://www.slate.com/articles/news\\_and\\_politics/explainer/2010/10/do\\_jews\\_really\\_control\\_the\\_media.html](http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/explainer/2010/10/do_jews_really_control_the_media.html). On Glenn Beck, see Sean Wilentz, "Confounding Fathers: The Tea Party's Cold War Roots," *New Yorker*, Oct. 18, 2010, pp. 32–39, esp. 36. On Glenn Beck's criticism of the news media, see Glenn Beck, ed., *Cowards: What Politicians, Radicals, and the Media Refuse to Say* (New York, 2012).

## Conclusion

### **“We Have Destroyed the Liberals’ Media Monopoly”**

Whether it was conservatives in Detroit and Louisville opposed to busing, racial conservatives in St. Louis and Boston, pro-family opponents of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), Christian anticommunists, or anti-Semites of the Far Right, critiques of the liberal news media were fundamental to the political and cultural worldview of conservatives in the 1970s. Did criticism of the news media by 1970s conservatives matter? The answer is yes, it did. Conservatives used news media criticism, in the words of the former Republican party chairman Rich Bond, to “work the refs.” Constant complaints by conservatives about media bias were designed to put pressure the news media to appease their critics by providing greater attention to conservatives and conservative issues. However, I argue that the majority of the conservative media critics I examine in this dissertation felt a real and deep sense of frustration and powerlessness. They believed that the allegedly liberal news media distorted the truth and wielded the power to brainwash Americans with their liberal distortions. When they painted themselves as relatively powerless victims of an all-powerful, elite liberal news media establishment, conservatives and conservative news media were also doing something very important: they were legitimizing their concerns and political activism. When antibusers, pro-family opponents of the ERA, and Christian conservatives characterized themselves as victims of the liberal news media, they affirmed the righteousness of their conservative beliefs, including their belief that the news media were liberally biased. They were victims, but they were also fighters, fighters who would eventually win—just as the heroes of the American Revolution who were once victimized by British tyranny eventually won in the face of overwhelming odds.<sup>1</sup>

For conservatives of the 1970s, then, news media criticism was an important rhetorical tactic—but one that probably did not yield real political dividends until after the 1970s. In their 2004 book *America's Right Turn: How Conservatives Used New and Alternative Media to Take Power*, Richard A. Viguerie and David Franke argue that the Republican party candidate Barry Goldwater lost the presidential race in 1964 primarily because he did not have the news media on his side. As the historian Nicole Hemmer argues, following Goldwater's defeat conservatives committed themselves to building up their own news media and, primarily through the use of such news media, arguing that the news media that the majority of Americans consumed was neither objective nor truthful but instead biased, un-American, and untrustworthy. The positive response of many Americans to Spiro Agnew's attacks on the news media in 1969 suggested that millions of Americans had come to believe that the nationally influential news media were liberally biased. Still, it was not until the 1980s that conservatives were able to challenge the power of the allegedly liberal news media with their own nationally influential news media. They were able to do so because they built on the thriving alternative news media network of the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>2</sup>

In the 1980s conservatives embraced new approaches and new technologies to provide further alternatives to the mainstream news media. Conservatives used direct mail, AM talk radio, cable television, and, beginning in the 1990s, the Internet to disseminate the conservative worldview. With the advent of Fox News Channel in 1996 and other cable news networks in the 2000s, conservatives can now turn to their own news media outlets that rival the so-called liberal news media outlets in terms of audience and influence. In a 2007 *Wall Street Journal* op-ed column, *American Spectator* editor R. Emmett Tyrell Jr. argued that in 1967 “liberals did indeed monopolize journalism,” but conservatives, thanks to talk radio and the Internet (as well as cable TV), now enjoy unprecedented mainstream news

media power. The king of conservative AM talk radio, Rush Limbaugh, told Tyrell, “We have destroyed the liberals’ media monopoly.” Indeed, to borrow Spiro Agnew’s rhetoric, the day when the TV news networks and the *New York Times* enjoyed a near-monopoly on national news is gone. Ironically, despite the immense changes in the news media landscape, accusations of liberal news bias are still today regularly levied by conservatives with as much frequency and intensity as in the 1970s.<sup>3</sup>

