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Daniel Hannan, Thomas Paine, and the Rhetoric of Outrage

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By

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Chapter 1

An Ordinary Day with Extraordinary Results

At 9 a.m. on Tuesday, March 24, 2009, the plenary meeting of the European Parliament opened up into what appeared to be another ordinary session. Various topics were debated and voted upon – everything from multilingualism to taxes on tobacco. Shortly after 3 p.m., Hans-Gert Pöttering, the President of the Parliament, introduced British Prime Minister Gordon Brown to make some remarks about the upcoming G20 Summit to be held in London. What followed was a fairly typical political speech on the part of Gordon Brown. He praised the European Parliament, looked back upon its past successes, and made proposals for needed reforms. He extensively addressed the issue of the economic recession as well as various other international fiscal matters. Then, after an inspirational conclusion about creating a "global society," the Prime Minister sat down.[1]

A few members of the European Parliament (MEPs) from various countries rose to give their responses to the Prime Minister's speech: some were concerned, some laudatory, and some critical. At last, the final speaker rose – the MEP representing South East England. He spoke briefly but emphatically, criticizing the Prime Minister's policies in a volley of statistics, metaphors, and even direct accusations. "You cannot spend your way out of recession or borrow your way out of debt," he said. "When you repeat in that wooden and perfunctory way that our situation is better than others, that we are well placed to weather the storm, I have to say, you sound like a Brezhnev-era apparatchik giving the party line." As he concluded, he called the

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[1] European Parliament, "Debates: Tuesday, 24 March 2009 – Strasbourg," March 24, 2009, accessed March 29, 2011, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20090324+ITEM-007+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN.

Prime Minister "the devalued Prime Minister of a devalued government."[2] When the MEP sat down after his three-minute speech, there was little applause, and an isolated "Hear, hear."[3] The Prime Minister got up, gave some concluding remarks, and bowed out as the session moved on to other matters.[4]

The MEP had alerted the news media to his speech, and subsequently posted the video clip of it on YouTube, but he had done so many times in the past without any remarkable results. However, the morning after he delivered his speech to the Prime Minister, he awoke to find: "My phone was clogged with texts, my email inbox with messages. Overnight, the YouTube clip of my remarks had attracted over 36,000 hits."[5] The speech quickly became the most-viewed video on YouTube, and remained so for two days.[6] Bloggers and political commentators began to take notice. MEP Daniel Hannan had suddenly been catapulted to the forefront of political discussion because of a mere three-minute speech before the European Parliament. Interestingly, the majority of his viewers, followers, and fans were *Americans*.

The preceding story is a prime example of rhetoric which is seized by an outraged public and continually disseminated and re-published in order to fuel outrage and, in many ways, give *expression* to feelings of outrage among a populace. Many other prominent examples exist in history, such as Patrick Henry's "Liberty or Death" speech or Thomas Paine's *Common Sense.* While these artifacts were certainly rhetorics of protest, they were something more – they were the sparks that lit brushfires across the pages of American history. Much study has been devoted

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[2] Ibid.

[3] YouTube, "Daniel Hannan MEP: The Devalued Prime Minister of a Devalued Government," March 24, 2009, accessed March 29, 2011, http://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=94lW6Y4tBXs&feature=channel_page.

[4] European Parliament, "Debates."

[5] Daniel Hannan, "My Speech to Gordon Brown Goes Viral," *Telegraph Blogs*, March 25, 2009, accessed September 22, 2009, http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/danielhannan/9289403/My_speech_to_Gordon_ Brown_goes_viral/.

[6] Heritage Foundation, "Putting the Government in Charge: Why America Should Avoid Europe's Mistakes," accessed September 20, 2009, http://www.heritage.org/Press/ Events/ev080609a.cfm.

to these specific artifacts of protest rhetoric. Many studies have also addressed the rhetoric of social movements in an attempt to define or categorize it, such as Sillars' study, "Defining Movements Rhetorically: Casting the Widest Net,"[7] and Simons' study, "Requirements, Problems, and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements."[8] Scholars such as Mary McEdwards have devoted their time specifically to the study of agitative rhetoric.[9] However, in all these studies, there is a deficiency: few, if any, even attempt to solve the problem of understanding what exactly causes rhetorical "sparks" to light fires which span across time, people groups, and even across the entire United States. Such a study would supplement the current body of knowledge by helping rhetoricians not only to understand specific social movements, but American social movements in general. Rhetorical scholarship of American protest rhetoric can serve to aid historians, political scientists, and communication scholars.

The purpose of this rhetorical study is to examine in detail two rhetorical artifacts: Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* and Daniel Hannan's speech "The Devalued Prime Minister of a Devalued Government." It is my intention to examine the textual charisma of these artifacts and how that charisma made them successful. I will also propose that the two texts under consideration exemplify a sub-genre of rhetoric which can be called "outrage rhetoric." At this stage in the research, "outrage rhetoric" will be generally defined as "any form of rhetoric generated by a single person and disseminated to a group of people within a turbulent social period for the purpose of inspiring social protest."

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[7] Malcolm O. Sillars, "Defining Movements Rhetorically: Casting the Widest Net," in *Readings on the Rhetoric of Social Protest*, eds. Charles E. Morris III and Stephen H. Browne, 115-125, (State College, Penn.: Strata Publishing, 2001).

[8] Herbert W. Simons, "Requirements, Problems, and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 56, no. 1 (February 1970): 1- 11, accessed March 11, 2009, doi:10.1080/00335637009382977.

[9] Mary G. McEdwards, "Agitative Rhetoric: Its Nature and Effect," *Western Speech* 32, no. 1 (Winter 1968): 36-43, accessed February 1, 2010, http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu:2048/ehost/pdf?vid=5&hid=8&sid=b214b752-3733-4f49-85e2-5ffe001c717f%40sessionmgr11.

Literature Review

Since its inception, America has had a rich rhetorical history rooted in the British

tradition and ultimately tracing its ancestry back to the likes of Cicero and Aristotle. A

fundamental part of this history consists of protest rhetoric – rhetoric of outrage. From the

diatribes of Patrick Henry and the highly rhetorical act of the Boston Tea Party to the abolitionist

rhetoric of the Civil War and the Vietnam War protests of the 70s, Americans have continually

displayed a rebellious and revolutionary spirit – a spirit that is awakened by and manifests itself

in protest rhetoric.

Perhaps the most significant example of protest rhetoric in American history is Thomas

Paine's incendiary pamphlet, *Common Sense.* The pamphlet, often credited with inspiring the

American Revolution, "conveys a breathless energy and an appetite for change."[10] This energy

would prepare the colonial mindset for a revolution that would change the future of the world.

Thomas Paine, who published the pamphlet anonymously, somehow managed to awaken a spirit

in colonial America that would prove to be an unstoppable, unbeatable force.

As has been pointed out, this rhetorical act of Paine's is by no means isolated in

American history. Protest rhetoric thrives in America today, as evidenced by British MEP Daniel

Hannan's speech "The Devalued Prime Minister of a Devalued Government," delivered in

March of 2009. Although the speech was given to a European audience, it parallels the invective

of *Common Sense*, and once again aroused the American spirit of protest. Just as Paine's

pamphlet was published in print form and disseminated throughout the colonies in multiple

editions, Hannan's speech became an internet sensation, netting more than a million views in one

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[10] David Nash, "The Gain from Paine," *History Today* 59, no. 6 (June 2009): n.p., accessed February 18, 2010, http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu:2048/ehost/detail?vid=7&hid=12&sid=2536bc70-13b3-47b4-a8bb-3539b477cce8%40sessionmgr4&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl#db=a9h&AN=41326592.

week,[11] and more than 2.5 million to date.[12] The speech, although British in origin, quickly

became an expression of American outrage directed at the big government policies of President

Barack Obama. A common thread in these two works is *charisma.*

Due to the recency of Hannan's speech, scholarly research on it is, as of yet, nonexistent.

However, a significant amount of research has been done on the related topics to be explored in

this thesis, namely, protest rhetoric, and charisma theory. This literature review will explore the

body of literature on each of these topics in turn and will establish the connections between

them. Literature on *Common Sense* will be reviewed in Chapter Two.

<div align="center">Protest Rhetoric</div>

The study of protest rhetoric has significant implications for this thesis. Morris and

Browne write in *Readings on the Rhetoric of Social Protest:*

> Students of rhetorical movements and social protest understand that *words are deeds*, that
>
> language has force and effect in the world. To study the rhetoric of social protest is to
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> study how symbols – words, signs, images, music, even bodies – operate to shape our
>
> perceptions of reality and invite us to act accordingly.[13]

Leland Griffin, in his 1952 essay "The Rhetoric of Social Movements" laid a foundation

for the modern study of protest rhetoric.[14] His essay set out criteria for the study of social

movements and their rhetoric. Since that time, much has been written on the subject of social

movements and their rhetoric. In 1969, Scott detailed the rhetoric of confrontation in radical and

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[11] "Today, Strasbourg; Next, the World," *Economist* 390, no. 8625 (April 4, 2009), accessed September 22, 2009, http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu:2048/ehost/detail?vid=8&hid=12&sid=2536bc70-13b3-47b4-a8bb-3539b477cce8%40sessionmgr4&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl#db=a9h&AN=37341122.

[12] YouTube, "Daniel Hannan MEP."

[13] Charles E. Morris, III and Stephen H. Browne, eds., *Readings on the Rhetoric of Social Protest* (State College, Penn.: Strata Publishing, 2001), 1.

[14] Leland Griffin, "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements," in *Readings on the Rhetoric of Social Protest*, eds. Charles E. Morris III and Stephen H. Browne, 5-10 (State College, Penn.: Strata Publishing, 2001).

revolutionary movements.[15] He expands on how confrontation rhetoric is used by the oppressed

to protest against the oppressors. He does not confine his definition to written and spoken

rhetoric, but includes demonstrations, sit-ins, marches, and other forms of protest. While

admitting that the basis in rhetorical theory needs to be expanded, he expresses assurance that the

study of confrontation rhetoric has significant implications for society and for rhetorical

scholarship (32). His ideas were late expanded upon by Robert Cathcart in his essay,

"Movements: Confrontation as Rhetorical Form."[16] Cathcart explored confrontation as

"instrumental" to social movements (103), but did not significantly broaden the definition of

confrontation rhetoric.

In 1970, Herbert Simons studied persuasion in social movements. In his essay,

"Requirements, Problems, and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements,"

Simons took a leader-centered approach to studying persuasion in social movements.[17] His work

discusses the rhetorical requirements of leaders, the problems they encounter, and the strategies

they employ. Simons emphasized that social movements pose great dilemmas for their leaders,

and are prone to collapsing from within if leaders cannot cope with the dilemmas (11). He

argued that effective leaders generally balance both militant and moderate strategies in their

persuasion.

In an eminently practical and pivotal essay, Malcolm Sillars looked back upon some

twenty years of study in protest rhetoric, and criticized the tendency of scholars to define social

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[15] Robert L. Scott, "The Rhetoric of Confrontation," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 55, no. 1 (February 1969): 1-8, accessed March 11, 2010, doi:10.1080/00335636909382922.

[16] Robert S. Cathcart, "Movements: Confrontation as a Rhetorical Form," in *Readings on the Rhetoric of Social Protest*, eds. Charles E. Morris III and Stephen H. Browne, 102-111 (State College, Penn.: Strata Publishing, 2001).

[17] Simons, 1-11.

movements too narrowly, and thus confine the study of the rhetoric of social movements and of

protest.[18] He wrote:

> The critic who emphasizes movements will . . . need to recognize that all communication
>
> factors may be viewed as a part of the movement process. Thus, whether a critic
>
> examines a single speech, a group of speeches by a single speaker, or a campaign by a
>
> group of speakers, writers, and media experts, such a critic can view that study in context,
>
> as a part of something greater . . . . The critic of movements will thus focus on messages
>
> of all shapes and forms: verbal and nonverbal, interpersonal and public, spoken and
>
> written, direct and electronic. These messages will be seen as related to, growing out of,
>
> and shaping the environment. (121)

Rhetorical scholars, Sillars argued, will benefit from a broader definition of social movements.

He criticized the work of scholars such as Griffin and Cathcart as lacking in usefulness and

applicability (115, 119).

Further research provides insight into protest rhetoric in an American context. Engels, for

example, identifies invective as a rhetoric of democracy in his article "Uncivil Speech: Invective

and Rhetorics of Democracy in the Early Republic."[19] McEdwards discusses agitative rhetoric,

contrasting it with invective, in her essay "Agitative Rhetoric: Its Nature and Effect."[20]

The rhetoric of the American revolutionary period certainly falls within the purview of

protest rhetoric studies. Donald Rice, in "Order Out of Chaos: The Archetypal Metaphor in Early

American Rhetoric," examines the dominant metaphorical themes in the context of American

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[18] Sillars, 115-125.

[19] Jeremy Engels, "Uncivil Speech: Invective and the Rhetorics of Democracy in the Early Republic," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 95, no. 3 (August 2009): 311-334, accessed February 1, 2010, doi:10.1080/00335630903156453.

[20] McEdwards, 36-43.

revolutionary protest rhetoric.[21] Looking specifically at the work of Madison and Thomas Paine,

Rice identifies the metaphor as a powerful rhetorical tool in the midst of crisis. He writes,

"Archetypal metaphors derived from elemental natural concepts have the greatest power to move

audiences to take action. This action is intended to bring the presented vision of reality into

existence" (20). In other words, Rice is identifying a key ingredient that makes protest rhetoric

an effective tool in inspiring audiences to action. No doubt this has implications for why specific

artifacts of protest rhetoric, such as *Common Sense*, were reproduced and disseminated on such a

wide scale.

<div align="center">Theory of Charisma</div>

In 1947, Max Weber pioneered a new method of studying and analyzing leadership with

his theory of charisma. According to this theory, as set out in *The Theory of Social and

Economic Organization*, charismatic leaders possess superhuman, or at least exceptional,

qualities that cause them to amass followers to themselves.[22] Since 1947, many scholars have

further defined, expanded, and elaborated upon Weber's theory of charisma. Several of these

works will be discussed here.

Weber's theory has been often explored in the context of religious leaders, such as in

David Smith's article, "Faith, Reason, and Charisma"[23] and Janet Sarbanes' article, "The Shaker

'Gift' Economy: Charisma, Aesthetic Practice and Utopian Communalism."[24] However, what

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[21] Donald E. Rice, "Order Out of Chaos: The Archetypal Metaphor in Early American Rhetoric," *North Dakota Journal of Speech & Theatre* 9, no. 1 (September 1996): 18-24, accessed February 18, 2010, http://web.ebscohost. com.ezproxy.liberty.edu:2048/ ehost/pdf?vid=8&hid=8&sid=b214b752-3733-4f49-85e2-5ffe001c717f%40 sessionmgr11.

[22] Max Weber, A. M. Henderson, and Talcott Parsons, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (Glencoe, Ill: Free Press & The Falcon's Wing Press, 1947).

[23] David Norman Smith, "Faith, Reason, and Charisma: Rudolf Sohm, Max Weber, and the Theology of Grace," *Sociological Inquiry* 68, no. 1 (Winter 1998): 32-60, accessed February 18, 2010, doi:10.1111/j.1475-682X.1998.tb00453.x.

[24] Janet Sarbanes, "The Shaker 'Gift' Economy: Charisma, Aesthetic Practice and Utopian Communalism," *Utopian Studies* 20, no. 1 (2009): 121-139, accessed February 18, 2010,

more concerns this author is the study of charismatic qualities that affect the rhetoric of leaders of secular social movements, particularly political movements. Works relating to this subject are abundant. Arthur Schweitzer, in "Theory of Political Charisma," summarizes the theory of charisma and offers commentary on which parts of the theory are justifiably criticized, and which parts are acceptable, also offering some revisions for the theory.[25] He reduces the theory to nine basic propositions: supernatural, natural, new style, mission, political types, instability, revolution, violence, and routinization (178).

