

# A Society of Brotherhood: Rhetoric for Resistance

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One of the many protest movements that occurred in the United States during the 1960s was the Anti-War Movement. It was led by people such as former Stanford Student Body President David Harris, who objected to the Vietnam War and specifically the draft. Throughout his time in the Anti-War Movement, Harris formed The Resistance, an anti-draft organization; planned mass protests; and spoke in favor of civil disobedience. This study takes a rhetorical approach in examining David Harris's call to action in a speech he delivered at the University of California, Berkeley on November 9, 1968. In his speech, Harris employs constitutive rhetoric to create a base on which to make his public moral argument for draft resistance centered on the rehumanization of the Vietnamese people.

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On November 9, 1968, David Harris stood in front of a group of students in Wheeler Hall at the University of California, Berkeley and encouraged them to become criminals. The Resistance group on Berkeley's campus invited Harris, his wife Joan Baez, and Ira Sandperl, director of the Institute for the Study of Nonviolence, to speak. In his speech, Harris suggested that draft resistance was necessary because it was better to be a criminal than to follow an unjust law ("Is Draft"). The purpose of my paper will be to examine how David Harris uses constitutive rhetoric, public moral argument, and rehumanization in his speech "Is Draft Resistance the Answer?" to imagine the formation of a society founded on brotherhood instead of oppression.

Scholars have yet to study the rhetoric of Harris's speech at Berkeley. Though some scholars claim that Harris had little effect on the Anti-War Movement because he began speaking after the movement was in full force (Manuto), Harris's speech deserves to be studied because it provides an in-depth look into the rationales for resistance from

the point of view of one of the leaders of the Anti-War Movement. Because Harris was well known, his actions were publicized, unlike the actions of most resisters, which only gained significance when grouped with other protesters' actions (Ferber and Lynd 87). Harris's speech at Berkeley was representative of the speeches that he gave throughout the country from 1968 to 1969 (Harris, *Dreams* 224, 234). When Harris, Baez, and Sandperl spoke on May 24, 1968, six months after their appearance at Berkeley, their speeches contained much of the same content as the speeches given at Berkeley. Harris's speech at Berkeley, though, was a better representation of his draft resistance speeches than the one he gave in May because the purpose of the speeches given in May was not just to talk about resistance but also to ask for donations ("David Harris"). In my examination of "Is Draft Resistance the Answer?" I will analyze the tactics Harris uses to persuade his audience. With this paper, I intend to add to the literature on anti-war rhetoric and specifically the scholarship on Harris.

## The Face of Resistance

The United States first implemented military conscription during the Civil War and subsequently used it in both World War I and World War II (“Draft”). In 1965, President Lyndon Baines Johnson decided to supplement the volunteer military forces in Vietnam by reinstating the draft (“Selective,” *Encyclopedia*). That same year, nineteen year-old David Harris demonstrated against the Vietnam War for the first time at a march at the University of California, Berkeley (Harris, *War* 47-48).

Men who opposed the Vietnam draft, such as Harris, could be placed into one of three categories: conscientious objectors, draft evaders, and draft resisters. To be considered a conscientious objector, one had to oppose the war but still cooperate with the government by seeking legal recognition of his status (Elmer) as one of “those whose consciences, spurred by deeply held moral, ethical, or religious beliefs, would give them no rest or peace if they allowed themselves to become a part of an instrument of war” (Welsh par. 2). If a man who opposed the war was not considered a conscientious objector, he was considered either a draft evader or a draft resister. Both evaders and resisters refused to be enlisted into the army; the former did so privately, often by means of neglecting to register for the draft or leaving the country to escape it, while the latter did so publicly to make a statement and therefore willingly accepted the consequences of their actions (Elmer).