Criticism of the so-called liberal news media continues to be an essential part of conservative politics in the 2010s, and has been a staple belief among conservatives since the 1970s. In the early 1980s the work of academic researchers such as S. Robert Lichter, Linda Lichter, and Stanley Rothman provided conservatives with evidence that the great majority of journalists were liberals whose views were to the left of the average American. Polls also suggested that Americans were increasingly skeptical of the press. A 1983 *Time* magazine article suggested there were growing numbers of Americans who believed that the news media were not only liberally biased but also arrogant, and cited a National Opinion Research Center poll that found that only 13.7 percent of Americans had a “great deal of confidence in the press,” down from 29 percent in 1976. In the 1990s conservatives blamed the allegedly liberal news media’s allegedly permissive, tolerant attitude toward crime for the Los Angeles riots of 1992; accused the *Washington Post* of being “soft” on black officials and politicians; and accused the *Miami Herald* of being biased in favor of Cuba president Fidel Castro. Conservatives also argued that CNN, which enjoyed a near-monopoly on cable news in the 1980s and much of the 1990s, was friendly to Democrats; some critics enjoyed calling CNN the “Clinton News Network.”<sup>4</sup>

Since the mid-1960s conservatives had worked tirelessly to convince Americans that the news media were liberally biased, and nearly thirty years later, that hard work had seemed

to finally pay off. A 1999 study found that the claims of conservative elites about liberal bias in the news media were indeed influencing public perceptions of the news media. A number of ethics scandals in the 2000s involving such media outlets as the *New York Times*, the *New Republic*, and CBS gave conservatives plenty of ammunition with which to assail the “liberal” media. By the 2000s, the liberal media bias idea had gone mainstream, and was embraced by a new generation of conservative celebrity pundits such as Limbaugh, Michael Savage, Ann Coulter, Laura Ingraham, Glenn Beck, Bill O’Reilly, and Sean Hannity. Books about liberal media bias became bestsellers. Conservative media-watch organizations such as Accuracy in Media, Morality in Media, and the Media Research Center’s NewsBusters (which employs the slogan, “Exposing and Combating Liberal Media Bias”) offer on line information about liberal bias in the news media. Of course, the very prominence enjoyed by conservative commentators and the popularity of their books demonstrates that conservative opinion can be readily found in today’s media landscape.<sup>5</sup>

In the 2010s news media criticism continues to be a cornerstone of conservative politics. During his 2012 bid for the Republican party presidential nomination, the former Pennsylvania senator Rick Santorum angrily told a *New York Times* reporter to “stop lying”; afterward, he said, “If you haven’t cursed out a New York Times reporter during the course of a campaign, you’re not really a real Republican.” The rhetoric and tactics of contemporary news media criticism closely parallels the news media criticism of the 1970s. As they did in the 1970s, conservatives pay for advertisements in newspapers to criticize the news networks of liberal bias; a September 2008 advertisement in the *New York Times* blasting television network news argued that conservative talk-radio commentators such as Limbaugh have “the uncanny ability to separate fact from fiction” and were in touch with the views of average Americans. Just as conservatives did in the 1970s, in the 2000s and 2010s they urged

Americans to seek out conservative, truth-telling alternatives to the liberal news media.

When opponents of gay marriage, many of whom describe their campaign as a battle against liberal cultural elites, complain that they are portrayed as bigots, they recall antibusers of the 1970s who complained that newspapers such as the *Boston Globe* depicted them as racists.

Pro-family conservatives frequently criticize the liberal media for allegedly pushing homosexuality, pornography, and abortion, just as Phyllis Schlafly and her supporters did in the 1970s. Representatives of the Tea Party movement also passionately decry the alleged liberalism of the “lamestream” media, and the Tea Party’s rhetorical and symbolic emphasis on patriotic imagery that references the Founding Fathers, the Minutemen, and the Spirit of ’76—as well as their anticommunist rhetoric—recall the busing opponents of the mid-1970s who fought against “tyrannical” court orders, socialism, and the allegedly liberal news media. Like antibusers, Tea Partiers complain that the news media portray them as racists; and, like the busing protestors of the 1970s, racial resentments appear to play a significant role in the conservative activism of some Tea Partiers.<sup>6</sup>

The news media criticism of conservatives of the 1970s continues to echo in today’s conservative politics despite myriad changes in the news media landscape, including new technologies, fragmentation, and concerns about the future of news organizations. It seems doubtful that accusations of liberal news media bias will go away anytime soon.