Kirkpatrick and Locke take a more specific approach to the theory, reducing it even further to three core components: vision, task cues, and communication style.[26] Their study, "Direct and Indirect Effects of Three Core Charismatic Leadership Components on Performance and Attitudes," finds that vision is the most important attribute of a charismatic leader, and that communication style is surprisingly less important than one would naturally assume (45-46).

Thomas Dow, Jr. examines charisma from the perspective of follower-leader relationships.[27] His study analyzes "charisma of office" as well as "hereditary charisma."[28] Another approach, demonstrated in Pastor et al.'s study, "Adding Fuel to the Fire," examines charisma as a mutually-formed inspiration between audience and leader.[29] That is, the favorable response of the audience boosts charisma in the leader.

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http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu:2048/ehost/pdf?vid=15&hid=9&sid=5b2e5461-0b63-4dc9-acb8-1f2f5c421f4a%40sessionmgr13.

[25] Arthur Schweitzer, "Theory and Political Charisma," *Comparative Studies in Society & History* 16, no. 2 (1974): 150-181, accessed February 18, 2010, doi:10.1017/S0010417500007441.

[26] Shelley A. Kirkpatrick and Edwin A. Locke, "Direct and Indirect Effects of Three Core Charismatic Leadership Components on Performance and Attitudes," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 81, no.1 (February1996): 36-51, accessed February 25, 2010, doi:10.1037//0021-9010.81.1.36.

[27] Thomas E. Dow, Jr., "The Theory of Charisma," *Sociological Quarterly* 10, no. 3 (Summer 1969): 306-318, accessed February 18, 2010, doi:10.1111/j.1533-8525.1969.tb01294.x.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Juan Carlos Pastor, Margarita Mayo, and Boas Shamir, "Adding Fuel to the Fire: The Impact of Followers' Arousal on Ratings of Charisma," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 92, no. 6 (November 2007): 1584-96, accessed February 25, 2010, doi:10.1037/0021-9010.92.6.1584.

In the case of Daniel Hannan's speech before the European parliament, it is easy to see how speaker charisma might be a determining factor in successfully garnering support and provoking outrage. However, whether or not Thomas Paine's written work, *Common Sense*, could express charisma in an effective fashion might be questioned. Even aside from the lack of such obvious charismatic attributes as speaker dynamism, charm, and likeability, Thomas Paine's work lacked any influence from him as a leader whatsoever, as the work was published anonymously. However, a review of the literature on the subject of Weber's theory of charisma produces several studies on the topic of *textual* charisma – that is, charisma existing in a message, not just in a messenger.

The first of these works is Rosenberg and Hirschberg's study, "Charisma Perception in Text and Speech."[30] The authors make clear that their intention is to study not only how messages are delivered, but also *what* is said, and how it affects audience perceptions of charisma (640). The authors tested a sample audience by presenting excerpts of political speech from nine different Democratic presidential candidates. Using five-point Likert scales and other "agree/disagree" statements, they tested audience perceptions of charisma from both spoken and transcribed tokens. They found that, "for the most part, those speakers who were rated as below average with respect to charisma based on the speech tokens were the same as those based on the corresponding transcripts . . . . The similarities between the speaker ratings across presentation media suggest that lexical content is especially relevant to the communication of charisma" (649). It can be determined, then, that charisma can exist both in the spoken word as well as in the written word. This has enormously important implications for Paine's *Common Sense* as it relates to the theory of charisma.

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[30] Andrew Rosenberg and Julia Hirschberg, "Charisma Perception from Text and Speech," *Speech Communication* 51, no. 7 (July 2009): 640-55, accessed February 25, 2010, doi: 10.1016/j.specom.2008.11.001.

A final and excellent work on the theory of charisma as it relates to the written word is Hogan and Williams' study, "Republican Charisma and the American Revolution: The Textual Persona of Thomas Paine's Common Sense."[31] This essay directly links *Common Sense* with Weber's theory of charisma. Hogan and Williams argue, in fact, that *Common Sense* was instrumental in forming a "new" charisma – the charisma of republicanism (2).

Hogan and Williams lament the fact that very little has been studied from a strictly *rhetorical* perspective with regard to the theory of charisma (2). They write, "What remains insufficiently explored is the phenomenon that links leader and follower: the charismatic *message*" (4). It is this area that they attempt to further expand through their study.

They admit that *Common Sense* contains certain flaws as an argument: "Throughout the pamphlet, passion supplanted reason and vituperation and even threats substituted for engagement" (11). They point out a second flaw in the work by noting that Paine lacked a plan for forming the independent republic that he advocated (12). However, they argue that these weaknesses may well have functioned as rhetorical strengths:

> In offering "hints, not plans," he articulated a key faith of the incipient republican mythology: the faith that a collective wisdom – a wisdom that transcended that of Paine or any other leader – arose out of the *process* of free men deliberating. In sum, the major weakness of *Common Sense* by classical deliberative standards – its outbursts of passion and the sketchiness and tentativeness of its "plan" – may be seen as its strengths in shaping Paine's distinctively "republican charisma." (12)

Hogan and Williams rhetorically analyze the style of *Common Sense* as well – taking note of its "bursts of passionate exclamation that startled precisely because they came in the midst of

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[31] Michael J. Hogan and Glen Williams, "Republican Charisma and the American Revolution: The Textual Persona of Thomas Paine's Common Sense," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 86, no. 1 (February 2000): 1-18, accessed February 15, 2010, doi:10.1080/00335630009384276.

reasoned arguments that readers at the time found not 'irrational' but 'conclusive' and 'unanswerable'" (14). Their analysis certainly leaves many more rhetorical jewels to be mined in the artifact – it is by no means complete. However, the really significant accomplishment of Hogan and Williams is the exposition of another aspect of charisma: the textual aspect.

While neither Hogan and Williams nor Rosenberg and Hirschberg deal with protest or "outrage" rhetoric, which is the focal point of this study, they do justify the idea of utilizing charisma theory in rhetorical studies, even in those studies which pertain to texts rather than to leaders or spoken messages.

An exploration of these two examples of outrage rhetoric has necessitated a review of literature on several topics: protest rhetoric, the rhetorical analysis of *Common Sense*, and Max Weber's theory of charisma. While the literature is extensive on each of these topics, it leaves room for expansion. The literature points to a further rhetorical analysis of these two artifacts of protest rhetoric – *Common Sense* and Daniel Hannan's three-minute invective – in light of Max Weber's theory of charisma. The methodology will be examined in the following section.

Methodology

As noted above, the purpose of this rhetorical study is to examine the textual charisma of Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* and Daniel Hannan's speech "The Devalued Prime Minister of a Devalued Government" and how that charisma made these artifacts successful. As the literature shows, there is a significant basis for analyzing the American tradition of protest rhetoric, starting with *Common Sense* and reaching forward to Daniel Hannan's landmark speech of 2009. Many approaches to rhetorical criticism are available to the researcher choosing to analyze a specific text. While there are many similarities in my two artifacts, the marked dissimilarities could potentially pose difficulties throughout the process of analysis. The challenge is to develop

a strategy that will equally treat both artifacts in spite of their differences. However, the use of Weber's theory of charisma presents an excellent method for analyzing the texts so as to isolate the similarities between them which make them significant examples of American outrage rhetoric. I will now discuss why the artifacts are worthy of analysis, how I will analyze them, and why my chosen method of analysis is justified.

<div align="center">Rationale for Analysis</div>

The question could be asked, "Why choose artifacts which differ so greatly?" Indeed, the differences between the two artifacts are noticeable: namely, their contexts, their respective media, and their target audiences. The main obvious contextual difference is the time distinction: while *Common Sense* was completed and published in 1776, Daniel Hannan's speech was popularized in 2009. *Common Sense* became popular through the medium of print, while "The Devalued Prime Minister" achieved renown via YouTube – a medium which did not exist in Paine's time. Another significant difference between the two is that *Common Sense* was targeted at an American audience, while Hannan's invective was delivered to a primarily European audience.

However, while these differences can potentially distract from the purpose at hand, they in no way render it implausible. There are several reasons why the decision to analyze these two artifacts is fully justified, and not remotely arbitrary.

The immediately striking thing about these two artifacts is how they each, in spite of their separate contexts, were immediately and enthusiastically seized upon by an American public in turmoil. In a society divided between loyalty to an unjust monarch and rebellion against him, *Common Sense* was, in many ways, the deciding factor in bringing about "one of the most

dramatic and significant shifts of opinion in American political history."[32] The work was

continually published, reprinted, and passed on until it became the equivalent of a national best-

seller. Hannan's speech certainly did not have an impact on the same scale; however, its

influence on American society was almost unaccountably significant. Hannan said humorously

after his speech became an internet hit, "There is something very surreal about a speech in the

European Parliament - one of the most boring places on earth - causing so much excitement."[33]

This is doubly true for Americans, most of whom are unaware of the existence of the European

Parliament. In fact, a 2008 Harris poll found that only 43% of Americans were familiar with the

European Union as a whole.[34] Most likely even fewer are familiar with the European Parliament,

the legislative component of the Union. In this case, however, the fact that a speech about British

policy issues was delivered by a Briton to a European audience did not suppress its impact on

American audiences. Shortly after the speech "went viral" on YouTube, Hannan was invited to

speak on several American talk shows, causing his popularity in America to increase. In an

article appearing in *New Statesman,* a British periodical, George Eaton dubbed Hannan "a staple

of America's conservative talk shows."[35] For some reason, Hannan's speech particularly

resonated with American audiences, and is thus significant and nothing short of phenomenal.

The reason why this speech resonated so highly with American audiences is relatively

simple: the American context in which it was received. The parallels between Gordon Brown

and U.S. President Barack Obama have been noted by many. At the time of the speech, both

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[32] Hoffman, 373-410.

[33] Kristy Walker, "An Internet Sensation, the Tory Who Told Brown to His Face that He's a Disaster," *Daily Mail,* March 27, 2009, accessed September 22, 2009, http://global.factiva.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu:2048/ga/default.aspx.

[34] Harris Interactive, "Americans May Be Familiar with Some International Organizations, but Majorities Do Not Have a Great Deal of Confidence in Any of Them," September 23, 2008, accessed September 23, 2009, http://www.harrisinteractive.com/harris_poll/index.asp?PID=950.

[35] George Eaton, "David Cameron May Have Dismissed His 'Eccentric Views,' But This Atlanticist Could Emerge as a Lightning Rod for Right-Wing Discontent under a Tory Government," *New Statesman* 138:4963 (August 24, 2009), accessed September 20, 2009, http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu:2048/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=11&hid=13&sid= 006b9bbc-6328-4aab-a919-6b7769ee1739%40sessionmgr13.

countries were facing serious financial crises, and the leaders of both countries were warmly embracing the Keynesian economics of government spending during recession. For a large number of American conservatives who had become accustomed to eight years of Republican leadership in the White House, the startling shift of radical liberal change under President Barack Obama made them a ripe and ready audience for political speech such as Hannan's. Julian Glover wrote for Britain's *The Guardian,* "[The speech's] tone caught the outrage of the right on both sides of the Atlantic, convinced that it must stop the big spending Brown-Obama juggernaut."[36] Indeed, the story was originally picked up in America by the Drudge Report, a right-leaning American informational website. Afterwards, Rush Limbaugh and other commentators quickly took notice, likening Gordon Brown to President Obama. "Republicans in Washington could take a lesson from the bravery of this man," Rush Limbaugh said to his radio audience. "This is exactly the kind of thing the opposition party in this country needs to be saying to President Obama."[37] A British blog made the same observation: "It is the speech that many Republicans wish they had someone to deliver to Obama."[38] James Pethokoukis of *US News and World Report* warned that "many American politicians might be hearing the same criticisms next year if the U.S. economy is still depressed even as the national debt soars."[39]

Further, while the differences in the contexts of the two artifacts are immediately noticeable, what is less noticeable are the contextual parallels that make them comparable. Much like the colonists in the tumultuous times of the American Revolution, American conservatives

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[36] Julian Glover, "Over a Million View Speech by Tory MEP Daniel Hannan on Web," 28 March 2009, accessed December 2, 2009, http://www.guardian.co.uk/ politics/2009/mar/28/daniel-hannan-tory-mep.

[37] Rush Limbaugh, "Listen Up, GOP: Daniel Hannan Takes It to Prime Minister Brown," The Rush Limbaugh Show, March 25, 2009, accessed December 2, 2009, http://www.rushlimbaugh.com/home/daily/site_032509/content/ 01125107.guest.html.

[38] Guido Fawkes' Blog, "Rushies, Co-Conspirators : 'Hannan is Our Leader,'" March 26, 2009, accessed December 2, 2009, http://order-order.com/2009/03/26/rushies-co-conspirators-hannan-is-our-leader/.

[39] James Pethokoukis, "U.K. MEP Daniel Hannan: Transcript of His Attack on Gordon Brown," *US News and World Report*, March 25, 2009, accessed December 2, 2009, http://www.usnews.com/money/blogs/capital-commerce/2009/03/25/british-mep-daniel-hannen-transcript-of-his-attack-on-gordon-brown.

found themselves disgruntled by the actions of a Democrat President and overwhelming Democrat majorities in both houses of Congress. Parallels between George III and President Obama may seem too politically charged—however, in the eyes of American conservatives, the parallels were certainly pronounced. Even though Hannan's speech was not targeted at an American audience, its outraged invective against increased government spending and control resonated in the ears of Americans who felt that such actions were a tyranny worth denouncing.

Also notable is that both Hannan's speech and Paine's inflammatory pamphlet were each disseminated in the common medium of the day. While Paine's work was to be printed and reprinted and passed on in print form, which, for the day, was as modern as could be, Hannan's speech was posted and reposted across the internet on YouTube, a popular American medium of dissemination. Something in both artifacts made them sufficiently noteworthy to be continually passed on in the media of the day.

The differences, then, can be viewed more as a matter of *scale* than anything else. While both artifacts are examples of protest rhetoric made popular during times of political turmoil, the main distinction exists in that *Common Sense* provoked a change that was far more immediate and obvious. Whether or not Hannan's speech will prove to have had effects as momentous remains to be seen – only history will tell. However, its seizure by the American public and its usage to stimulate outrage among a disgruntled populace makes it a brother to *Common Sense.*

Method of Analysis

Having discussed the significance of the artifacts, their parallels, and their merits as subjects of analysis, a specific method for analysis must be identified. What commonality between these artifacts makes them both examples of outrage rhetoric in America? What is the common denominator? What trait of American outrage rhetoric exists in both artifacts that made

them successful? While there are many angles from which these questions could be answered, I have chosen to analyze both artifacts for their *charisma.*

While applying the theory of charisma to a speech may seem straight-forward and obvious enough, analyzing a *text* from that perspective could be less so. However, as has been discussed, a significant basis for textual charisma exists in the literature which has been written on the subject. The challenge is to develop a system of examining charismatic textual cues in both Hannan's speech and Paine's *Common Sense.* To develop specific cues to be identified in the text, I turned to Rosenberg and Hirschberg's identification of lexical charisma. They found that the following characteristics were consistently identified with charisma by the audiences they tested: charm, persuasiveness, enthusiasm, convincingness, believability, and powerfulness.[40] I will be looking for these characteristics in my artifacts. However, I have chosen to exclude charm, convincingness, and enthusiasm from the list, for several reasons. To begin with, charm is a characteristic which is likely to be included in some types of rhetoric, but not in others. Rosenberg and Hirschberg's analysis involved campaign rhetoric of Democratic presidential nominees. Such rhetoric often involves an attempt to establish rapport with an audience through charm. Protest rhetoric, however, attempts to establish rapport in other ways: by connecting with the anger of the audience, appealing to the audience's shared sense of justice, or addressing the fears or concerns of the audience. The two artifacts I have chosen to analyze are anything but charming—in fact, they are abrasive and jarring. Paine and Hannan both appealed far more to negative emotions than they did to positive emotions. Their concern was not so much to establish a *personal* rapport with the audience as it was to establish a *message*-based rapport rooted in intellectual and emotional agreement on issues. Charm, therefore, is less relevant to this type of rhetoric.

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[40] Rosenberg and Hirschberg, 649.