David Harris fell in the category of draft resister. He declared his refusal to participate in the draft in August of 1966 (Hall) by sending a letter to the local draft board in Fresno that contained his draft cards (Harris, *War* 49). At the time, Harris was the student body president at Stanford

University, having only agreed to run for that post because he thought he had no chance of being elected by the supposedly conservative student body (Harris, *Dreams* 135). Regardless of original intention, Harris was elected. However, on February 22, 1967, he resigned as student body president, believing that he had accomplished all that he could in that role (*Dreams* 175).

Beginning the summer before his presidency, Harris lived in a house in East Palo Alto referred to as “the commune” (Ferber and Lynd 81). While there, he adopted completely non-violent beliefs (Ferber and Lynd 85). Just before resigning as student body president to focus on the Anti-War Movement, Harris founded the Resistance, an anti-draft organization, with Dennis Sweeney, Lennie Heller, and Steve Hamilton (Hall). He announced the existence of the Resistance on April 15, 1967 by handing out leaflets that read, “We of the Resistance feel that we can no longer passively acquiesce to the Selective Service System by accepting its deferments” (Ferber and Lynd 90). After leaving Stanford in 1967, Harris traveled along the Pacific Coast, speaking at least a thousand times in both auditoriums and street corners alike. Since a call to disobedience resulted in a maximum of five years in prison under the Selective Service Act, Harris estimates that he accumulated at least five thousand years worth of prison time for his speeches urging young men to join him in resisting the draft (*War* 12).

One of Harris’s problems with the Selective Service System was that because it granted exemptions and deferments to those with educational commitments, those in the clergy, and those with medical restrictions (“Selective,” *International* 392), Vietnam became a war fought by the poor who did not have the means to defer (Harris, *War* 27-28).

The Selective Service System granted local draft boards control over deferments, which sometimes led to discrimination and favoritism (“Selective,” *Encyclopedia*). Critics, including Harris, noticed that large numbers of minorities were being drafted and concluded that the draft was unfair to those with low economic status (“Selective,” *International* 392). As a result, Harris declined his student deferment because he believed “if Americans fought wars... either everybody should be obliged to fight them or nobody should” (*War* 28). He began to organize opposition to the Selective Service System, and on October 16, 1967, over two thousand men protested the draft by returning their cards. As a result of refusing draft induction, Harris was placed in a federal prison for close to two years before eventually gaining parole in 1971 (Hall).

During his involvement in the Anti-War Movement, Harris married singer and fellow activist Joan Baez. Because of their mutual belief in resistance, the two announced a speaking tour of college campuses with Ira Sandperl, the co-director of the Institute for the Study of Nonviolence. Between January of 1968 and July of 1969, Harris gave over 500 speeches in 20 states (Harris, *Dreams* 224, 233, 234).

Harris delivered one of these speeches at the University of California, Berkeley, sponsored by Campus Resistance (“Is Draft”). Berkeley had a history of political involvement and continued this involvement during the Anti-War Movement. This is evidenced by the formation of the Vietnam Day Committee in the spring of 1965 and a university-wide referendum for the immediate withdrawal of the

United States from Vietnam in the spring of 1966 (Pacifica). Berkeley’s involvement with the Anti-War Movement made it an ideal platform for Harris to present his ideas about draft resistance.

### **Rhetoric for Resistance**

My analysis of Harris’s Berkeley speech on November 9, 1968<sup>1</sup>, will reveal the ways in which Harris uses language to persuade his audience to resist. Throughout the speech, Harris builds up both his character, to make himself seem trustworthy and knowledgeable, and the character of the audience, creating a community between himself and the audience. Because of the relationship he has formed with the audience, he is able to address the concept of morality. He invokes a public moral argument against the Vietnam War and, specifically, the Selective Service System. Harris gains support against the war by reminding the audience of the humanity of the enemy. He establishes credibility, suggests responsibility, and exposes the horrors of the Vietnam War and the Selective Service System by employing constitutive rhetoric, public moral argument, and rehumanization.