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<sup>1</sup> On news media criticism as a conservative strategy and the “working the refs” idea, see Eric Alterman, *What Liberal Media? The Truth about Bias and the News* (New York, 2003), 2; and Eric Alterman, “Refs, Worked (Redux),” *The Nation*, Dec. 15, 2008, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Richard A. Viguerie and David Franke, *America’s Right Turn: How Conservatives Used New and Alternative Media to Take Power* (Chicago, 2004), 75; Nicole Hemmer, “The Dealers and the Darling: Conservative Media and the Candidacy of Barry Goldwater,” in *Barry Goldwater and the Remaking of the American Political Landscape*, ed. Elizabeth Tandy Shermer (Tucson, 2013), 114–43.

<sup>3</sup> On conservatives and new and alternative media, see Viguerie and Franke, *America’s Right Turn*, vii–viii, esp. viii; and James Brian McPherson, *The Conservative Resurgence and the Press: The Media’s Role in the Rise of the Right* (Chicago, 2008). R. Emmett Tyrrell Jr., “Four Decades of Conservative Journalism,” *Wall Street Journal*, Nov. 3, 2007, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB119405287363981236.html>. On Spiro Agnew, see John R. Coyne Jr., *The Impudent Snobs: Agnew vs. the Intellectual Establishment* (New Rochelle, 1972), 274.

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<sup>5</sup> On public perceptions of the news media in the 1990s, see David Domke, Mark D. Watts, Dhavan V. Shah, and David P. Fan, “The Politics of Conservative Elites and the ‘Liberal Media’ Argument,” *Journal of Communication*, 49 (Fall 1999), 35–58. On conservative news media pundits, see



McPherson, *Conservative Resurgence and the Press*, 7–8. On the news media bias debate in the 2000s and 2010s, see Rick Perlstein, “Eyes Right: Conservatives Are Winning the Media War: How Do They Do It?,” *Columbia Journalism Review*, March–April 2003, pp. 52–55. On conservative news media-watch organizations, see McPherson, *Conservative Resurgence and the Press*, 221, 223. On Accuracy in Media, see Arthur S. Hayes, *Press Critics Are the Fifth Estate: Media Watchdogs in America* (Westport, 2008), 21–34. On NewsBusters, see *NewsBusters*, <http://newsbusters.org/>. Media Research Center founder and president L. Brent Bozell III is a former speechwriter for Joseph McCarthy, the ghostwriter of Barry Goldwater’s *The Conscience of a Conservative* (1964), the former publisher of the conservative Catholic magazine *Triumph*, and the author of the 2004 book *Weapons of Mass Distortion: The Coming Meltdown of the Liberal Media* (New York, 2004). See Ronald Lora and William Henry Longton, eds., *The Conservative Press in Twentieth-Century America* (Westport, 1999), 201. On ethics scandals in the news media in the 2000s, see Tyrrell, “Four Decades of Conservative Journalism.” For books that accuse the news media of liberal bias, see Bernard Goldberg, *Bias: A CBS Insider Exposes How the Media Distort the News* (New York, 2002); Bob Kohn, *Journalistic Fraud: How the New York Times Distorts the News and Why It Can No Longer Be Trusted* (Nashville, 2003); Ann Coulter, *Slander: Liberal Lies about the American Right* (New York, 2002); Brian C. Anderson, *South Park Conservatives: The Revolt against Liberal Media Bias* (Washington, 2005); and Tim Groseclose, *Left Turn: How Liberal Media Bias Distorts the American Mind* (New York, 2011). For a rebuttal of the liberal news media argument, see Alterman, *What Liberal Media?* For studies of contemporary conservative news, see Peter Hart, *The Oh Really? Factor: Unspinning Fox News Channel’s Bill O’Reilly* (New York, 2003); Kathleen Hall Jamieson and Joseph N. Cappella, *Echo Chamber: Rush Limbaugh and the Conservative Media Establishment* (New York, 2008); and Mike Conway, Maria Elizabeth Grabe, and Kevin Grieves, “Villains, Victims, and the Virtuous in Bill O’Reilly’s ‘No-Spin Zone’: Revisiting World War Propaganda Techniques,” *Journalism Studies*, 8 (no. 2, 2007), 197–223.

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- Carmen A. Roberts Papers, 1972–1981 (Michigan Historical Collections, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.)
- Damon J. Keith Papers (Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University, Detroit, Mich.)
- Progress in Education Records, 1972–1978 (Special Collections and Archives, University of Louisville, Louisville, Ky.)
- Shirley Wohlfield Papers, 1972–1988 (Michigan Historical Collections, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.)
- Special Collections, “Kanawha County Textbook Controversy” (West Virginia State Archives and History Library, Charleston, W.Va.)
- University of Louisville Oral History Center (University Archives and Records Center, University of Louisville, Louisville, Ky.)
- Wilcox Collection of Contemporary Political Movements (Kansas Collection, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kans.)