I have chosen to eliminate convincingness from the list of characteristics I will be looking for because convincingness and persuasiveness are so near in meaning that it seems unnecessary to look for both. Rosenberg and Hirschberg do not explain why they included both traits in their research, nor do they identify any differences between them. It seems practical and logical to exclude one of the two from my analysis, therefore, I have eliminated convincingness.

Enthusiasm is dispensable to my analysis because it is a characteristic that tends to be associated more with the rhetor than with his rhetoric. In Rosenberg and Hirschberg's analysis of the rhetoric of presidential candidates, lexical enthusiasm was important because it reflected positively on the candidate. However, as I have searched for textual cues specific to enthusiasm, I have found that they are quite similar to those that I use for powerfulness, and not distinctive enough to merit their own place in this study.

My intention is to take the characteristics that remain (persuasiveness, believability, and powerfulness) and translate them into specific cues to be identified in the two artifacts. Believability and persuasiveness can be identified through the use of argumentative reasoning and through specific research cited by the author or speaker. Powerfulness exists in compelling imagery, specifically metaphors and analogies, and in declarative statements and rhetorical questions. My task is to use a text-in-context form of analysis in order to discover the instances of these specific textual cues within the texts. The cues will be further defined throughout the study.

<div align="center">Justification</div>

Having discussed the rationale for the study and the literature written on the subject, the justification for this chosen method of analysis should be fairly clear. Textual, rhetorical analysis of charisma is not a highly-researched area; however, it has great potential to help explain the

tradition of American outrage rhetoric. A glance at American history may prove puzzling when one tries to define exactly *why* specific authors, orators, and leaders managed to motivate masses of people to action or birth social movements into existence. A solely historical perspective may prove helpful, but is insufficient to provide a full explanation. A typical approach to analyzing specific leaders using charisma theory can help to define some reasons for their rise to prominence but fails to explain how texts such as *Common Sense* (anonymously published) contributed to the shaping of social movements and the forming of an American tradition of outrage rhetoric. From the research examined, it is clear that a basis for textual-rhetorical analysis of charisma exists, but it needs to be extended in order to provide a more specific view of how written or spoken texts convey a charisma that sparks a desire for change. My intention is to extend textual-rhetorical charisma theory to invite further exploration of specific cues which indicate the presence of charisma in a speech text or written text.

Following chapters will seek to accomplish several goals. First, the background of each of the two artifacts will be examined; second, the researcher will explore the textual charisma cues within the artifacts; and finally, the researcher will draw conclusions and analyze the results of the study.

Chapter 2

Common Sense: A Harbinger of Freedom

It is difficult to capture the amount of praise heaped on *Common Sense* in the centuries following the American Revolution. Some have called it "an immediate sensation"[41] and "the first bestseller in North America."[42] Others have dubbed it "the spark that ignited the American Revolution,"[43] or the mechanism that "fanned the smoldering sparks of revolution into a raging fire."[44] It was "intimidating and seductive rhetoric"[45] that "ripened, united, exploded, unrooted, and popularized."[46] It is almost hard to believe that such words could be used to describe a pamphlet which, in its day, contained neither new ideas nor scholarly language and was published by a man who, by colonial standards, had little or no claim to credibility. Before proceeding with charisma analysis in the next chapter, I will review pertinent contextual information necessary to bring this artifact into focus. In this chapter, I will explore background information on Thomas Paine, the historical context in which the document rose to prominence, pertinent details regarding the document itself, and finally, the previous paths of analysis that have been employed when studying *Common Sense*.

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[41] Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1967), 286.

[42] Michael Everton, "'The Would-be-Author and the Real Bookseller': Thomas Paine and Eighteenth-Century Printing Ethics," *Early American Literature* 40, no. 1 (March 2005): 87, accessed February 24, 2011, doi: 10.1353/eal.2005.0018.

[43] Lee Sigelman and Colin Martindale, "The Common Style of Common Sense," *Computers & the Humanities* 30, no. 5 (October 1996): 373, accessed February 24, 2011, http://www.jstor.org/stable/30204657.

[44] Rowland L. Young, "A Powerful Change in the Minds of Men," *American Bar Association Journal* 62, no. 1 (January 1976): 90, accessed February 24, 2011, http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu:2048/ehost/ pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=27a159de-8fcf-4d9f-8adf-a5cff0b82101%40sessionmgr110&vid=1&hid=125.

[45] Martin Roth, "Tom Paine and American Loneliness," *Early American Literature* 22, no.2: (September 1987): 175, accessed February 24, 2011, http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu:2048/ehost/pdfviewer/ pdfviewer?sid=78904d7d-71c1-48f9-be1d-c9ebaad5b303%40sessionmgr115&vid=1&hid=125.

[46] Benjamin Ponder, *Independence Unfurled: "Common Sense" and the Constitution of the American Public* (PhD diss., Northwestern University, 2007), 401.

Thomas Paine: A Transplanted "Failure"

In many ways, Thomas Paine was an early embodiment of the American Dream. He emerged from the ashes of a life of mediocrity and even failure to achieve a renown that would place him among the foremost early shapers of the American republic. As Ferguson notes, Paine was the only Revolutionary leader to achieve fame and prominence through authorship alone.[47] The average onlooker observing Paine's life before *Common Sense* would likely have described him as a ne'er-do-well—shiftless, restless, directionless—doomed to failure. Few, if any, could have predicted the monumental effect his life and work would have upon an entire nation, and, consequently, on the entire world.

Born in England to a corset-maker, Paine had only grammar school education from the ages of eight to thirteen.[48] In her Master's thesis, Kelly K. Gasset identifies Paine's education (or lack thereof) as one of two main formative influences on his life and writing.[49] Paine was not educated in classical languages, which prevented him from pursuing higher education, and likely fostered the "common" prose style for which Paine is well-known (8). Apart from formal education, Paine is thought to have read extensively, but as Ferguson points out, details regarding his personal readings are vague, and Paine's reading was "certainly unsystematic and often superficial" (474). He is thought to have studied Locke and other philosophers, but did not credit any sources that he may have used, claiming to think for himself.[50] Evidence proving his familiarity with Locke is scant, though his writings certainly reflect a philosophical agreement with many of Locke's ideas (475, n. 35).

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[47] Robert A. Ferguson, "The Commonalities of 'Common Sense,'" *William & Mary Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (2000): 469, accessed February 18, 2010, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2674263.

[48] Ibid., 474.

[49] Kelly K. Gasset, *Thomas Paine's Rise to Popularity in the Environment of the American Revolution*, M.A. diss., California State University, 2006, ProQuest.

[50] Gregory Claeys, *Thomas Paine: Social and Political Thought* (London: Routledge, 1989), 85, accessed February 24, 2011, http://www.netlibrary.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu:2048/Reader/.

Religion, as Gasset notes, was another extremely important aspect in Paine's early life 6-7). Paine's father was a Quaker and his mother was an Anglican. When in London as an adult, Paine dabbled in Methodism, where pastors spoke in concise, plain language. This Methodist preaching style stemmed from the Methodist belief in equality. Gasset writes that the Methodist equality teachings, along with the Quaker "inward light" teachings—which imply that all men are equal before God—were formative in developing Paine's class-defying, "common" prose style (6-7, 10).

Paine's life up through 1774 reflected few accomplishments, and can be amply described through a metaphor of treading water. Ferguson paints a bleak picture of Paine's adult life prior to emigrating to America:

> The corset trade of his father, a life at sea, teaching, possibly the Methodist ministry, shopkeeping, and government service all attracted Paine, but he floundered in each vocation more than once. These experiences took him from town to town, including Dover, Sandwich, Lewes, and London as well as Thetford. By 1774, the year that he left for America at the age of thirty-seven, Paine had descended into bankruptcy with two dismissals for cause from government service and two failed marriages behind him. (473)

To add to his woes, Paine contracted typhoid fever on the journey to America, and was immediately confined to a month's bed rest upon arrival. This, however, may have actually helped Paine get his start in America. He used that time to observe America, and to write his first essay as an American resident—an essay concerning the dispute between Parliament and the colonists:

> This piece was described by one author as being "almost too American" because he had been in the country for such a brief amount of time. This work was a good example of

Paine's ability to understand the audience whom he was addressing; additionally, this

piece suggests that Paine had been taking his experiences from England and quickly

formulating them in order to address the problems in the colonies. This ability to be able

to understand his audience was a characteristic that made Paine's writings seemingly

more meaningful than others of the time.[51]

Paine's first year in America was spent as the editor of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, a

position that he held from two to three months after his arrival in America up to the writing of

Common Sense. Edward Larkin argues that this experience was among the most important

formative influences upon Paine's writing.[52] It was at the *Magazine* that Paine learned how to

communicate with the American public. The magazine's situation in Philadelphia, a hub of

colonial political and commercial activity, also added to Paine's opportunities to observe and

even interact with public affairs (259).

Paine was, no doubt, keenly aware of the power of print as a medium of communication.

In 1775, shortly before starting to work for the *Pennsylvania Magazine¸* Paine wrote in an article

for the *Pennsylvania Journal,* "There is nothing which obtains so general an influence over the

manners and morals of a people as the Press; from that, as from a fountain, the streams of vice or

virtue are poured over a country."[53] Paine made the most of that fountain during his time at the

Pennsylvania Magazine. Larkin tells us that Paine's writing in the magazine often broke down

the typical divisions between political and non-political content (267-268):

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[51] Gasset, *Thomas Paine's Rise to Popularity*, 32.

[52] Edward Larkin, "Inventing an American Public," *Early American Literature* 33, no. 3 (December 1998): 253, *America: History & Life,* EBSCO*host*, accessed February 24, 2011, http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu: 2048/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=834689b4-740e-41d9-9d21-1431bbbbe982%40sessionmgr113&vid= 1&hid=125.

[53] Thomas Paine, "The Magazine in America," in *The Writings of Thomas Paine*, ed. Moncure Daniel Conway (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1894), vol 1., 18, accessed 24 February 2011, ttp://oll.libertyfund.org/title/343.

The *Pennsylvania Magazine* in effect redefined the political and geographical category of

"American" by transforming it into a behavioral category. Being an American became a

matter of acting and thinking in specific ways, and by extension participation in the

revolution also became a matter of everyday life . . . . while not every article printed in

the *Pennsylvania Magazine* deals directly with a political issue, everything in it takes on

a political dimension insofar as it can be construed as a form of acting as an American

rather than British subject. (269)

After residing in America for only a matter of months, it was already clear that Paine had

decisive opinions and a distinct agenda. The *Pennsylvania Magazine* was an important, though

brief, stepping stone in Paine's American experience leading up to the writing of *Common Sense*.

And, as Larkin notes, "Although Paine had never published anything substantial in England or

edited any form of publication in his life, his impact on the sales of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*

was dramatic and immediate . . . . Paine had found both his audience and his voice" (261).

A look at Paine's life shows him to be an unlikely actor to be cast as "one of the really

inspired manipulators of public opinion" in the drama of the American Revolution.[54] Perhaps it

was failure that somehow mysteriously primed him for success. Perhaps the reasons he could not

succeed in England were the very same reasons why he *could* succeed in America. But whatever

the reason, Thomas Paine was fated to play a crucial role in causing the American kettle of

outrage to boil over into revolution. As Claeys conjectures, "Perhaps only an apostate Quaker,

exiled Englishman and adopted American with French sympathies could have been so insistently

rebellious."[55]

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[54] Philip Davidson, *Propaganda and the American Revolution, 1763-1783* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1941), 349.
[55] Claeys, *Thomas Paine*, 216.

A Region in Turmoil

It is unnecessary to meticulously recount here all the events that led up to the social and political turmoil of 1776—history books are filled with far more detailed accounts than any I could produce. However, an overview of the main events is certainly warranted. Additionally, I will review some important points about colonial print culture which are extremely relevant to the subject of *Common Sense*.

Political upheaval in the colonies began to escalate dramatically in 1765 with the passage of the Stamp Act, which required all documents in the colonies to bear a paid-for government stamp. The Sugar Act of the previous year had been unfortunate, but it was the Stamp Act that brought the colonists together in a new way. Gassett tells us that the Act caused a significant shift in colonial public opinion (19). Nearly everyone was affected by the Stamp Act. The outrage caused by the incendiary legislation inspired a meeting of the Stamp Act Congress, a convention of representatives from nine colonies. Gassett writes, "The real significance was that the colonies were beginning to come together and attempting to speak with one voice. Around the colonies, the slogan of 'No taxation without representation' was becoming more commonplace. This act made significant strides toward uniting the colonies" (21).

To make matters worse, the Stamp Act was immediately followed by the first Quartering Act, which essentially forced colonists to bear the cost of housing British troops stationed in the colonies. By May 29th of that year, Patrick Henry had spoken his immortal words, "If this be treason, make the most of it," and only a few short months later, the Stamp Act Congress convened in the colonies. The political atmosphere was heating up, and the repeal of the Stamp Act did little to cool it down, as Parliament reasserted control over the colonies through several more waves of legislation, including the Townshend Duties and the infamous Intolerable Acts.

By 1776, snowballs had turned to bullets in the Boston Massacre, tea had splashed in Boston

Harbor, Paul Revere had completed his famous ride, and a shot had resounded around the world

at the battles of Lexington and Concord. Yet, in the midst of all these dramatic events, the

prevailing mood was one that included both anger and indecision. While the movement for

independence had strengthened somewhat,[56] it was still far from being the consensus, and there

was "no clear path" ahead for the colonists.[57] While the colonists knew that Parliament's tyranny

was unacceptable and that something had to be done about it, there was still an overall prevailing

sentiment that monarchy was the paradigm of good government and that a republic could be

disastrous, as many attempts at republican government in Europe had clearly been.[58] This

preference for monarchy was buoyed up by religious conviction, making a collective change of

heart much more difficult to bring about.[59]

In the midst of societal upheaval, the dialogue among the colonists gathered more voices

as the communications infrastructure grew and developed. The influence of the printing press

during this period can hardly be overstated. A mere ten years earlier, communication in the

colonies was quite different. Benjamin Ponder, in his doctoral dissertation on Paine's *Common

Sense*, presents a very detailed description of colonial print culture. He notes that the spread-out,

mainly rural colonies simply did not have the labor force that was available in London; therefore,

American printing was sadly stunted when compared to its British counterpart.[60] The Stamp Act

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[56] Davidson, *Propaganda and the American Revolution*, 41.

[57] Gasset, *Thomas Paine's Rise to Popularity¸* 38.

[58] Paul W. Adams, "Republicanism in Political Rhetoric before 1776," *Political Science Quarterly* 85, no. 3 (Fall 1970): 398-400, *America: History & Life*, EBSCO*host*, accessed February 24, 2011, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2147877.

[59] Jerome Dean Mahaffey, "Converting Tories to Whigs: Religion and Imagined Authorship in Thomas Paine's Common Sense," *Southern Communication Journal* 75, no. 5 (November 2010): 488-504, *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCO*host*, accessed February 23, 2011, doi: 10.1080/10417940903045402.

[60] Ponder, *Independence Unfurled,* 99.

of 1765 was the impetus for change. Printers were now charged for the documents they printed

and the paper they used to print them (102). Ponder writes:

> In an industry already beset by razor-thin profit margins, the printers took this as a
>
> personal affront . . . . Though the Stamp Act was repealed less than a year after its
>
> passage, the printers and their presses had become inextricably entangled in the ebb and
>
> flow of continental resistance. Agitated colonial subjects began reading and discussing
>
> newspapers more frequently in taverns and coffeehouses, and printers met this increased
>
> demand by ramping up circulation and by publishing more and more politically-oriented
>
> broadsides and pamphlets. (102-103)

By 1775, there were thirty-eight newspapers in the colonies,[61] and from 1763 to 1783 somewhere

between 1200 and 1500 pamphlets distributed, not counting reprinting and various editions.[62]

The colonial print shop had risen to prominence, such that Everton calls it a town center: "Where

France had its salons and England its coffee houses, the colonies had their print shops. The

building functioned as a cultural highway . . . the printer presided over everything from lottery

tickets to the newspaper, stationary to Milton—morality to inequity" (87).