### **Constitutive Rhetoric**

James Boyd White defines constitutive rhetoric as “the ways in which character and community—and motive, value, reason, social structure, everything, in short, that makes a culture—are defined and made real in performances of language” (xi). Each time a person speaks he creates a character for himself, and through his words conveys his attitude toward the world around him (White 15). In order for

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<sup>1</sup> The speech he gave only exists in an audio file. Citations throughout my analysis mark the minute:second start time of the cited quotation.

Harris to make his argument for resistance, he constitutes a character for himself, forms a community with the audience, and establishes the identity of the community.

When forming his character, Harris includes information about his arrest, trial, and pending imprisonment to assure the audience that he does not simply encourage resistance in others; he himself resists. Harris provides a sense of comfort in that even though he was arrested, he can continue to function as a member of society. He attempts to increase the audience's trust in him by telling them how he has taken risks and acted on his beliefs. Through his words, Harris becomes the embodiment of resistance:

I intend not to hide those [collection of thoughts and ideals], but to live them, to live them out on the streets where people live, to make that life a seed from which those things might grow. I got to choose between doing that and staying out of jail. In that choice, I choose jail. Not because there's something nice about jail, but because there's something nice about life. ("Is Draft" 25:23)

Harris defines himself as committed to the cause. When he declares that he will choose to live out his ideals even if it means going to jail, Harris provides the audience with evidence that he is willing to go to great lengths to realize his dream. It is important for Harris to constitute a character for himself that is dependable because in order for the audience to accept his seemingly radical argument for resistance, they must first be able to trust him.

When Harris speaks, he shapes not only his character but also that of the audience, forming a community with them (White xi). One way that Harris attempts to form a community with his audience is by consistently using the phrase "You and I". In his 25

minute speech, Harris uses the phrase "You and I" 64 times ("Is Draft"). By regularly using this phrase, he indicates that if the audience decides to follow his advice and resist the draft, they will not be alone in doing so. When he includes the audience, he not only assures them of company but also suggests a sense of responsibility. It is no longer Harris alone who must resist; it is Harris, and the audience, and everyone else. If an individual decides to resist, he will be a member of a community of resisters. Harris gives the audience a task—not a task that they must undertake alone, but a task that must be done together:

The task that you and I have is not simply the task of finding a new policy or leveling a critique at a set of leaders, the task that you and I have is that of building a whole new social logic. You and I must find a whole new set of assumptions upon which American society can rest. You and I must find a new way of life, a way of life whose logical conclusion is not death and oppression. ("Is Draft" 11:12)

Harris explains that the reason for resistance is that American society, as it currently stands, is a society based on death and oppression. He invites his audience to help him find a new formation of society that is not based on the destruction of others.

When Harris creates the new community with his audience, he must describe the foundations and principles of this new community. To do this, Harris and the audience must have a shared language. Harris reconstitutes the meaning of words that he believes have lost their meaning in order to escape the boundaries of language and discover a new meaning that can bind the newly formed community together (Hariman and Scult 209). He begins by negating the previous definition of *society*

and creating a new one, saying, “I think we have to say that a society is much more than a set of institutions or a set of people inside of those institutions. A society at its most basic point is a model of consciousness” (“Is Draft” 9:45). The previous definition of society is not sufficient for the argument that Harris is making because it is based on the idea of *democracy*, which, according to Harris, cannot exist if “those people subject to democracy have no possession over their lives or no control over the conditions they live in” (“Is Draft” 15:56). To make his argument for resistance, Harris first recognizes that the words available are inadequate because society is not based on the true form of democracy; its focus is on the wellbeing of institutions rather than the wellbeing of people. Since the society that Harris strives for is different than the version of society that the audience knows, he must define for them the basis of this new society.