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The author examined the following newspapers and magazines, all of which criticized the news media in the late 1960s and 1970s:

- Accuracy in Media Report* (Washington, D.C.)
- American Patriot* (Phoenix, Ariz.)
- American Victory* (Salem, Wisc.)
- Arizona Republic* (Phoenix, Ariz.)
- Augusta Courier* (Augusta, Ga.)
- Battlefront* (Jackson, Miss.)
- Bluefield Daily Telegraph* (Bluefield, W.Va.)
- Borger News Herald* (Borger, Tex.)
- Chattanooga News-Free Press* (Chattanooga, Tenn.)
- Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, Ill.)

*Christian Battle Cry* (Englewood, Colo.)  
*Christian Crusade Weekly* (Tulsa, Okla.)  
*The Citizen* (Jackson, Miss.)  
*Citizen's Constitutional Committee Newsletter* (Kansas City, Kans.)  
*Citizens Informer* (Overland, Mo.)  
*Combat* (Washington, D.C.)  
*Common Sense* (Union, N.J.)  
*The Councilor* (Shreveport, La.)  
*Fort Pierce News Tribune* (Fort Pierce, Fla.)  
*Free Enterprise* (Phoenix, Ariz.)  
*Gainesville Times* (Gainesville, Ga.)  
*Houston Tribune* (Houston, Tex.)  
*Human Events* (Washington, D.C.)  
*Independent American* (Littleton, Colo.)  
*Insight on the News* (Miami, Fla.)  
*Iowa Conservative* (Waterloo, Iowa)  
*Jefferson City News Tribune* (Jefferson City, Mo.)  
*Johnson County Sun* (Johnson County, Kans.)  
*Kanawha Valley Leader* (Nitro, W.Va.)  
*The Klansman* (Danham Springs, La.)  
*Kokomo Tribune* (Kokomo, Ind.)  
*Lebanon Daily News* (Lebanon, Pa.)  
*Liberty Bell* (Reedy, W.Va.)  
*Liberty Letter* (Washington, D.C.)  
*Life Lines* (Dallas, Tex.)  
*Louisiana Freedom Review* (Alexandria, La.)  
*Lynchburg News* (Lynchburg, Va.)  
*Manchester Union Leader* (Manchester, N.H.)  
*Manion Forum* (South Bend, Ind.)  
*Mexico Ledger* (Mexico, Mo.)  
*Militant Truth* (Atlanta, Ga.)  
*Milwaukee County News* (Milwaukee, Wisc.)  
*Mindszenty Report* (St. Louis, Mo.)  
*NAPF* (Louisville, Ky.)  
*National Christian News* (Ocala, Fla.)

*National Spotlight/Spotlight* (Washington, D.C.)  
*Neighbor-to-Neighbor News* (Phoenix, Ariz.)  
*New Guard* (Washington, D.C.)  
*News and Views* (Wheaton, Ill.)  
*Northeast Detroit* (Detroit, Mich.)  
*Pax Centurion* (Boston, Mass.)  
*Phyllis Schlafly Report* (Alton, Ill.)  
*Pittsboro Post* (Raleigh, N.C.)  
*Point Blank* (Bellevue, Wash.)  
*Point-Blank* (Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.)  
*Red Line* (St. Louis, Mo.)  
*Review of the News* (Belmont, Mass.)  
*Richmond News Leader* (Richmond, Va.)  
*The Rising Tide* (Washington, D.C.)  
*S.O.S.!!!, U.S.A., Ship of State* (Salem, Mass.)  
*Sons of Liberty News* (Brisbane, Calif.)  
*South Boston Marshal* (Boston, Mass.)  
*Star News* (Chicago, Ill.)  
*Tactics* (Alexandria, Va.)  
*Through to Victory* (Ridgescreech, Calif.)  
*Tuebor* (Detroit, Mich.)  
*TV Guide* (Radnor, Pa.)  
*Veritas Report* (West Sayville, N.Y.)  
*Washington Intelligence Report* (Washington, D.C.)  
*WRAL Viewpoint* (Raleigh, N.C.)