    Another important factor in the colonial print culture equation, as Joseph M. Adelman

points out, was the development of postal communication.[63] Adelman's study, entitled "'A

Constitutional Conveyance of Intelligence, Public and Private': The Post Office, the Business of

Printing, and the American Revolution," is a thorough analysis of colonial communication

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[61] Bailyn, *Ideological Origins,* 1.

[62] Homer L. Calkin, "Pamphlets and Public Opinion during the American Revolution," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 64, no. 1 (January 1940): 23, *The Historical Society of Pennyslvania*, JSTOR, accessed March 3, 2011, http://www.jstor.org/stable/20087256.

[63] Joseph M. Adelman, "'A Constitutional Conveyance of Intelligence, Public and Private': The Post Office, the Business of Printing, and the American Revolution," *Enterprise & Society* (2010): 709-752, *America: History & Life*, EBSCO*host*, accessed February 24, 2011, doi: 10.1093/es/khq079.

systems in the Revolutionary period. Adelman begins by refuting Trish Loughran's essay that attacked the traditional notion that *Common Sense* was an early best-seller.[64] He writes:

> [Loughran] argues that America consisted of a patchwork of fragmented print networks too decentralized to support anything like a unified national print culture, and that these conditions persisted until the era of the mass commercial press in the mid-nineteenth century . . . Loughran overemphasizes the fragmentation of late colonial-era printing and systems of distribution. Printing was decentralized, but it was not insular. When printers and their Patriot allies fashioned a new "Constitutional" and then Continental Post Office, they created a truly intercolonial and then interstate institution that had special significance for the distribution of newspapers and the political news they contained and for the printers who relied on it. In so doing, they laid the groundwork for a more raucous public sphere that operated through newspapers and other print media and shaped national political culture during the early republic. (713-714)

By 1773, Adelman notes, a largely "ad hoc" communications infrastructure had been developed by the colonists to maneuver around the imperial infrastructure (and its concomitant regulations) that had been put in place by the British. Printers were motivated by a desire for profit, and colonists by a desire for news (722). The new systems of communication, fueled by the ink of colonial printing presses, made possible the large amount of political news and commentary which grew out of the decade leading up to the colonies' attainment of independence.

Thomas Paine's chosen medium, the pamphlet, was an important part of colonial communication. Bailyn goes so far as to call pamphlets "the distinctive literature of the

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[64] Trish Loughran, "Disseminating Common Sense: Thomas Paine and the Problem of the Early National Bestseller," *American Literature* 78, no. 1 (March 2006): 1-28, accessed February 18, 2010, http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu:2048/ ehost/pdf?vid=5&hid=9&sid=5b2e5461-0b63-4dc9-acb8-1f2f5c421f4a%40sessionmgr13.

Revolution." He writes: "[Pamphlets] reveal, more clearly than any other single group of documents, the contemporary meaning of that transforming event." They were "explanatory as well as declarative, and expressive of the beliefs, attitudes, and motivations as well as the professed goals of those who led and supported the Revolution" (8).

There were several reasons why the pamphlet was a popular choice for authors and printers. To begin with, it was economical to print. Most pamphlets were relatively brief, and simply bound. When printing materials and equipment were modernized in the early 1800s, the need for pamphlets diminished and they fell from prominence. Therefore, they can be seen as more of a "transitional medium."[65] Another advantage of the pamphlet was its flexibility in size, which Bailyn calls its "greatest asset": "For while it could contain only a very few pages and hence be used for publishing short squibs and sharp, quick rebuttals, it could also accommodate much longer, more serious and permanent writing as well" (3). These pamphlets were often read aloud at meetings or passed on from person to person, thus increasing their reach.[66]

The time was right, the medium was available, and the channels of communication were ready to bear Paine's message across the colonies. Let us turn briefly to that message—the document itself—before moving on to an analysis of it.

Common Sense

Homer Calkin, in his work on Revolutionary pamphlets, identifies timeliness as an important aspect of pamphlets. "To be effective," he writes, "a pamphlet must come neither too soon nor too late. The people must be to the point where they are ready for some one to take the lead in expressing either agreement or opposition [to the major concerns of the day]" (27). As has been discussed, Paine's pamphlet could hardly have been more timely. It came at a crucial

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[65] Ponder, *Independence Unfurled*, 45.
[66] Calkin, "Pamphlets and Public Opinion," 27.

moment of indecision for the colonists, just when they were wavering between reconciliation and independence. Perhaps it is no surprise, then, that "at a time when the largest colonial newspapers and most important pamphlets had circulations under 2,000, *Common Sense* reached between 120,000 and 150,000 copies in its first year alone. It was the first American best-seller."[67] Based on colonial literacy rates and estimates of how many copies were printed and circulated, as well as estimates of how many times each pamphlet was passed among friends and family members, Ponder estimates that a conservative guess would put the pamphlet's readership around 500,000—approximately the entire literate population of the colonies (377). Within months of its publication, it had already attracted the attention of the foremost colonial thinkers and leaders: the members of the Continental Congress, who wrote about it and passed it on (392-393).

Paine published the pamphlet anonymously, hoping that the fact that he had only resided in America for a short time would not discredit his arguments.[68] His anonymity may have worked to his advantage, however, as he was able to remove any potentially alienating aspects of his personality or past. As Aldridge notes, "Paine keeps his personality as the author completely submerged, but he uses a style and vocabulary to suggest that he is a common man as well as an exponent of common sense."[69] Paine's style seems to be a central focus of many scholars. It is at once accessible, yet incendiary—polemical, yet relational. In his landmark work on Revolutionary propaganda, Davidson concludes: "The finest example of a pamphlet argument in popular form is Tom Paine's *Common Sense*. It is in a class by itself; its bold argument,

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[67] Ferguson, "The Commonalities of Common Sense," 466.

[68] Gasset, *Thomas Paine's Rise to Popularity*, 46.

[69] Owen A. Aldridge, "Paine and Dickinson," *Early American Literature* 11, no. 2 (September 1976): 128-129, *America: History & Life*, EBSCO*host,* accessed February 24, 2011, http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu: 2048/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=87a5a9a1-7667-49e7-9911-69d1fb00f29b%40sessionmgr113&vid= 1&hid=125.

trenchant phraseology, and universal appeal mark it as one of the best pieces of propaganda produced during the revolutionary period" (215). No doubt Paine's education (or lack thereof) figured greatly into this outcome. Ponder points out that the majority of American pamphlets, while clearly constructed with a goal to impress, were decidedly lacking in finesse, particularly in comparison with their British counterparts. "London pamphlets from the late eighteenth century maintained a high standard of wit and elegance," Ponder writes, "while most American pamphlets from the same era came across as bug-eyed and stiff, like a modern high school production of a Broadway musical" (46). He goes on to offer yet another stinging blow to Revolutionary pamphlets:

> Reading the pamphlets and wading through their typically circuitous logic, onerous footnotes, and effete classicisms, the apparent objective of most eighteenth-century American pamphlets comes into focus: they were written with only a *secondary* intent to alter the political landscape; they were written *primarily* to impress their friends and to solidify their status as learned gentlemen. (49)

Paine's work, on the other hand, was free from this type of pretentious puffery. Whereas previous pamphleteers had directed their arguments to elites, Paine directed his right to the common man, going so far as to even echo a scriptural style, with which the average colonist would be familiar and comfortable (50, 156).

The content of the pamphlet can be divided into six sections, differentiated by Paine's own subheadings: an introduction, remarks on the origin and purpose of government and the English Constitution, a discussion of monarchy and hereditary succession, the current state of affairs, an examination of America's ability to function as an independent entity, and an

appendix.[70] The next few pages will briefly review methods with which *Common Sense* has been analyzed.

<div align="center">Previous Paths of Analysis</div>

A significant amount of scholarly attention has been given to *Common Sense*, thus validating its status as a rhetorical phenomenon in American history. The plethora of studies forms a veritable buffet of analytical strategies. Some of the major ones are reviewed here.

For a rhetorical perspective on *Common Sense*, one would be hard-pressed to find many studies that could parallel that of Robert A. Ferguson, in his essay "The Commonalities of 'Common Sense.'"[71] It is quite a lengthy treatise on the pamphlet, focusing on how it "galvanized" people so effectively and continues to galvanize them to this day. Ferguson writes: "No other text by a single author can claim to have so instantly captured and then so permanently held the national imagination" (465-466). He argues that Paine's rhetoric offered colonists a "conversion experience" (481): "In a master stroke, Paine grasped that Americans must be forced to choose between a brilliant future and a manifestly duller past, and for that choice to be made absolute, he saw that all of history had to be refigured and collapsed into a fresh sense of the present" (479-480). Ferguson's analysis involves a detailed look at both Paine himself and at the document he created. Ferguson focuses extensively on Paine's use of metaphor and emotional appeal.

Several studies on *Common Sense* have focused on various themes within the document. A helpful rhetorical perspective on *Common Sense* is offered by David C. Hoffman in his essay

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[70] The appendix is not included in the earliest edition of the pamphlet. I have chosen, however, to consult the second edition of the pamphlet, which was released on February 14, 1776—about one month after the printing of the first edition.

[71] Ferguson, "The Commonalities of 'Common Sense,'" 465-504.

"Paine and Prejudice: Rhetorical Leadership through Perceptual Framing in Common Sense."[72]
Hoffman focuses on how Paine used the term "prejudice" to "frame negative perceptions of
American independence and positive perceptions of the British constitution as being distorted by
the force of custom and habit" (374). Using "prejudice" as a perceptual frame caused the readers
to rethink the way they had thought of the world (393). Through this perceptual frame, Paine was
able to achieve a reversal in colonial thought, as Ferguson notes:

> Before *Common Sense* the presumption was that the colonists were British subjects
> fighting for the restoration of their rights as British subjects. After *Common Sense* the
> presumption became that the colonists were fighting for the restoration of their natural
> rights, a goal that could only be achieved through American independence. (398)

In so doing, Paine was unique among colonial rhetoricians (398).

Jordan D. Winthrop explores another aspect of Paine's writing: his rhetorical "killing of
the king," or convincing Americans to throw off the monarchism of Great Britain.[73] Winthrop
writes: "Taking American history as a whole, one can make a very good case for the proposition
that, with the possible exception of *Uncle Tom's Cabin, Common Sense* was demonstrably the
most immediately influential political or social tract every published in this country" (295).
Jordan argues that much of Paine's influence was exerted subliminally in *Common Sense* (296).
He explores the various devices and metaphors that Paine used, such as his attack mounted
through the metaphor of George III as a father figure, transforming him into a "brute" (301).

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[72] David C. Hoffman, "Paine and Prejudice: Rhetorical Leadership through Perceptual Framing in Common Sense," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 9, no. 3 (2006): 373-410, accessed February 3, 2010, http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy. liberty.edu:2048/ehost/pdf?vid=13&hid=8&sid=b214b752-3733-4f49-85e2-5ffe001c717f%40sessionmgr11.
[73] Winthrop D. Jordan, "Familial Politics: Thomas Paine and the Killing of the King, 1776," *Journal of American History* 60, no.2 (1973): 294-308, accessed February 18, 2010, http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.liberty.edu:2048/stable/ pdfplus/2936777.pdf .

Another theme worth exploring in the document is Paine's use of religious allusions and arguments in the pamphlet. Jerome Mahaffey takes note of this odd rhetorical choice of Paine's and attempts to reconcile it with Paine's reputation as a deist.[74] He explores how Paine's decision to publish the pamphlet anonymously allowed Paine to construct an "imagined author" whose religious arguments would be more forceful and credible (489). Mahaffey writes:

> Arguably, the person speaking in Common Sense did not really exist. Yet, by placing Common Sense in the mainstream of that reading public, Paine engaged them with a person whom they could visualize and hear—a fiery preacher dedicated to the revolutionary cause—sensible, rational, articulate, and not afraid to risk all by publishing his seditious thoughts. (491)

Overthrowing the colonists' religious reasons for eschewing war with Britain was, Mahaffey argues, a significant "rhetorical challenge"; however, it was a challenge Paine was apparently not afraid to take up. His imagined authorship allowed him to counter the religious arguments before moving on to practical arguments (493).

Paine's style in writing *Common Sense* was, as we have seen, remarkably down-to-earth, and is often cited as a reason for its success. In view of that fact, it is no surprise that many scholars have focused on Paine's *style* as an important target of analysis. Sigelman and Martindale, for example, use modern textual analysis to discover how *Common Sense* employed accessibility and forcefulness.[75] They analyzed fourteen pre-Revolutionary pamphlets and articles in addition to *Common Sense*. Using the number of words per sentence and the number of long words (words of six letters or more) as a measure of accessibility and categorizing specific words according to temperament to gauge forcefulness, they found that:

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[74] Mahaffey, "Converting Tories to Whigs," 488-504.
[75] Sigelman and Martindale, "The Common Style of Common Sense," 374.

Paine used fewer long words and wrote in shorter sentences than any other pamphleteer, thereby achieving the simple, unadorned style he sought. No less importantly, his tone was far different from that of any other pamphleteer; whereas others conveyed reserve and passivity, Paine, to an unparalleled degree, conveyed energy and activity. (374-375, 377)

A similar study by Thomas Clark analyzes the common style of *Common Sense* via another path. Clark uses Walker Gibson's framework from *Tough, Sweet, and Stuffy* to analyze Paine's prose along with four other revolutionary era pamphleteers.[76] He found that Paine had a favorable balance of toughness, sweetness, and stuffiness—each of these being measurable prose styles—while the other pamphleteers generally used more stuffiness and very little toughness (32). His analysis is somewhat limited in that he only analyzed the first one thousand words of each of the pamphlets, however, his conclusion fits with the general consensus regarding Paine's writing style. In Clark's words, "Paine's voice is relatively tough. He knows he is right and does not attempt to coax his listeners with intimate first or second person pronouns. He states his argument directly and makes frequent use of 'to be,' arguing, for example, that 'society is produced by our wants' rather than 'society may be produced by our wants'" (33).

One final study from this brief overview of analytical methods regarding *Common Sense* is Edward Larkin's "Inventing an American Public." Larkin takes a historical-critical perspective on the document, examining how Paine's experiences with the *Pennsylvania Magazine* uniquely equipped him to communicate with a "public" that he himself created.[77] In Habermasian style,

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[76] Thomas Clark, "A Note on Tom Paine's 'Vulgar' Style," *Communication Quarterly* 26, no. 2 (Spring1978 1978): 31-34, accessed February 24, 2011, http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu:2048/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=c6372bcb-e302-4d27-b549-d8740ee431d7%40sessionmgr110&vid=1&hid=125.

[77] Larkin, "Inventing an American Public," 253.

Larkin discusses how Paine and the *Pennsylvania Magazine* constructed that public and motivated it by creating a specifically *American* identity for the readers of the magazine (270).

These studies form a solid basis from which to analyze *Common Sense* rhetorically, though there is certainly more that can be done with the work, rich as it is in meaning and impact. It is my hope that textual charisma analysis can add yet another piece to the puzzle of dialogue regarding *Common Sense.* Mahaffey notes correctly that many authors have posited differing explanations as to how and why Paine's pamphlet achieved such immediate wide-spread renown in the colonies,[78] while Ponder presciently observes that "there is no master key" to unlocking the secret to *Common Sense'*s success.[79] He writes:

> No serious engagement with the text of *Common Sense* and no earnest attempt to describe its rhetorical force can avoid the complexity and concurrence of events in colonial America during the first half of 1776. Paine's pamphlet worked on many different levels with many different readers in many different places—all at about the same time. (24)

I do not intend to assert that my explanation is the *only* legitimate one, or even that it is necessarily the foremost one: it is merely one more way of looking at the document—one more key to the complex set of padlocks encasing the mystery of *Common Sense*.

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[78] Mahaffey, "Converting Tories to Whigs," 490.
[79] Ponder, *Independence Unfurled*, 24.