The society that Harris wants to form with the audience is one of brotherhood. Before he can form a society of brotherhood, he must make sure that he and the audience have a mutual understanding of what *brotherhood* means. Harris tells the audience to “take [that phrase] out of the hollow realm of religious incantation, take it out of the realm of empty ritual, and give that phrase substance and meaning. You and I will give a notion such as brotherhood substance and meaning when you and I begin to live that brotherhood” (“Is Draft” 12:23). Harris wants to reconstitute the meaning of brotherhood to give it meaning in the community he is forming with the audience. To Harris, brotherhood is not an empty phrase; it encompasses all people regardless of nationality. A society based on brotherhood is one in which the lives of all men are valued above all else.

To form Harris’s society of brotherhood, the audience will have to resist oppression, specifically the Selective Service System. Because resistance is required to create Harris’s dream society, Harris must reconstitute the word *criminal*; he must erase the negative connotation of criminal because he is effectively asking his audience to become criminals. If the audience views criminals in a negative light, it will most likely be difficult for Harris to convince them to become criminals themselves, and if they are unwilling to resist oppression and become criminals, Harris’s society of brotherhood cannot be formed. Harris declares that in certain circumstances, being a criminal is the most honorable position one can find in society:

Stand up and say that when the law has become nothing other than the sanctification of men’s butchery that we can have nothing to do with the law; that when the law has been nothing other than a huge padlock on a chain around the world, which binds men to suffering, then you and I can have nothing to do with the law; and that when the law has become synonymous with the destruction of people around the world, that you and I can find no more honorable position than that of criminal, and stand proudly and say yes, we choose that role of criminal. For in modern America, life itself has become a crime. (“Is Draft” 29:14)

Harris recognizes that the audience he is speaking to would be “taking on what for most of [them] is a new social role. That’s the social role of criminal” (“Is Draft” 23:17). In the community that he has created, being labeled a criminal is not looked down upon but is instead something to aspire to because it means that the person has defended brotherhood against forms of oppression. To

successfully make his argument against the draft, Harris and the audience must first have a shared language (Condit 82).

### **Public Moral Argument**

Celeste Condit defines public rhetoric as the “process in which basic human desires are transformed into shared moral codes” (84). She asserts that moral codes do not exist unless humans actively draft them (88).

In Harris’s attempt to craft a new public morality in which all people are considered equal and treated humanely, he encounters problems with the law. To overcome human law, Harris invokes the higher law, which, according to Sean O’Rourke, serves to increase public morality in support of the speaker’s position (35). Higher law has three purposes: to fill gaps in law, to challenge an unjust law, and to be a base for international law (Jamieson 237). Harris employs higher law to challenge an unjust law. When Harris suggests resistance as an alternative to war, he suggests that the people have no obligation to follow a law that they consider to be unjust. Many anti-war protestors in Vietnam looked to Henry David Thoreau as a guide for resistance because Thoreau stressed that a citizen had the duty to first obey higher law before obeying a law of the state (Lawton 23). When Harris uses the idea of following a higher law, he follows in the footsteps of protestors such as Thoreau and Mohandas Gandhi. Because Harris’s argument is based on the idea that one has the moral right to break an unjust law, he invokes a sense of continuity with those before him.

Condit explains that when making a public moral argument, the speaker defines the role of each person in a society (82). Harris gives his audience the role of resisters and tells them that they must stand up and declare “that you refuse to build your lives

around that fear; that you refuse to make that fear the hub and center of your existence; that you refuse to give the energies of your lives to those social systems which have done nothing other than preserve or extend that fear” (“Is Draft” 19:36). Harris warns that it is this fear that controls political systems and human decisions. He states that fear leads to people’s blind acceptance of unjust things such as the Vietnam War. When he repeats the phrase “that you refuse to,” he gives the audience a push in the direction of resistance. Using the word *refuse*, Harris emphasizes that there is no middle ground. In order to be in the Resistance, a person must commit fully to the cause.