The author also examined the following newspapers and magazines:

*Blytheville (Ark.) Courier News*  
*Boston Globe*  
*Boston Magazine*  
*Boston Phoenix*  
*Charleston (W.Va.) Daily Mail*  
*Charleston (W.Va.) Gazette*  
*Charleston (W.Va.) Sunday Gazette-Mail*

*Chicago Daily Defender*  
*Daily News* (Bowling Green, Ky.)  
*Delta Democrat-Times* (Greenville, Miss.)  
*Des Moines Register*  
*Detroit News*  
*East Side Community News* (Detroit, Mich.)  
*Fiery Cross*  
*Group Research Report*  
 "Hi" Neighbor (Detroit, Mich.)  
*Los Angeles Times*  
*Louisville Courier-Journal*  
*Louisville Defender*  
*Louisville Magazine*  
*Louisville Times*  
*More: The Media Magazine*  
*New Pittsburgh Courier*  
*New York Times*  
*New York Times Magazine*  
*New Yorker*  
*Newsweek*  
*Pontiac Press*  
*Salt Lake Tribune*  
*Sunday Louisville Courier-Journal and Times*  
*Time*  
*Washington Post*

### **Syndicated columnists**

Syndicated columnists of the 1970s who wrote columns accusing the news media of liberal bias include:

Tom Anderson  
 John Ashbrook  
 George S. Benson  
 Alan W. Bock

David Brudnoy  
Patrick J. Buchanan  
Bayliss “Jim” Corbett  
Peter Dominick  
Edith Efron  
Peter N. Ehrmann  
Edward J. Epstein  
M. Stanton Evans  
Lamar Fike  
William F. Gavin  
Vic Gold  
Barry Goldwater  
Grace Hamilton  
Roy V. Harris  
Jeffrey Hart  
Jesse Helms  
Reed J. Irvine  
Jenkin Lloyd Jones  
J. Kesner Kahn  
James J. Kilpatrick  
Russell Kirk  
William Loeb  
John D. Lofton  
Daniel Lyons  
Marilyn Manion  
Howard Phillips  
Kevin Phillips  
Edith Kermit Roosevelt  
Richard J. Roudebush  
William A. Rusher  
Morrie Ryskind  
Phyllis Schlafly  
John Schmitz  
Paul Scott  
Andrew C. Seamans

Dick Sinnott  
 Jeffrey St. John  
 John J. Synon  
 E. P. Thornton  
 Ralph de Toledano  
 Ann Watson  
 Alice Widener

## Books

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*1975 Editor and Publisher International Yearbook* (New York, 1975)  
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*1977 Editor and Publisher International Yearbook* (New York, 1977)  
*1981 Editor and Publisher International Yearbook* (New York, 1981)  
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Hemmer, Nicole. “Messengers of the Right: Media and the Modern Conservative Movement” (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2010)

Hustwit, William P. ““The Hell He is Equal,”” James J. Kilpatrick, Salesman for Segregation” (Ph.D. diss., University of Mississippi, 2008).

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### **Films**

*Television’s Vietnam* (Accuracy in Media, 1985)

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## **Education**

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Ph.D., Mass Communications, June 2013  
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Adviser and Dissertation Chair: Dr. David Paul Nord  
Concentrations: Media history, twentieth century U.S. history, U.S. culture and law  
Minor: American Studies

Ohio University, Athens, Ohio  
M.S., Journalism, November 2005  
Master's Thesis: "The *Scanlan's Monthly* Story (1970–1971): How One Magazine Infuriated a Bank, an Airline, Unions, Printing Companies, Customs Officials, Canadian Police, Vice President Agnew, and President Nixon in Ten Months."

Colby College, Waterville, Maine  
B.A., American Studies, May 1995 (Distinction in the Major)

## **Scholarly Articles**

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"Say No to Busing and the Liberal Media: Backlash against the *Louisville Courier-Journal* and *Louisville Times*, 1975–76," *Journalism History*, 35 (Winter 2010).

"'Rebellion in the Kingdom of Swat': Sportswriters, African American Athletes, and Coverage of Curt Flood's Lawsuit against Major League Baseball," *American Journalism*, 26 (Spring 2009).

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## **Academic and Teaching Positions**

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Editorial Assistant, *Journal of American History* (January 2010–present)

Associate Instructor, AMST 201, The American Suburbs: 1945–present (Indiana University American Studies Program, Fall 2009)

Associate Instructor, JOUR 200, Reporting, Writing, and Editing I (Indiana University School of Journalism, Fall 2007–Spring 2008)

Adjunct Instructor, JOUR 231, News Writing (Ohio University E.W. Scripps School of Journalism, Fall 2004)