Chapter 3

Charisma in *Common Sense*

John Marcus wrote in his 1961 essay, "Transcendence and Charisma," that "the essence of the indispensability of the charismatic Hero lies in the belief he arouses that he can control the forces of history and achieve its transcendent objective."[80] This very Weberian explanation of charisma is a typical one for early studies on charisma. While I have no intention of disputing its validity and its value to charisma studies, I do wish to point out that charisma as a focus of study has expanded greatly in recent decades, as I have shown in previous chapters of this thesis. Charisma is no longer seen to exist merely in a leader or "hero." Recent studies have focused less on the transcendence of charisma and more on its pragmatic function. We do not study only charismatic world-changers such as Napoleon or Hitler, we study figures of lesser historical significance, such as Democratic presidential nominees—even unsuccessful ones.[81]

I do heartily embrace Marcus' idea that charisma involves a belief that, to some degree or another, the charismatic leader is able to "control the forces of history and achieve its transcendent objective." However, this grandiose language should not lead us to believe that charisma is always accompanied by trumpets, cymbals, and choirs of angels singing over the leader in question—charisma can exist more quietly than that. Sometimes it merely involves the audience's assent that what the speaker or leader stands for is true and right, and that the charismatic individual is worthy of some sort of allegiance.

This concept applies the same way to message as it does to messenger. In some way, the reader or listener believes that the *message* itself, the idea, is able to control or alter the courses

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[80] John T. Marcus, "Transcendence and Charisma," *The Western Political Quarterly* 14, no. 1, part 1 (March 1961): 237, *JSTOR*, accessed March 17, 2011, http://www.jstor.org/stable/443942.
[81] Rosenberg and Hirschberg, 640-655.

of history and achieve its transcendent objective. This was certainly the case with Paine's

Common Sense. Those who read it knew fully the significance of Paine's ideas: they were no

mere invitation to agree and then carry on with business as usual. The tremendous import of the

document was that, if its message were true, it would *change the course of history*. The colonists

came to believe that the message indeed was true, and that the idea, the message itself, was so

transcendent that it was worth the risking of their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.

In this chapter, I will analyze the charisma in the text of Paine's *Common Sense.* As

previously noted, I have adopted three of Rosenberg and Hirschberg's characteristics identified

with charisma: persuasiveness, enthusiasm, and powerfulness. I will begin by expanding on my

method of analysis, proceed to carrying out the analysis, and conclude by summarizing the

results.

Method of Analysis Explained

For each of the four characteristics that I have decided to search for in my chosen texts, I

have assigned specific textual cues that correspond to those characteristics. For persuasiveness, I

will be looking specifically for argumentative reasoning such as syllogisms, enthymemes, and

statistics or examples. Each of these specific cues are identifiable as appeals to the intellect and

direct attempts to change one's mind. Believability I will identify through appeals to authorities

and sources that are accepted as credible.

What is powerful? Powerfulness is an impression, where the emotions are affected before

the intellect. Anyone can understand the difference between saying "War is beginning" and "The

lights are going out all over Europe," as Sir Edward Grey so insightfully said at the outbreak of

World War I. The first is matter-of-fact, and could hardly be any simpler—the second is a

metaphor that leaves an instant impression. This is not to say that simplicity is less powerful. At

times simplicity can be far more powerful than elaborate speech, as *Common Sense* illustrates. "Yes, we can" is certainly among the simplest of phrases in the English language, but coming from the lips of Barack Obama, that simple phrase left a powerful impression and became a mantra that accompanied one of the most historic elections in American history. We are all familiar with the sensation of chills going up the spine at a powerful piece of music, a powerful word, or even at a powerful *thought* that may never find utterance. While powerfulness in a message may be difficult to quantify, it is my opinion that there are several specific textual cues which often accompany it: declarative or exclamatory statements, metaphors and other forms of imagery, and rhetorical questions. Though by no means comprehensive, this brief list of items forms a starting point for my analysis of powerfulness in my chosen artifacts.

As I have previously noted, *Common Sense* exists in six sections. In order to limit the scope of this study and narrow the focal point, I will only be examining the third and fourth sections, which together form the heart of the pamphlet: the most emphatic, the most controversial, and the most incendiary portion of *Common Sense*. It is in the third section that Paine delivers a fell blow to the colonists' collective notions about monarchy and hereditary succession. In the fourth section, Paine's tone ascends to a fevered pitch and his invective becomes energetic, hard-hitting, and aggressive. In the following pages, I will discuss the results of my analysis of this rich text, taking each of the three elements (persuasiveness, believability, and powerfulness) one by one.

Persuasiveness

There is a relatively spare use of *clear* syllogistic reasoning in the pamphlet—that is, most syllogisms are implied rather than explicitly delineated. For example, Paine's entire argument regarding monarchy and hereditary succession can be seen as an extended enthymeme:

If the Bible clearly expresses that monarchy is not God's plan for mankind, and the Bible is authoritative, then monarchy must not be God's plan for mankind. Paine does not elaborate on the authority of Scripture. In the colonial context, the Bible was widely accepted as an authority on human affairs; therefore, it was not presumptuous or careless for Paine to assume that premise and only explicitly state the other two premises. This style of reasoning is employed frequently throughout the pamphlet. Instances of concise or clearly-stated syllogisms and enthymemes are relatively few, though they are occasionally used, such as Paine's pithy statement that "a government [Britain] which cannot preserve the peace is no government at all."[82] The unwritten premise is that government, by definition, is an institution which organizes to protect its own territory. Paine, having proven that Britain has entangled America in European wars, draws the conclusion that Britain is no government at all for the colonies.

Paine uses statistics sparingly, and only when absolutely necessary. For example, he notes in his discussion of the ethnicity of the colonies that "not one third of the inhabitants, even of this province, are of English descent," thus damaging the notion of the colonies' relationship to England (27). His rhetoric is, however, peppered with colorful and useful examples. He reaches back to excoriate William the Conqueror multiple times in order to cast the origins of the English monarchy in a dubious light (18, 20, 41). He mentions Holland and Switzerland as models of the republican form of government (38) and points to Denmark and Sweden as examples of nations where repeated petitioning of the monarch was inversely related to liberty (the implication being, of course, that further petitioning George III would only cause him to become more implacable). Paine draws very heavily from historical examples throughout the pamphlet, though such examples are particularly ubiquitous in the section on monarchy and hereditary succession.

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[82] Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (Bedford, Mass: Applewood Books, 2002)*,* 37.

Paine uses examples in a highly *comparative* fashion, attempting to prove that where a principle has been true or untrue in one case, it will also be true or untrue in another. He questions the idea of English descent being a tying bind between England and the colonies, writing that "the first King of England, of the present line (William the Conqueror) was a Frenchman, and half the Peers of England are descendants from the same country; wherefore, by the same method of reasoning, England ought to be governed by France" (27). Paine's intention is that the reader should automatically rebuff the idea of England being ruled by the despised French and should then regard the idea of America being ruled by England merely because of ancestral ties every bit as absurd.

It is worth noting that a great deal of the persuasiveness of Paine's pamphlet rests with his ability to effectively *disprove* prevailing notions much more than with his ability to *prove* his own ideas. The fourth segment of the pamphlet consists almost entirely of disproving arguments for reconciliation with Britain. Paine lists off the popular arguments, one by one, asking at the outset that the reader will merely "divest himself of prejudice and prepossession" enough to realize that widely-circulated arguments are not necessarily valid ones (23). He uses a variety of methods to disprove these arguments. Early in the fourth section, he points out a *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* fallacy, objecting to the idea that prosperity under Britain in the past would ensure a secure future. "Nothing can be more fallacious than this kind of argument," he writes. "We may as well assert that because a child has thrived on milk, that it is never to have meat, or that the first twenty years of our lives is to become a precedent for the next twenty" (24-25). He attacks the notion of Britain as a sheltering parent by questioning her motives: "We have boasted the protection of Great Britain, without considering, that her motive was *interest* not *attachment*; that she did not protect us from *our enemies* on *our account*, but from *her enemies* on *her own*

account" (25). This protection, he argues, arises from the same basic motive that Britain would have in defending a nation such as Turkey: "the sake of trade and dominion" (25).

<center>Believability</center>

It is interesting almost to the point of humorousness that Paine's chief appeals to authority are to the Bible and to "the Almighty." That a man so irreligious would draw so heavily from accepted Christian authorities can only be attributed to his knowledge of his audience and his crafty ability to make himself credible in their eyes, as Mahaffey has noted.[83] It is certainly an ironic twist of fate that that same audience would later castigate him for his irreverence after he penned *The Age of Reason*. His checkered religious background left him familiar enough with Scripture to use it to his advantage. Indeed, the section on monarchy and succession draws almost exclusively from biblical authority.

Paine opens the section by referring to the "scripture chronology" almost immediately (12). What follows is an account of the Israelites' early experiences with monarchy. The institution of monarchy, Paine asserts, cannot "be defended on the authority of scripture; for the will of the Almighty, as declared by Gideon and the prophet Samuel, expressly disapproves of government by Kings" (13). He then relates the stories of Gideon and Samuel, also making sure not to neglect the popularly recited and certainly well-known "Render unto Caesar" passage, which he asserts to be "no support" of monarchy (13). His discussion includes many direct quotations from Scripture, several of which are rather lengthy, and even a reference to the doctrine of original sin (19). "These portions of scripture are direct and positive," he states confidently. "They admit of no equivocal construction. That the Almighty hath here entered his protest against monarchical government is true, or the scripture is false" (16-17).

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[83] Mahaffey, "Converting Tories to Whigs," 488-504.

Biblical references are virtually the only appeals to authority that Paine employs, possibly because the Bible would have been the most universally accepted authority that the colonists would be able to relate to. Only three times does Paine quote any other authority: he references Milton, Giacinto Dragonetti (an Italian political theorist), and Sir William Meredith (an author and member of Parliament) once each.

<div align="center">Powerfulness</div>

Without a doubt, powerfulness was the most demanding and yet rewarding part of my analysis of *Common Sense.* It is profound that a document so many centuries old can still produce an emotional reaction in readers today. *Common Sense* is to the reader at various times a seductive melody, an unfolding drama, or a splash of cold water in the face—but it is always *powerful*, and virtually impossible to ignore.

The four textual cues which formed the basis of my analysis of powerfulness (declarative statements, exclamatory statements, metaphors/imagery, and rhetorical questions) were all present in the document. The two strongest categories were declarative statements and metaphors and imagery.

The document is literally filled with strongly-worded declarative statements. Many, though not all, of these statements are simple sentences (as opposed to compound or complex sentences), making them stark and straight-forward:

"Reconciliation and ruin are nearly related" (36).

"Every quiet method for peace hath been ineffectual" (32).

"Every thing that is right or natural pleads for separation" (28-29).

"Arms, as the last resource, decide the contest" (23).

Bailyn's description of *Common Sense* as a "slashing attack" is quite well-suited to these short, clipped statements—each one is a thrust of the rhetorical sword.[84]

Exclamatory statements are more rare, occurring only eight times in the two sections I analyzed. Twice they occur in clusters—one cluster with two in a row, and one with three, as if to increase the intensity of Paine's appeal:

> O ye that love mankind! Ye that dare oppose, not only the tyranny, but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the old world is overrun with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted round the globe. Asia, and Africa, have long expelled her. Europe regards her like a stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart. O! receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind. (42)

As the section draws to a close, the powerfulness of these words seems to echo in the mind. The intensity of Paine's call to action makes the calm, almost sedate opening to the fifth section of the pamphlet a jarring surprise.

Rhetorical questions occur slightly more frequently than exclamatory statements; however, they function in much the same way, and Paine employs them with similar technique, often clustering them together. "Hath your house been burnt?" Paine demands of the colonist who dares support the idea of reconciliation with the mother country. "Hath your property been destroyed before your face? Are your wife and children destitute of a bed to lie on, or bread to live on? Have you lost a parent or a child by their hands, and yourself the ruined and wretched survivor?" These questions are a perfect set-up for Paine's bitter answer which follows: "If you have not, then are you not a judge of those who have. But if you have, and can still shake hands with the murderers, then are you unworthy the name of husband, father, friend, or lover, and whatever may be your rank or title in life, you have the heart of a coward, and the spirit of a

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[84] Bailyn, *Ideological Origins*, 286.

sycophant" (31). As this example illustrates, Paine's rhetorical questions are pointed, and leave little room for disagreement.

Without doubt, one of the most immediately noticeable devices which Paine employs to make his prose more powerful is that of metaphor and imagery. The images Paine uses are vivid and arresting, and they are the chief ornaments which the reputedly simple prose boasts. Many of these metaphors are crafted to portray ideas, persons, or other entities in a negative or even repulsive light. It is certainly by design that Paine aligns monarchial government with the much-hated emblem of oppressive religion when he states that "monarchy in every instance is the Popery of government" (17). He draws off this same metaphor again later on when referring to the "papistical design" of "the King and his parasites" (26). Paine is broad-minded about the epithets with which he castigates George III, however, describing him as the "Pharaoh of England" (34) in one instance and "the Royal Brute of Britain" in another (40). George III is, to Paine, a hypocrite for masquerading as a patriarchal figure: "I rejected the hardened, sullen tempered Pharaoh of England for ever; and disdain the wretch, that with the pretended title of FATHER OF HIS PEOPLE can unfeelingly hear of their slaughter, and composedly sleep with their blood upon his soul" (34). He further blackens the image of Britain as a whole by portraying their excesses and abuses as tantamount to harlotry or rape, both unforgiveable (42). America is the victim, "wounded through a thousand pores" (42). These examples merely provide a small sampling of Paine's brilliant use of imagery.

<div align="center">Unexpected Results</div>

In my analysis, I stumbled across two elements of powerfulness that I had not intended to look for, but that were impossible to miss: hyperbole and sarcasm. Paine frequently uses extreme and exaggerated language as well as superlatives to communicate the urgency of the colonists'

situation, the repulsiveness of Britain's actions, and the indefensibleness of support for reconciliation with Britain. The idea of hereditary succession being a protection from civil war is "the most barefaced falsity every imposed upon mankind," Paine writes flatly (20). He decries as "repugnant to reason" the idea that America should be ruled by an external power, asserting confidently that "the utmost stretch of human wisdom cannot, at this time, compass a plan short of separation" (31). Interestingly, Paine follows at least one of his most hyperbolic passages, the "heart of a coward and the spirit of a sycophant" sentence (quoted earlier), with an immediate claim that he is, in fact, *not* exaggerating (31). One almost wonders if the claim was intended as sarcasm!

Paine certainly employs sarcasm in other parts of the document. He jeers at the Israelites' "natural delusion" in naively desiring a monarchy (13), and in spite of his frequently outrageous and harsh use of invective, states sardonically that he would "carefully avoid giving unnecessary offence" (29). Paine mentions that George III's youth could be easily mocked, but sardonically states that he will "decline this sort of reply, though I will never cease to expose the absurdity of it" (35). In his segment on monarchy and succession, Paine takes a shot at the notion of the divine right of kings by referencing William the Conqueror:

> A French bastard landing with an armed banditti, and establishing himself King of England against the consent of the natives, is in plain terms a very paltry rascally original.—It certainly hath no divinity in it. However, it is needless to spend much time in exposing the folly of hereditary right, if there are any so weak as to believe it, let them promiscuously worship the ass and lion, and welcome. I shall neither copy their humility, nor disturb their devotion. (19)

Reflections

Common Sense is a document wreathed in charismatic devices. Thomas Paine's craft cannot be attributed to education: his successful prose stemmed either from extraordinary natural talent, great personal diligence, or mere chance—or perhaps a combination of the three. Whatever the cause, however, it is little wonder that this brash and yet alarmingly insightful document spread across the colonies as it did. Leaving the past behind for the moment, though not forgetting it, the next two chapters will move forward two and a half centuries to the rhetoric of Daniel Hannan: first contextualizing it, and then breaking it apart to see where its charisma lies.