Harris continues his moral argument by appealing to the audience’s sense of brotherhood. He explains that what he wants is for the notion of brotherhood to become a reality. When stated this way, Harris’s desires do not seem radical because the idea of brotherhood is more socially acceptable than the idea of civil disobedience. Harris pleads with the audience to recognize that all men are brothers, which implies that “we owe no allegiance to a colored piece of cloth, we owe no allegiance to a set of governmental principles, we owe no allegiance to a set of people that enforce those governmental principles” (“Is Draft” 26:06), but instead to a brotherhood of all men. With this statement, Harris challenges allegiance to a government that does not consider the lives of men in its decisions. Harris calls for the destruction of any society that does not recognize this brotherhood. He then lays out the problems he has found with American society as it currently stands. He attempts to build a feeling of responsibility to help him destroy the current society and build one of brotherly love. Harris imagines an ideal world in which

two words disappear from the language. Those two words are oppressor and oppressed. You and I must work for the day when those words fall like dead leaves off a tree. When a young child comes to you after having found those words in a book and says what do these words mean, what are these words, explain these words to me, and you try and explain them to that child, and you look around you and you try and find an example to point to and you can find nothing. And those words die because there's nothing left for them to describe. ("Is Draft" 30:55)

Harris believes that if this ideal world is to come into existence, we must work together to oppose the current world. Harris's dream society is one in which a child does not know oppression. He wants it to be difficult to choose a society based on oppression over a society based on brotherhood. Harris declares that in order to form such a dream society, it is necessary to resist oppression in its current forms, specifically the Selective Service System. He does not believe that he can be expected to follow a government, its people, or its laws if that government defies higher law.

### ***Rehumanization***

The rhetoric of dehumanization serves to negate the humanity of another person. Pro-war rhetoric employs dehumanization to make the enemy less than human so that one can become comfortable with killing, bombing, or maiming them (Wilz 582-83).

During his speech, Harris uses archetypal metaphors, which are effective because they have a stable meaning that can be relied upon to accurately convey a message to the audience (Osborn and Ehninger 230). Michael Osborn and Douglas Ehninger claim that archetypal metaphors result in an audience's rejection of what the speaker

opposes and acceptance of what the speaker proposes (233). Osborn also suggests that using an archetypal metaphor can be effective when a speaker is attempting to make key changes in a society's attitude (117). The main metaphor that Harris uses is sight, because he recognizes the fact that dehumanization of the enemy makes people blind to what they are doing. He says that it is "fear [that] makes men blind. It's that blindness which allows a grown man to drop jellied gasoline upon a small child. Obviously, what you and I must do is give the world back its eyesight. You and I must teach the world once again how to see. If we're to do that, then you and I must speak directly to that fear which has blinded them" ("Is Draft" 17:58). Harris reasons that people accept the war without questioning it and the harm it causes because of fear. By using a metaphor about blindness and vision, Harris suggests that the current situation is one of darkness, but his solution of resistance will bring about light (Osborn 117). He challenges this blind acceptance and dehumanization by asking the audience to recognize the Vietnamese people's humanity in order to make it harder for the audience to support harming them.

Kelly Wilz contends that just as dehumanization is essential to the justification of war, rehumanization is essential to the justification of war protest (582). Those in favor of the war depict the American Soldier as a war hero in order to justify the war and to garner support for it (584). The enemy is portrayed as evil while the hero is made to be god-like (589). While speaking about his trial, Harris also includes the story of the trial of an army sergeant in Vietnam. In accordance with the norm of the time, Harris would be branded a criminal while the soldier would be considered a hero. Harris challenges the norm with this anecdote:

At the end of May I was convicted in a San Francisco Federal Court of the heinous crime of having refused to cooperate with conscription. For that heinous crime, I was sentenced to three years in a federal prison. One interesting sideline on that trial was that the same day the news of my trial came out in the papers, there was the news of another trial. It was the trial of an army Sergeant in Vietnam. He had been convicted of having willfully murdered a Vietnamese peasant woman; of having gone into her village and shot her for what even the army could not find to be an acceptable reason. He was sentenced to three years in a federal prison. ("Is Draft" 23:25)

The army sergeant, Harris explains, received the same sentence for killing an innocent Vietnamese peasant woman as he did for resisting the draft. The lack of punishment devalues the life of the Vietnamese woman because in essence, a man murdered an innocent woman and only spent three years in jail for doing so. Harris asks the audience to reconsider what they have been taught about who is in fact the criminal, Harris or the sergeant. He questions the validity of a society that would give the same prison sentence to both men; one that "considers the willful refusal to kill and the willful act of killing to be one and the same crime" ("Is Draft" 24:14).

Rehumanization emphasizes the similarities that unify a person and his enemy rather than the differences that divide them (Wilz 591). Harris attempts to find a common ground when he says, "You teach his hands how to operate the mechanism of a rifle, you teach his eyes how to sight that rifle, you send that young man six thousand miles from home to kill or be killed on a field by another young man who's gone through exactly the same process" ("Is Draft" 13:50).

With this line, Harris creates a common experience between the Americans and the Vietnamese. Harris wants the audience to recognize that both countries are suffering because of the war and that young men on both sides are being corrupted by it. Harris emphasizes that it is not only our soldiers being taught to shoot and kill other young men, and it is not only our soldiers who have been robbed of their potential. The Vietnamese soldiers are experiencing the same pain and losing the same opportunities.

When Harris says that the war is "taking a young man whose hands might have built, whose hands might have constructed for those people around him, whose hands might have healed" ("Is Draft" 13:39), he warns that young men's lives and their possible contributions to society are being taken away by the war. By repeating the phrase "whose hands might have," Harris reminds the audience that each young man has the opportunity to do incredible and constructive things. The men start off with a multitude of opportunities which are stripped from them by the draft and by the war. The loss of these opportunities not only hurts the men but also hurts society as a whole. This phrase begs the audience to consider that each man who goes into war, and who is drafted by the Selective Service System, is more than just the rifle he holds.

One way that Harris attempts rehumanization is by using gory images to make the war a reality for the audience. Stephen Browne describes the idea of "[making] vivid and compelling an evil to which most... had never borne witness" (277), when referring to making real the horrors of slavery to the northerners. Harris attempts something similar with the terrors of Vietnam and the American people. In order to make the cause seem justified and

worthwhile, Harris must make it seem real. In his speech, Harris is speaking to an audience of people who have not been to Vietnam. Therefore, Harris must make the war a reality for the audience so that they are no longer able to accept the dehumanization of the Vietnamese people. Browne stresses that “the testimony itself [has] to be of an especially graphic type, so vivid and brutal as to overcome... complacency on the subject” (284). It is this need that drives Harris to use particularly graphic images such as, “Instead of the breakfast that a child might eat, instead of that bowl of grain in the morning, that child’s breakfast is dropped from fifty thousand feet in the air and explodes when it hits the ground” (“Is Draft” 21:06). Harris wants to make it so that Vietnam is no longer a dehumanized, faceless enemy. He offers suggestions for faces to give the Vietnamese people: “Take the face of the widow. Take the face of that young child that’s had its chin melted into its chest. Take the face of that young man that’s being shipped home in a box right now” (“Is Draft” 26:58). Harris provides images of people experiencing unthinkable horrors in order to engage the sympathies and consciences of the audience.

In order to challenge the idea that war only happens on the battlefield, Harris states that it is the duty of each American citizen and each citizen of the world to stand up against the destruction of men. He encourages the audience to join him in saying, “No longer do I bend my back so death gets an easier step into the saddle. No longer do I polish its sword. No longer do I shine its shield. No longer do I stand idly by and watch it go riding down the road in bloody hoof prints” (“Is Draft” 28:04). By

using the imagery about death and its sword, Harris makes death gory, terrifying, and real. When saying “no longer do I,” he recognizes that a lack of action contributes to the death of innocent people. Harris refuses to sit back and participate in people’s slaughter, so he asks the audience to confront the reality of what is happening in Vietnam and to take responsibility for it.