Chapter 4

Daniel Hannan: An Internet Sensation

Just as the printing press revolutionized its time, the internet has revolutionized ours. Daniel Hannan's 2009 speech is a prime example of that revolution: it propelled a virtually unknown MEP to the forefront of the political scene on both sides of the Atlantic. Hannan, a self-described "backbench MEP,"[85] had alerted the BBC and other journalists of his speech, but none of them initially reported on it.[86] In spite of this fact, the YouTube clip received more than a million views in one week,[87] and has more than 2.7 million views to date.[88] The YouTube clip was then picked up by a number of American bloggers, and eventually by commentators and journalists in the mainstream media. For this reason, Hannan has been dubbed "an internet sensation"[89] and an indirect source of embarrassment for the British media that failed to cover the story when it broke.[90] Interestingly, he had frequently posted clips of his speeches on YouTube in the past—however, none of the other clips he posted generated nearly as much interest as the clip of his harangue against Gordon Brown. He admitted that this fact left him "perplexed."[91]

My hope is that the analysis to follow can shed a little more light on the question of how Hannan's speech became so popular so quickly, and in the unlikely region of the United States. However, prior to analyzing the charisma of the speech, some explanation of context is needed. This chapter will review information on the background of the speaker, the historical context of the speech, and details regarding the speech itself.

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[85] Hannan, "My Speech to Gordon Brown."
[86] "Today, Strasbourg," *Economist.*
[87] Ibid.
[88] YouTube, "Daniel Hannan MEP."
[89] Walker, "An Internet Sensation."
[90] "Today, Strasbourg," *Economist.*
[91] Hannan, "My Speech to Gordon Brown."

"Who Is This Hannan Man?"

It seems unlikely that there could be many characters in the European Parliament as colorful as Daniel Hannan. Born in Peru in 1971, Hannan earned an M.A. in Modern History from Oxford in 1992.[92] He began his work as a conservative early on, participating in and leading conservative student groups. In his second year at Oxford, he organized an anti-European federalism group called "Campaign for an Independent Britain."[93] Later, he began working for Tory Parliament Members (MPs) Michael Howard and William Hague as a speechwriter.[94] Since 1999, he has served as an MEP representing Southeast England.

In 2007, Hannan found a new way to communicate his political ideas to the public: blogging. He has a blog with *The Telegraph* that he updates several times a week. In 2009, he wrote, "I've just spotted that *Newsnight* described me last week as a 'Conservative blogger' . . . . I've always regarded the letters 'MEP' name as a kind of leper's bell. When I meet people at weddings, I never volunteer what I do for a living. But blogging? That's another matter entirely: bold, questing, new wave. Thank you, *Newsnight*: I feel I've finally made it."[95] His embrace of new media such as blogging and YouTube has caused him to be described by MP Douglas Carswell as a "modern politician."[96]

Perhaps Americans sensed something in this British speaker that they could relate to—something distinctly American—the daring, independent, slightly renegade spirit of revolutionary America. If they did, they were correct: Hannan is well-known as a political

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[92] European Parliament, "Daniel Hannan," accessed March 13, 2011, http://www.europarl.europa. eu/members/public/geoSearch/view.do?country=GB&partNumber=1&zone=South+East&language=EN&id=4555.

[93] Daniel Hannan, "How Our One Small Protest Toppled the Pound," *The Telegraph*, September 13, 2002, accessed March 14, 2011, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/2773280/How-our-one-small-protest-toppled-the-pound.html.
[94] "Who Is Daniel Hannan?" *BBC News*, August 27, 2009, accessed March 14, 2011. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/8225571.stm.
[95] Daniel Hannan, "I'd Rather Be Known as a Blogger Than an MEP," *Telegraph Blogs,* May 27, 2009, accessed March 13, 2011, http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/danielhannan/9908863/Id_rather_be_known_as_a_blogger_than_an_MEP/.
[96] "Who Is Daniel Hannan?" *BBC News*.

renegade—a backbench MEP with a penchant for shock value. Former Tory MP Michael Parris described him as "politically and ideologically . . . highly unstable—there's a danger that he could blow up at any time. He's an incurable attention-seeker."[97] Glover writes that Hannan "is no typical little Englander . . . he is multi-lingual. Some find his style absurd: for a while he ended speeches in Latin calling for a vote on the Lisbon treaty: 'Pactio Olisipiensis censenda est [the Lisbon Treaty must be put to the vote].'"[98] In another speech in 2009, Hannan called for Prime Minister Gordon Brown to step down, concluding by quoting Dr. Suess: "The time has come, the time is now, just go, go, go, I don't care how. You can go by foot, you can go by cow. Gordon Brown, will you please go now?"[99]

Hannan's stark independence and occasional flamboyance not only rattles his opponents, however—often, he finds himself at odds with his own party. Early on in his career at the European Parliament, he set fellow Tories' teeth on edge with critical remarks at a meeting of British MPs and MEPs. "Who is this Hannan man?" an annoyed former cabinet minister demanded after the meeting.[100]

Hannan's strained relationship with members of his own party has been a trend throughout his time in the European Parliament. It may be the reason why, after four days of YouTube fame, his speech was still not linked to the Conservative Party website.[101] His disagreements with his party led him to forfeit a frontbench position in the Parliament in order to return to the backbenches to drum up support for a move toward more direct democracy.[102] In

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[97] Ibid.

[98] Glover, "Over a Million."

[99] "Hannan's Poetic Call for Brown to Go," *BBC News*, June 8, 2009, accessed March 14, 2011, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8088541.stm.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Ibid.

[102] Chris Irvine, "Daniel Hannan Resigns from European Parliament Post," *The Telegraph,* November 5, 2009, accessed December 2, 2009, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/politics/conservative/6504497/Daniel-Hannan-resigns-from-European-Parliament-post.html.

2010, he made negative comments about Britain's National Health Service, after which members

of his own party called for discipline.[103] Conservative Party leader David Cameron distanced

himself from Hannan, saying, "He does have some quite eccentric views about some things, and

political parties always include some people who don't toe the party line on one issue or another

issue."[104]

Perhaps it is Hannan's unwillingness to "toe the party line" that makes him appealing to

American conservatives, who may have felt that their voice was not heard in a government

swallowed in Democratic majorities on every side. Even in his brief three-minute diatribe,

Hannan's independent spirit was evident, as he wanted it to be. He subsequently said in reference

to the speech:

> Nobody wants to risk looking unpatriotic, so you have to be measured and tempered in
>
> how you respond, which is completely understandable. The result of it, unfortunately, is
>
> that a lot of people are left with saying, wait a minute, hang on, nobody is saying what I
>
> would like them to say. All the politicians seem to be in this together. A lot of people felt
>
> that a cartel of politicians and bankers were setting policy in defiance of public opinion.
>
> Those were the people I was trying to speak for.[105]

<div align="center">An Electrified Political Climate</div>

Much like *Common Sense*, Hannan's speech came at a time when the American public

policy arena was extremely polarized. After eight years under President George W. Bush, the

nation was confronted with an entirely different type of governance under President Barack

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[103] BBC News, "NHS Attack by MEP 'Unpatriotic,'" August 14, 2009, accessed December 2, 2009, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8200817.stm.

[104] Deborah Summers and Lee Glendinning, "Cameron Rebukes Tory MEP Who Rubbished NHS in America," *The Guardian,* August 14, 2009, accessed December 2, 2009, http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2009/aug/14/health-nhs.

[105] "Interview with Daniel Hannan," *Vox Popoli,* March 30, 2009, accessed December 2, 2009, http://voxday.blogspot.com/2009/03/interview-with-daniel-hannan.html.

Obama. Toward the end of the Bush administration, the country had witnessed an economic

downturn followed by increased government intervention in the private sector. Soon after

Obama's inauguration, it became clear that the bricks of government growth that had been laid

by President Bush would be built upon aggressively by the new President.

Among President Obama's early controversial decisions were the closing of Guantanamo

Bay and repeal of the Mexico City Policy, which prevented taxpayer dollars from funding

abortions overseas.[106] There was also considerable controversy surrounding several of the

President's nominees, such as Timothy Geithner and Tom Daschle, both of whom had allegedly

engaged in suspicious activities regarding their taxes.[107]

During the first one hundred days of Obama's presidency, unease grew among more

conservative sectors of the population as President Obama pushed forward the American

Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, also known as the stimulus package. One blogger

called it "the most profligate spending plan in U.S. history,"[108] while another warned that "unless

some of these people get a serious dose of moral integrity overnight, Obama's massive spending

bill will become law, and we will spiral further downward."[109]

In mid-February, the political climate was again stirred up when President Obama

announced the Homeowner Affordability and Stability Plan. The $75 billion plan was intended

to spare homeowners who were unable to make their mortgage payments.[110] Conservatives met

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[106] Peter Baker, "Obama Reverses Rules on U.S. Abortion Aid," *The New York Times*, January 23, 2009, accessed March 15, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/24/us/politics/ 24obama.html.

[107] Jonathan Weisman, Laura Meckler, and Naftali Bendavid, "Obama on Defense as Daschle Withdraws," *The Wall Street Journal*¸ February 4, 2009, accessed March 15, 2011, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123368340324444099. html.

[108] Candace de Russy, "'Madness, Thy Name Is Stimulus,'" *American Thinker*, February 13, 2009, accessed March 13, 2011, http://www.americanthinker.com/2009/02/madness_thy_ name_is_stimulus.html.

[109] James Simpson, "The Stimulus Boondoggle," *American Thinker,* February 12, 2009, accessed March 13, 2011, http://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2009/02/the_stimulus_ boondoggle.html.

[110] FDIC, "Homeowner Affordability and Stability Plan," last modified February 19, 2009, accessed March 15, 2011, http://www.fdic.gov/consumers/loans/hasp/.

the announcement with outrage and protest, not only because of the cost of the program, but also because the plan supposedly rewarded the irresponsibility of those who purchased houses that they could not afford. On February 19th, CNBC's Rick Santelli "ranted" against the plan from the floor of the CME Group in Chicago. His four and a half minute tirade became known as the "rant of the year," in which he called out to the traders on the floor, "How many of you people want to pay for your neighbors' mortgage that has an extra bathroom and can't pay their bills? Raise their hand." The idea was met with booing, whereupon Santelli turned toward the camera and shouted, "President Obama, are you listening?" Another trader leaned over to Santelli and joked, "Why don't we all stop paying our mortgages? It's a moral hazard!"[111] In the wake of these events, polls showed by mid-March that President Obama had lost nearly all Republican support, as well as the support of many independent voters.[112] Santelli's famous rant became known as the catalyst for birthing the Tea Party movement.

Santelli's memorable tirade is yet another reminder of the importance of YouTube in the years and months leading up to Daniel Hannan's speech. One wonders whether the creators of YouTube ever envisioned the kind of widespread popularity that YouTube now enjoys. YouTube's own statistics tracking shows that, after only a little over five years of existence, the video search engine which made possible the viral internet video has itself "gone viral" on a global scale. Thirty-five hours of video are uploaded every minute—a massive information input level—which makes YouTube's uploaded content over sixty days greater than the amount of

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[111] YouTube, "CNBC's Rick Santelli's Chicago Tea Party," February 19, 2009, accessed March 13, 2011, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zp-Jw-5Kx8k.

[112] Douglas E. Schoen and Scott Rasmussen, "Obama's Poll Numbers Are Falling to Earth," *The Wall Street Journal*, March 13, 2009, accessed March 15, 2011, http://online.wsj.com/ article/SB123690358175013837.html.

content generated by the three major US networks over a period of sixty years. The site attracts a

wide range of users from ages eighteen to fifty-four.[113]

   Time magazine's John Cloud speculated in 2006 about the reasons for YouTube's

success: "YouTube became a phenomenon in 2006 for many reasons, but one in particular: it

was both easy and edgy, a rare combination. You can watch videos on the site without

downloading any software or even registering. YouTube is to video browsing what a Wal-Mart

Supercenter is to shopping: everything is there, and all you have to do is walk in the door."[114]

This ease of access and use is, no doubt, part of what has made YouTube so responsive to

popular culture. In addition, content is shaped largely by the users. There are some commercial

accounts, but the vast majority of users are ordinary people, uploading home-made music videos

of favorite songs, excerpts from favorite movies, home videos of family members and children,

or whatever "random" subject matter that a user feels is worthy of a mass audience's attention.

It's a free-for-all. The site has provided yet another medium whereby individuals and

organizations can share information on an international scale. This medium would prove to be of

vital important to Daniel Hannan's 2009 viral speech.

<p align="center">"The Devalued Prime Minister of a Devalued Government"</p>

   Clearly, the American context in which Hannan's speech was received was a significant

contributing factor to its popularity. America was ripe for Hannan's bold, almost angry rhetoric.

"Do you realize how your message is resonating loudly and clearly in America tonight and how

inspired people are by your words?" American commentator Sean Hannity demanded of Hannan

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[113] YouTube, "Statistics," accessed February 21, 2011, http://www.youtube.com/t/press_statistics.

[114] John Cloud, "The Gurus of YouTube," *Time,* December 16, 2006, accessed February 21, 2011, http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1570721,00.html.

in an interview just days after the speech went viral on YouTube.[115] "You seemed to articulate in

few minute speech what others have been spending days, weeks and months whining about,"

gushed FOX News' Neil Cavuto. "I guess they're likening it to sort of a Davy Jones moment for

the world. And I'm wondering whether that was your intention or you just hit a nerve at the right

time."[116] Glenn Beck also interviewed the international YouTube star, noting that "this thing is

spreading like wildfire, except, I think, in the United Kingdom."[117]

American bloggers quickly began to take note of the speech as well, affording Hannan

celebrity status. "Can I vote for this guy?" asked one blogger, re-posting the video. "Can I import

him?"[118] Another wrote, "The Republicans finally found a leader. Too bad he's a Brit."[119] Pamela

Geller quipped in her blog, "Being that it is no longer required that you present a birth certificate

to run for the presidency of the United States, let's run this fella!"[120]

Obviously, however, context alone rarely makes a speech noteworthy. Some have

questioned the merits of speech itself. Andrew Sparrow of *The Guardian* wrote, "Having listened

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[115] "Interview with Daniel Hannan," *Hannity* (*FOX News),* March 26, 2009, *LexisNexis,* accessed March 10, 2011, http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu:2048/lnacui2api/results/docview/docview.do?docLinkInd=true&risb =21_T11444563374&format=GNBFI&sort=BOOLEAN&startDocNo=176&resultsUrlKey=29_T11446154258&cis b=22_T11446154257&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=174179&docNo=188.

[116] "Cavuto for March 25, 2009," *Your World with Neil Cavuto (FOX News)*, March 25, 2009, *LexisNexis,* accessed March 10, 2011, http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu:2048/lnacui2api/results/docview/docview.do?doc LinkInd=true&risb=21_T11444563374&format=GNBFI&sort=BOOLEAN&startDocNo=201&resultsUrlKey=29_ T11446154258&cisb=22_T11446154257&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=347932&docNo=201.

[117] "FOX News Channel 'The Glenn Beck Program' Interview with Daniel Hannan, Member of the European Parliament," *Federal News Service*, March 29, 2009, *LexisNexis*, accessed March 10, 2011, http://www.lexisnexis. com.ezproxy.liberty.edu:2048/lnacui2api/results/docview/docview.do?docLinkInd=true&risb=21_T11444563374&f ormat=GNBFI&sort=BOOLEAN&startDocNo=201&resultsUrlKey=29_T11446154258&cisb=22_T11446154257 &treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=8104&docNo=214.

[118] Michael F. Cannon, "Can I Vote for This Guy?" *Cato@Liberty,* March 26, 2009, accessed March 10, 2011, http://www.cato-at-liberty.org/can-i-vote-for-this-guy/.

[119] Larry Elder, "Political Courage – British Style," Creators Syndicate, April 1, 2009, *LexisNexis,* accessed 10 March, 2011, http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu:2048/lnacui2api/results/docview/docview.do? docLinkInd=true&risb=21_T11444563374&format=GNBFI&sort=BOOLEAN&startDocNo=101&resultsUrlKey=2 9_T11444563391&cisb=22_T11444563390&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=157000&docNo=115.

[120] Pamela Geller, "Presidential!" *Atlas Shrugs*, March 25, 2009, accessed March 10, 2011, http://atlasshrugs2000. typepad.com/atlas_shrugs/2009/03/presidential.html.

to it a couple of times, and read the text, I don't think it's a great speech."[121] Sparrow attributes

the speech's successfulness to the atmosphere in which it was delivered:

> MEPs in the European Parliament are sometimes only allowed to speak for one minute.
> They don't get heckled, in the way that MPs do at Westminster, and they don't have to use
> any of the archaic language about "honourable friends" etc. This makes the place quite
> soulless. But it also makes it much better for YouTube. Hannan's the last person I would
> expect to applaud European parliamentary procedure, but he should; it's one factor, I
> think, that has helped to make him an internet star.[122]

While there may be some merit to Sparrow's assertion, I do not think the speech's phenomenal

American popularity can be reduced to so simple a factor—and I also have trouble with the idea

that the speech itself is not noteworthy. Sparrow does, however, partially redeem himself by

noting another factor that I find significant, writing that the speech is "much clearer and more

concise than the speeches normally delivered in Congress or at Westminster. And, at three

minutes long, it's just the right length for YouTube."[123] Indeed, this clearness and conciseness is

more than likely one of the factors that made Americans listen up. One post on a blog

appropriately referred to the speech as "the shot heard around the world."[124] This metaphor is

well-suited in several ways: first, it accurately describes the phenomenon of the speech making

its way all the way across the Atlantic. Second, and more revealingly, the metaphor reveals

something about the speech itself: it was a shot, a bullet – brief, concise, clear, resounding, and

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[121] Andrew Sparrow, "Why Has Daniel Hannan Become an Internet Sensation?" *Politics Blog*, March 26, 2009, accessed December 2, 2009, http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/ blog/2009/mar/26/danial-hannan-youtube.

[122] Ibid.

[123] Ibid.

[124] Mr. and Mrs. Orlando Loyd of UT, November 7th, 2009 (4:19 p.m.), comment on James Pethokoukis, "U.K. MEP Daniel Hannan," *US News and World Report,* March 25, 2009, accessed December 2, 2009, http://www.usnews. com/money/blogs/capital-commerce/2009/03/25/british-mep-daniel-hannen-transcript-of-his-attack-on-gordon-brown.

striking. Sparrow may not have found anything ground-breaking or unprecedented in the speech; however, his analysis brushes close to, yet falls short of, discovering what American people most value: straight-forwardness. It is that quality that Hannan's speech possesses in abundance.

Returning to the words of Andrew Sparrow – "Having listened to it a couple of times, and read the text, I don't think it's a great speech" – it is hard to understand how he could have reached such a conclusion. The speech is powerfully-delivered, with impeccable phrasing and timing. Hannan's rate of speech picks up at key moments in order to increase the energy of the moment. It slows down in other places to provide resounding emphasis:

"You cannot go on forever."

"You have run out of our money."

"Under your captaincy, our hull is pressed deep into the waterline under the accumulated weight of your debt."

There can be little doubt that the manner in which the speech was delivered was a significant factor in its success. Before the advent of television and internet, the delivery of a speech would only carry effect for those who heard the speech in person. Afterward, the text alone would have to stand the test of public review and scrutiny. However, the really amazing thing about a speech popularized by YouTube is that the delivery, the atmosphere, and even much of the surrounding noise are preserved perfectly for each person who views the speech. Each viewer is then made part of a "virtual audience."

Additionally, there is one interesting factor in the speech's delivery that ought not to be neglected: the speaker's British accent. While it may seem a trivial point, it should not be overlooked. Americans often embrace the British accent and culture with an almost disproportionate fascination. In *Forbes¸* D. Keith Mano relates a humorous example. He had

been conducting an experiment in which he was doing undercover research on panhandling. Decked out in an elaborately tacky costume, he begged for money and received only one Canadian dime until he conceived the idea to beg with a British accent. After that point, he received $11.05 in an only ninety minutes.[125]

While amusing, this story exemplifies what Mano and Searle refer to as "anglophilia"—the love of all things British. They identify a few reasons why the British accent is so alluring to the American ear. The first reason is that British speakers tend to emphasize the vowel, rather than the consonant. Thus, "meaning and force are dependent on inflection."[126] The second reason deals with articulation:

> The British – because they leave so much space between word and word – tend to enunciate well. We, given our consonantal drift, pronounce incomprehensible locutions like 'Whaddyadoon?' Furthermore, we associate clear speech and the stress implied by it with a) anger or b) firmness or c) angry firmness. When little Bill gets irksome, his American dad will say, 'Go. To. Your. Room. William. Smith.' Thus, for us, being spoken at by a Brit is like disciplinary action: you are bad and five years old again. By contrast our own diction is so imprecise that we say, 'Read my lips,' before making a point. Americans are eloquent only to the deaf.[127]

This lay explanation actually is demonstrated quite well in Hannan's speech. After playing this speech to several of my Communication 101 classes, many students commented on almost fear-inducing severity of Hannan's delivery. Certainly part of this was intentional—he

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[125] D. Keith Mano and Ronald Searle, "Why Americans Feel Inferior to the British and Why We Shouldn't," *Forbes* 155, no. 6 (March 13, 1995): 123-125, *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost, accessed 2 December 2009, http:// web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu:2048/ehost/detail?vid=3&hid=124&sid=ece525f2-969f-44c3-88ab-fb83c759884f%40sessionmgr111&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl.

[126] Ibid.

[127] Ibid.

spoke with force, staring directly at the Prime Minister. However, I cannot help but agree with Mano and Searle that the British enunciation, which Americans often associate with firmness or anger, is a contributing factor to the forcefulness and consequent effectiveness of Hannan's delivery.

Christine Marie Bennett's dissertation, "Theoretical Approach to Understanding the Impact of Accented Speech on Marketers' Efforts to Inform, Persuade, and Assist Consumers," provides great insight into further reasons why British speech is so effective with American audiences. She points out that stereotypes and associations play a significant role: Americans tend to associate British speech with individuals such as Tony Blair or Queen Elizabeth.[128] The association is linked to the stereotype of British people as being more educated, proper, intelligent, or sophisticated (25, 27). In fact, people are likely to perceive a Briton as more sophisticated than Americans in general (40). Interestingly, Bennett's research suggests that the perception of a product's spokesperson is likely to affect a consumer's perception of the product: "using a British accented spokesperson may aid consumers' perception that the advertised product is sophisticated as well" (32). Applying that principle to political speech, it is rational and natural that an audience member would assign greater intelligence to a *message* delivered by an intelligent *messenger.* This is likely true in Hannan's case. Subconsciously, Americans associate him with higher levels of intelligence and sophistication – therefore, his message, or his speech, is assumed to be more sophisticated and intelligent as well. This would, perhaps, partially account for Americans' quickness to hail Hannan's speech as masterful.

Sparrow, of course, being British, could not be expected to figure this point into his calculations. In fact, it is unlikely that he would understand Americans' enthusiasm about the

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[128] Christine Marie Bennett, *Theoretical Approach to Understanding the Impact of Accented Speech on Marketers' Efforts to Inform, Persuade, and Assist Consumers*, (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 2008), 21.

speech in any degree. He passed the speech off as "predictable" because he is familiar with British and European politics.[129] Hannan's comments did not come as a surprise to him – his accent did not sound new or original to him. However, to Americans, the highly relevant message delivered in a sophisticated accent with a commanding presence met their need for a spokesman to voice their concerns.

What caused this speech, of all the speeches given by Hannan over the years, to impact audiences so greatly? Why did it acquire tens of thousands of views on YouTube while the clip of Prime Minister Gordon Brown's speech (to which Hannan's speech was a response) only netted just over two hundred views by the same time the next day?[130] Of interest also is the fact that other MEPs had delivered speeches to Prime Minister Gordon Brown on the same day as Daniel Hannan's speech. MEP Nigel Farrage, for example, delivered a vehement speech in which he decried the Prime Minister's policies and failure to accept responsibility for past blunders.[131] The YouTube clip of Farrage's speech, however, has netted only a little over sixteen thousand views to date.[132] While context and delivery are, no doubt, significant factors in the speech's success, I do not believe that they show the whole picture. Charisma analysis will provide yet another way of looking at this speech, and, I think, a very significant one.

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[129] Sparrow, "Why Has Daniel Hannan Become an Internet Sensation?"

[130] James Forsythe, "Can the Internet Turn Dan Hannan's Skewering of Brown into a Story?" *Spectator Blogs*, March 25, 2009, accessed September 22, 2009, http://www.spectator.co.uk/ coffeehouse/3473051/can-the-internet-turn-dan-hannans-skewering-of-brown-into-a-story.thtml.

[131] "Debates," European Parliament.

[132] YouTube, "Nigel Farrage vs Gordon Brown EU Parliament," March 24, 2009, accessed September 22, 2009, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J0h9dLMWF4E.

Chapter 5

Charisma in "The Devalued Prime Minister of a Devalued Government"

After Prime Minister Gordon Brown had made his almost ritualistically dry political comments before the European Parliament on March 24, 2009, European Parliament President Pottering made a ritualistically fatuous comment: "Prime Minister, on behalf of the European Parliament, I want to thank you for that very remarkable speech here in the European Parliament."[133] To read the transcript of the Prime Minister's speech or to listen to it on video makes obvious the painful fact that the most remarkable thing about the speech was how *unremarkable* it actually was. It can hardly come as a surprise that Hannan's stinging, scintillating rhetoric shone by comparison. As Matthew Parris wrote the day after, "I've just read one of the worst speeches by a British prime minister it's been my misfortune to encounter in 40 years following politics." He continued:

> This hole in the air encased in a suit of clunking verbal armour? This truck-load of clichéd grandiloquence in hopeless pursuit of anything that might count as the faintest apology for an idea? Words fail me. They certainly failed Gordon Brown, addressing the European Parliament this week. No wonder everybody's now watching the MEP Daniel Hannan's riposte, uploaded on to YouTube—for the sheer, blessed relief of finding anyone still standing as the grey ash came bucketing down.[134]

While Parris's comments entertainingly indicate one possible cause of the success of Hannan's speech, it is nonetheless clear that the speech did not skyrocket to international fame

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[133] European Parliament, "Debates."

[134] Matthew Parris, "Do the Honourable Thing, Mr. Brown. Run Away," *The Times Online,* March 28, 2009, accessed March 14, 2011, http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/matthew_parris/article5989191.ece.

merely on the basis of its being less sleep-inducing than the Prime Minister's remarks. As I have

previously noted, Gordon Brown's speech did not garner nearly as much attention as did

Hannan's—it is not unreasonable to conjecture that most Americans did not even hear Brown's

speech, unless they looked it up out of curiosity after hearing Hannan's. The secret ingredient to

the nearly instant success of the "Devalued Prime Minister" speech lies within the speech itself.

It succeeded on its own merit.

In this chapter, I will take the three elements of textual charisma (persuasiveness,

believability, and powerfulness) and discuss whether they are present in the text of Hannan's

speech, and in what proportions. First, however, I must make a note about my method as it

relates to the analysis of the speech.

A Note on Methods

I have attempted in this study to be "fair" to both of my artifacts—that is, to treat them

equally so as not to skew the results of my analysis. Both are so worthy of study that I would not

wish to short-change one or the other through carelessness. This became more difficult as I

approached Hannan's speech, which involved a visual and audio element in addition to the

textual element. Initially, I intended to simply ignore the visual and audio elements in order to

keep those aspects from clouding my analysis or putting *Common Sense* at a disadvantage—my

goal was to analyze his content, not his delivery. However, as I attempted to settle on a method

for analyzing the content of Hannan's speech, I realized that I could not approach the content

without taking note of the delivery. Attention to the audio aspect of the speech was necessary.

The difficulty came in finding a transcript to use in my analysis. The European

Parliament's record of the March 24 debates contains a transcript of Hannan's speech; however,

in reviewing the transcript, I found it to be unreliable. There were several mistakes in the

transcript, where it clearly differed from the YouTube clip of Hannan's speech. For example,

Hannan's actual speech begins with remarks addressed directly to the Prime Minister, where he

states, "Prime Minister, I see you've already mastered the essential craft of the European

politician; namely, the ability to say one thing in this chamber and a very different thing to your

home electorate."[135] The European Parliament's transcript, however, records Hannan as directing

his opening comments to President Pottering: "Mr. President, I see that the Prime Minister has

already mastered the essential craft of the European politician; namely the ability to say one

thing in this Chamber and a very different thing to your home electorate."[136] Obviously, the

difference between delivering the comments directly to Brown and delivering the comments to

the President *about* Brown is significant, and alters both the tone of the remarks and the way in

which the reader or viewer perceives Hannan's message. Is the opening sentence a jesting aside

to the President, or is it a direct accusation to the Prime Minister? Does the comment follow

parliamentary procedure by directing comments to the President, or does it throw procedure to

the wind in order to deliver a stinging invective to Gordon Brown? The European Parliament

transcript's divergence from the actual speech in this manner makes it unsuitable for use in my

analysis.

My decision, therefore, was to use my own transcript, which I adapted from the YouTube

clip itself. It was not difficult to get an accurate transcript, as every word which Hannan utters is

crystal clear. However, I ran into a bit of trouble when attempting to decide how to punctuate the

speech. This is not quibbling—punctuation is crucial to the analysis of the speech. The difference

between an exclamation point and a period can determine whether or not a statement is

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[135] Unless otherwise noted, all subsequent references to Hannan's speech are taken from the YouTube clip of the speech. YouTube, "Daniel Hannan MEP: The Devalued Prime Minister of a Devalued Government," March 24, 2009, accessed September 19, 2009, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=94lW6Y4tBXs&feature=channel_page.
[136] European Parliament, "Debates."

interpreted as exclamatory. A semicolon or a period can mean the difference between two simple

sentences or one compound sentence. These differences have direct bearing on the analysis of

charisma within the lexical content of the speech. I found, curiously, that James Pethokoukis'

transcript punctuated a series of statements with question marks, thus transforming those

statements into rhetorical questions: "Perhaps you would have more moral authority in this house

if your actions matched your words? Perhaps you would have more legitimacy in the councils of

the world if the United Kingdom were not going into this recession in the worst condition of any

G20 country?"[137] However, listening to the actual speech, I found nothing in Hannan's tone to

indicate that these statements are questions, rhetorical or otherwise. His inflection descends at

the end of the sentence. Hannan is positing hypothetical scenarios where the Prime Minister

might have had more credibility, thus creating a stark contrast between the hypothetical and the

factual and further highlighting the fact that, in Hannan's opinion, the Prime Minister has lost all

credibility. The emphasis is on that contrast, not on the implied answer to the rhetorical question.

The remarks are stronger when seen as statements—this difference is no trivial matter.

Therefore, as I transcribed the speech, I was compelled to take into account Hannan's

tone, inflection, and expression in order to accurately represent the content which millions of

viewers heard and found inspiring. My analysis does not deal directly with his delivery;

however, his delivery did indirectly influence the way in which I approached the content of the

speech.

<div align="center">Persuasiveness</div>

In comparison with Paine, Hannan relies far less on examples and more on statistics. He

highlights the fact that every British child is born with a debt of £20,000 and that paying the

interest on that debt will exceed the cost of educating the child. He provides data concerning the

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[137] Pethokoukis, "U.K. MEP Daniel Hannan."

deficit, unemployment rates, the growth of the public sector, and the devaluing of British currency. These statistics lend weight to his arguments in an age where hard data is a trump card in public policy debate.

The content of Hannan's speech reflects one central syllogism: If high government spending is responsible for Britain's financial crisis and Gordon Brown is responsible for high government spending, then Gordon Brown is responsible for Britain's financial crisis. This syllogism adequately expresses Hannan's method and purpose in the speech: he proves each premise with the ultimate goal of ascribing blame to Gordon Brown. When combined with Hannan's relatively liberal use of data and statistics as proof of his assertions, the syllogism is compelling and persuasive. Throughout my time as a public speaking instructor, I have played the speech for many university colleagues and for eight separate public speaking classes. A common sentiment expressed by those who see the speech is that of rather amused or ironic sympathy for Gordon Brown. When the camera briefly shows a shot of Brown smirking and jotting notes as Hannan speaks, the viewers inevitably ask, "Is that *him*?" Many laugh at the image of Brown sitting there weakly, powerless to stop the onslaught of Hannan's remarks. "I would not like to be him at that moment," some say. They often express interest in whether or not the Prime Minister replied to Hannan's remarks: "What did he *say* after that?!" they ask. This focus on Gordon Brown, his attitude, his reactions, is all a direct result of the effectiveness of Hannan's highly persuasive argument. Hannan succeeds in causing the viewer to look with disdain, condescension, or disgust upon Brown, the culprit. For Americans, no doubt, Hannan's argument formed a customizable "insert-your-villain-here" attack—and as American commentators in days following were quick to point out, many Americans responded by

inserting their President into the scene, thus replacing Brown with their own perceived national culprit.