### **Response**

A question-and-answer segment followed the speeches at Berkeley, in which Harris’s idea of resistance and nonviolence seemed to have been generally accepted by the students. One man stated that he agreed “totally with [Harris’s] policy towards the draft” (“Is Draft” 41:15). Many asked him about the specifics of resisting and the consequences of doing so. Some agreed with his idea of resistance but disagreed with nonviolence, while a few students disagreed with the idea entirely. Another audience member argued, “to stop that war is to stop the economy” (“Is Draft” 37:50). The meeting in Wheeler Hall reached a wider audience when it was broadcast on KPFA six days later on November 15, 1968 (Pacifica).<sup>2</sup>

In the time between October 16 and May 24, 1968, 150 men in the Los Angeles area returned their draft cards as a part of the Resistance. In one year, the Resistance grew from three people to three thousand people (“David Harris”). In a lecture in which he reflected on his time in the Anti-War Movement, Harris provided three changes to modern day society that he believes the Movement caused. First, he believes that the Movement resulted in an emergence of options in our culture. He states that prior to the 1960s, people did not have options

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<sup>2</sup> KPFA is a community-supported radio station that was established in Berkeley in 1949 (History).

because society at that time was a “society of singularity” (“California”). The second change he believes the Anti-War Movement instigated was the limitation of authority through the ending of lawful segregation, the War in Asia, conscription, and the prevention of another war in Asia. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, he believes the Movement changed the relationship between the government and the governed. Harris claims that before the war, criticizing the war and government was considered treasonous. The Movement opened the door for criticism and questioning of the government and its actions. He says that instead of a blind acceptance, society now has an inherent distrust in the government. Even though the War did not end how or when Harris wanted it to, he believes that it eventually ended because of the efforts of at first hundreds of thousands, and then millions of Americans who banded together to stop it (“California”).

## Conclusion

The Anti-War Movement is controversial among scholars. There is consensus on the nature of the protests, i.e. that the protesters involved in the movement combined peaceful demonstrations and civil disobedience in an effort to further their movement (Windt 160-61). Participants in the Anti-War Movement engaged in symbolic acts such as accepting jail sentences, demonstrating their commitment to the movement (Windt 155). Some, however, dispute that the Anti-War Movement’s participation in illegal activities hindered its effectiveness (Gustainis and Hahn 207). Others maintain that leaders of the movement simply used the tradition of democratic protest to illustrate their goal of policy change (Windt

161). Indeed, though some consider Harris and others in the Anti-War Movement to be radicals, their beliefs in non-violence and civil disobedience were not so different from those of Martin Luther King Jr., Mohandas Gandhi, and Henry David Thoreau.

The Anti-War Movement came about in a similar way as other movements; people perceived an order as faulty and wanted justice through its correction (Cathcart 87). According to Harris, those within the movement simply wanted a discussion. They believed that once others saw the war as they did, they too would be horrified and call for its end (*War* 49).

In his speech, Harris attempts to convince the audience to join the Anti-War Movement. His speech aligns with the guidelines for constitutive rhetoric and public moral argument set out by White and Condit respectively. He then introduces rehumanization imagery in response to the pro-war dehumanization of the Vietnamese people. Harris is able to make his argument because he has constituted a moral character for himself—one satisfactory enough to present a moral argument for civil disobedience based on higher law. Harris cements his argument by employing images of the enemy that rehumanize them. By reminding the audience of the enemy’s humanity, Harris attempts to eliminate doubt about resistance.

This study adds to the collection of literature on anti-war rhetoric and expands the limited study of David Harris and his involvement in the Anti-War Movement, contributing to a continuing need for analysis of the use and effect of constitutive rhetoric, public moral argument, and rehumanization in protest rhetoric.

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