Believability

For the most part, Hannan does not cite his sources for the data he presents. There are few appeals to authority in the brief speech. Only at the very end of the speech does he appeal to the authority of the International Monetary Fund and the European Commission to support his assertion that Britain is "worse off than any other country as we go into these hard times." Interestingly, he also appeals to the economy as a witness to his claim: "The markets have said so, which is why our currency has devalued by thirty percent, and soon the voters too will get their chance to say so." The "markets," or the economy, obviously, is not a single entity or organization to which Hannan can appeal; however, he draws credibility from an implied "seeing is believing" argument—the listener, presumably, will agree that the economy is an incontrovertible witness to Britain's poor situation in the midst of the recession. Hannan's phrasing poses the markets as the ultimate authority on the matter, superior even to bodies like the IMF and the European Commission.

Powerfulness

As with *Common Sense*, powerfulness comprises the bulk of the analysis, and provides some of the richest insights into the textual charisma of the artifact under examination. All four textual cues (declarative statements, exclamatory statements, metaphors/imagery, and rhetorical questions) are present in the brief speech, which amounts to scarcely a page and a half when double-spaced.

There is only one rhetorical question in the text, of which I have more to say later on. There is also only one exclamatory statement, which falls near the end of the speech. Hannan

states, essentially, that Gordon Brown's feckless rhetoric is little more than recitation of political platitudes, and he goes on to say emphatically, "You know, and we know, and you know that we know that it's nonsense!" This choice of words is almost humorous; however, at this point in the speech, Hannan has completely allied the audience to himself. One colleague of mine remarked on hearing that exclamatory statement, "If anyone else had said that, it would have sounded ridiculous." However, Hannan uses the statement in a powerful way, placing it at the peak of the speech's intensity. Whatever ridiculousness exists in the statement falls completely on the head of the Prime Minister—it is he who looks ridiculous, not Hannan.

There are a considerable number of declarative statements, and, as in *Common Sense*, the short, clipped statements tend to appear in clusters: "The truth, Prime Minister, is that you have run out of our money. The country as a whole is now in negative equity. Every British child is born owing around £20,000. Servicing the interest on that debt is going to cost more than educating the child." These clusters are emphatic, and each point is distinct and blunt, like a slow, foreboding drum beat.

Some of the most powerful rhetorical force in the speech comes from Hannan's brilliant use of metaphor and imagery. He says early in the speech, "You've spoken about free trade, and 'amen' to that." He uses "amen" as a metaphor for almost religious devotion to the idea of free trade, and immediately afterward points out Brown's hypocrisy in claiming to support free trade while in actuality bringing large parts of the private sector under government control. Moments later, in the middle of the speech, Hannan crafts and extends another powerful metaphor:

It is true that we are all sailing together into the squalls, but not every vessel in the convoy is in the same dilapidated condition. Other ships used the good years to caulk their hulls and clear their rigging, in other words, to pay off debt. But you used the good

years to raise borrowing yet further. As a consequence, under your captaincy, our hull is

pressed deep into the water line under the accumulated weight of your debt.

Later Hannan invokes this nautical metaphor once again when he refers to the financial crisis as

"a storm"—possibly drawing from Brown's own earlier use of a hurricane metaphor.[138]

Another similarity with *Common Sense* was Hannan's extremely effective use of

hyperbole and sarcasm throughout the speech. No doubt this acerbic quality is partly what makes

the speech so interesting and engaging to listen to or watch. Hannan sets up a sarcastic tone early

on, when he asks the only rhetorical question of the speech: "You've spoken here about free

trade, and amen to that. Who would have guessed, listening to you just now, that you were the

author of the phrase 'British jobs for British workers' and that you have subsidized, where you

have not nationalized outright, swathes of our economy, including the car industry and many of

the banks?" Hannan weaves this type of sarcasm throughout the speech. I always enjoy watching

my students' reactions when he says straight-facedly, "Now, it's not that you're not

apologizing—like everyone else, I've long accepted that you're pathologically incapable of

accepting responsibility for these things." Their eyes widen and they laugh in surprise—this bit

of repartee is sharp, exaggerated, and penetrating. Generally, however, because of their youth

and lack of familiarity with Cold War history, they miss the meaning in Hannan's perhaps most-

famous line: "When you repeat, in that wooden and perfunctory way, that our situation is better

than others, that we're 'well-placed to weather the storm,' I have to tell you that you sound like a

Brezhnev-era apparatchik giving the party line." Countless Americans, however, understood that

reference, and that remarkably hyperbolic line became a popular sound bite among American

commentators.

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[138] European Parliament, "Debates."

Reflections

Analysis of Hannan's speech only strengthens the case for textual charisma. Having looked at the devices he used to make the speech persuasive, believable, and powerful, it is hard to imagine that his success was merely coincidentally correlated to the political context, resultant from his own superior speaking delivery, or attributable to the sensory generosity of the medium in which the speech was transmitted. There can be little doubt that the charismatic pith of his speech was a significant factor in bringing about the political stir that followed. In the final chapter of this study, I will tie together the two artifacts that I have analyzed, drawing inferences for the study of American protest rhetoric, and making recommendations for future research.

Chapter 6

Final Thoughts on Charisma and American Protest Rhetoric

This study has attempted to unravel a tangled and complex thread, and even at the conclusion of this study I cannot assert that that thread has been fully unwound. However, I hope that my work can serve as a starting point for what can be done with textual charisma analysis. More than that, I hope that there is something to be gleaned here about the nature of American political protest rhetoric. In the final pages of this thesis, I will review what I have done thus far, draw some conclusions about the artifacts I have analyzed, and present some suggestions for future research.

Review and Conclusions

My journey into this project began with a few initial impressions. When I first heard Daniel Hannan's "Devalued Prime Minister" speech, I was struck by its forcefulness and penetrating nature. I was intrigued to see it spread across the nation amid some of the most unusual circumstances: its origin and context made it an unlikely poster child for the turbulent political climate of early 2009. However, I could not help being reminded of another piece of rhetoric, two and a half centuries old, also originating in the mind of an Englishman, which sped to national prominence with shocking force. Daniel Hannan and Thomas Paine were both, arguably, in the right place at the right time; however, I felt that there was more to the story than just that. As I began researching these two unique texts, I was stunned at the similarities I found in them, and my interest was captivated by the possibilities that textual charisma analysis offered for delving more deeply into them. While textual charisma analysis is certainly not a popular framework with which to approach rhetorical texts, I am now more convinced than ever that it promises rich results for anyone willing to apply it.

I found both texts to be highly charismatic; however, certain aspects of that charisma stood out more than others. Believability, for example, was the most weakly exhibited textual trait in both of the artifacts according to the cues which I ascribed to that trait. Neither author seemed much inclined to appeal to outside authorities, perhaps because of a temperament-related streak of independence. Roth says of Paine, "Tom Paine is a man who will not be bound, and he . . . anticipate[s] the male heroes of nineteenth-century American literature—the self-reliant individuals, repudiating and free from all attachments, all relationships, all bonds."[139] There is a similar self-reliance in Hannan, the upstart MEP from Southeast England. Both Englishmen, though separated by centuries, exhibited similar traits of intellectual independence. Perhaps this independence, this abandonment of traditional deference to outside authority, worked in their favor in times when the American public was feeling stirrings of its own independent spirit.

Persuasiveness, while relatively strong in both texts, did not come across with nearly the amount of force that powerfulness did. Powerfulness was a key feature of both texts. I mentioned previously that the forcefulness of Hannan's rhetoric was one of the first things that impressed me about his speech. So also with Paine—both men used compelling imagery, particularly metaphors, balanced with strong declarative statements, exclamatory statements, and rhetorical questions. However, the most striking and powerful aspects of their rhetoric were the two textual cues which I did not initially seek out, and which Rosenberg and Hirschberg did not include in their analysis of lexical charisma: sarcasm and hyperbole. This is no reprimand to Rosenberg and Hirschberg, however: their study on the rhetoric of Democratic presidential candidates dealt more with charismatic traits that the public would find appealing and even disarming. The nature of American elections makes this approach reasonable. The charisma of protest rhetoric must necessarily emphasize some different aspects of charisma because the purposes of protest

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[139] Roth, "Tom Paine and American Loneliness," 180.

rhetoric and campaign rhetoric differ from each other. Future researchers might consider categorizing the differing traits which, in the context of a specific genre of rhetoric, might be highly charismatic, while at the same time being completely lacking in charisma in the context of a different genre.

Hyperbole and sarcasm were both extremely powerful devices in the hands of Paine and Hannan. Their rhetoric is saturated with an almost acrimonious negativity—their goal is to assassinate whatever feelings of goodwill their audiences retain toward the political enemy. Both of these rhetorical tools are used as devices of invective. In Revolutionary times, the "sarcastic repetition of an enemy's own words as if they were caught in one's throat," was a common tool of invective.[140] Paine uses this multiple times in his pamphlet, once to mock those who favor reconciliation and twice to mock George III (30, 34, 35). Hannan employs this same tool when he references Brown's "wooden and perfunctory," Brezhnev apparatchik-esque repetition of the idea that Britain is "well-placed to weather storm."

Metaphors and imagery were another common thread in both texts—both authors use imagery very effectively in their rhetoric. In Hannan's case, particularly, this is likely a very important facet of his textual charisma. The metaphor, it can be argued, is an underused device in American political rhetoric. One would be hard-pressed to think of many American political speeches including any phrase as elegantly phrased and descriptively apt as Hannan's pronouncement that "under your captaincy, our hull is pressed deep into the waterline under the accumulated weight of your debt." It would be difficult, perhaps, to even think of many American rhetors *capable* of inventing such a turn of phrase. Hannan's extensive use of metaphors, such as the nautical metaphor just referenced, is immediately striking to the American ear.

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[140] Ibid., 179.

It has not been my intention in this study to assert that the two artifacts are the same or even that Hannan's speech is the modern equivalent of Paine's pamphlet. However, I hope it is clear by now that there are significant similarities between them—significant enough to be beyond coincidence. What most interests me is what these two artifacts can tell us about an American trend in protest rhetoric. It is this idea that I would like to highlight as a possible path for future research.

The Rhetoric of Outrage: A New Path?

A vast deal of literature has been devoted to the study of protest rhetoric, particularly American protest rhetoric. This thesis is yet another cog in that wheel—however, I think it has the potential to reveal an as-yet untapped mine in the study of the American protest rhetoric tradition.

As I conducted this study, I became dissatisfied with the available descriptions for the type of rhetoric used by Hannan and Paine. "Protest rhetoric" is a broad category, I thought— surely there is a more specific way to classify my artifacts than that! I then arrived at agitative rhetoric as a slightly more specific (though still rather broad) sub-genre of protest rhetoric, which is often applied to the rhetoric of those who lead social movements or effect change in society. However, this category also seemed inadequate; for I could not bring myself to view either Paine or Hannan as *primarily* agitative rhetors, though certainly there was an agitative element to their rhetoric.

When one thinks of "agitation," one tends to envision something that was formerly still, or relatively still, being stirred up and set in motion. So it is with agitative rhetoric: the agitator is one who brings turbulence to the status quo.[141] In the case of Hannan and especially Paine, the status quo was already greatly troubled. The people were already agitated, and it was no small

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[141] McEdwards, "Agitative Rhetoric," 36.

faction of the populace that had experienced the feelings of agitation—these were not a few grumbling malcontents. Rather, the agitation was widespread. Paine and Hannan *translated* the feelings of a widespread audience into texts that could be passed around and disseminated in the popular media of the day. Their rhetoric gave form to the thoughts that the people had already been thinking, and their words provided a vehicle for the outrage that people were already experiencing. It is for this reason that I prefer to term this sub-genre of rhetoric "outrage rhetoric."

It would be hard to make the case that *Common Sense* agitated what had formerly been still. As Davidson notes, Thomas Paine "sensed as few others the radical temper and could express to people what they themselves thought and felt in striking, popular language."[142] Ferguson tells us that *Common Sense*'s expression of anger brought Americans together in "a formative act of self-recognition":

> Of all of the emotions, anger is the most difficult to control, and Paine's triumph in this regard is the great master stroke in his rhetorical plan . . . . Only Paine really harnessed these forces in 1776. He alone, of all the writers of the Revolution, fathomed the depths of "popular rage" in America, and he plied that resentment to construct a vital identification between narrator and reader. It is this perception, more than any other, that carries Common Sense from story toward spell-binding myth.[143]

Hannan's speech created a similar type of identification between rhetor and audience. In an interview with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Hannan himself observed this phenomenon:

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[142] Davidson, *Propaganda and the American Revolution*, 14.
[143] Ferguson, "The Commonalities of Common Sense," 493.

There is a real anger in Britain about the extent of our deficit, about the extent of our debt

and about the fact that, you know, we've never had an election with Gordon Brown. He

came in after a kind of internal deal in the Labor Party. . . . So, people feel unconsulted.

And I think a lot of people would've liked to have grabbed the guy by the lapels and

shouted at him because he isn't a very listening sort of leader. Now, obviously, most

people don't get the opportunity to do that. Under a quirk of the rules of the European

Parliament, I did get to do that. And I suppose the next best thing if you can't do it

yourself, you get a certain vicarious pleasure in watching somebody else doing it for you.

That, I suppose, is why it caught on.[144]

The same thoughts and motives that Hannan ascribes to his fellow Britons apply to the American

audience that popularized the YouTube clip of Hannan's speech to Brown: the "insert-your-

villain-here" adaptability of the speech gave conservative Americans the words to express their

feelings about the new President. That "vicarious pleasure," that identification with the outrage

expressed by Hannan, parallels the experience that many colonists had reading *Common Sense*. It

was not necessary for Paine or Hannan to convince the audience to be outraged—feelings of

outrage were already widespread. It is for this reason that Paine could write matter-of-factly, "I

offer nothing more than simple facts, plain arguments, and common sense" (23). His task, and

Hannan's task, was to *harness* the common sentiments. Both rhetors were so effective at

accomplishing that task that their rhetoric became an instantaneously "viral" success.

I view outrage rhetoric and agitative rhetoric on a continuum: it would be difficult to

absolutely assert that an artifact were wholly one or the other. A protest text may both agitate

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[144] "YouTube Hit Speechmaker Discusses G20 Politics," ABC Transcripts (Australia), April 3, 2009, *LexisNexis,* accessed March 10, 2011, http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu:2048/lnacui2api/results/docview/ docview.do?docLinkInd=true&risb=21_T11444563374&format=GNBFI&sort=BOOLEAN&startDocNo=76&resul tsUrlKey=29_T11444563391&cisb=22_T11444563390&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=300228&docNo=99.

and give legitimacy to latent public outrage; however, the central matter of inquiry is which function predominates. I am interested in seeing future research better define these sub-genres of protest rhetoric.

<div align="center">Conclusion</div>

At the outset of this study, it was clear to me that the artifacts I had chosen as well as the method of analysis which I adopted would be difficult to handle—an ambitious choice of subject, to be sure. However, with every phase of the research, I have become more firmly convinced of its worthiness as a topic. It is my hope that others will also attempt to plumb the depths of textual charisma analysis and outrage rhetoric.

Common Sense and "The Devalued Prime Minister of a Devalued Government" are inspiring and instructive examples of how a rhetor, no matter how atypical his circumstances or how unknown he may be, can captivate the minds and hearts of a public. The colonial ne'er-do-well and the parliamentary back-bencher together have demonstrated across two and a half centuries that the "hero" who can shape the destinies of nations is not always a man—oftentimes it can be a message. It is not always the power of the leader that inspires public confidence, but the power of a simple word. Lest we forget this truth, the study of rhetoric must live on and thrive.

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