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ANARCHY IS ORDER: CONFRONTING THE DEFINITIONAL TENSION IN THE  
VANGUARD GROUP'S ANARCHISM

by

Merci Michelle Decker

A Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Major: Communication

The University of Memphis

May 2015

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For Dr. Michael Leff, z"l, who taught me to see the world differently

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I was thrilled the day I discovered Vanguard Group. Dr. Leff cautioned me that this was only the beginning of a long journey.

“Ah,” I replied, “but the journey of a thousand miles...”

and with a twinkle in his eye he completed the Lao Tzu quotation along with me...“often begins with a single step.”

So the journey I began. Like every traveler, I have encountered numerous individuals who have touched my life, challenged me, encouraged me, and inspired me. However, I would like to specifically thank a handful of individuals who have played a key role in the success of this expedition.

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## **ABSTRACT**

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The fall of the global economy in 1929 set into motion a number of events, which would later influence scholars in rhetoric and other fields. While anarchists were active during this decade, attention is rarely drawn to their contribution. Anarchism is interesting rhetorically, because the term's origins, past usage, and current usage often present competing definitions of meaning. This creates a definitional rupture in which the meaning of the term must constantly be negotiated.

In my dissertation I argue that in order for the term "anarchism" to be truly comprehended, scholars must acknowledge its rhetorical character, which resides in the definitional rupture of this term. By chronologically tracing the development of Vanguard Group's use of the word "anarchism" in their 1930s publication, I address how they use rhetorical ways of defining to approach the challenges of how to apply limits to what is and is not anarchist rhetoric, redefine previous notions of anarchism, and create a form of rhetoric that would continue current situation.

The most revealing aspect of the analysis is that anarchism functions as its own form of rhetorical critique. The ability of Vanguard Group to employ a definition of "anarchism" that was embraced by the members of their group, their readership, and the next generation of anarchists suggests the definitional strategies used by Vanguard Group to meet the challenges posed by the definitional rupture also allowed them to adapt to the constraints of a rapidly changing rhetorical situation.



The inconsistency in defining anarchism from one volume of *Vanguard* to another also indicates anarchist rhetors are not confined to the same constraints of consistency within an identity as other political rhetors. Due to their unapologetic critique of even their own cultural institutions, Vanguard Group was not constrained by the same rhetorical limitations of maintaining a consistent identity within a quickly changing global world. The continued presence of the definitional rupture suggests that this rupture prompted definitional strategies employed by Vanguard Group that could be useful to other anarchists, and perhaps even other marginalized groups, in retaining at least minimal control over the terms connected to self-identity.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Introduction .....	1
A Multifarious Beginning .....	1
Definitions of Anarchism .....	5
Disciplinary Differences in Negotiating Anarchism .....	6
The Advantage of Rhetoric .....	12
Rationalization .....	12
Rhetorical Approach .....	29
Preview of the Chapters .....	31
Chapter 2: The Youth Publication .....	31
Chapter 3: The Militant Press.....	32
Chapter 4: Sanguine Reporting .....	33
Chapter 5: Future Implications .....	34
Chapter 2: The Youth Publication .....	35
Establishing the Rhetorical Situation .....	35
1929-1934 .....	35
The Founding of Vanguard Group .....	36
Youth as the Stewards of the Revolution .....	39
Youth and National Identity .....	39
Youth and Organizing Strategy.....	42
Youth and Ties to the Future .....	45
Shift in Ideological Topoi .....	47
Economic Ideology .....	50

Political Ideology .....	56
Societal Ideology .....	60
Topoi of Enactment.....	63
Enactment of a Plan of Action .....	63
Enactment of anarchism through a Vanguard Party.....	66
Enactment of a Militant Press .....	69
Conclusion .....	72
Chapter 3: The Militant Press .....	75
A New Rhetorical Situation .....	75
1935-1937 .....	75
The Growing Vanguard Group .....	76
Definition by Negation to Distance Themselves from Negative Connotations .....	79
The Negation of Socialism .....	79
The Negation of Communism .....	82
The Negation of Anarchism .....	86
Redefining through Bureaucratization .....	89
Reports on the Labor Front .....	90
Reports on Spain .....	94
Broader Revolutionary Strategy .....	98
Redefining Through Domestication .....	101
Revolution as a Journey .....	102
Revolution as Living Entity .....	105
Revolution as Water .....	109

Conclusion .....	111
Chapter 4: Sanguine Reporting .....	113
A Disconcerting Rhetorical Situation .....	113
1938-1940 .....	113
The Aging Vanguard Group .....	114
Defining Through a Framework of Aporia .....	118
A Clear Plan .....	118
Revolution Coming Out of a Singular Act .....	122
Organizing only with those in a Lower Socio-economic Class .....	124
Defining through a Framework of Hysteron .....	127
Timelessness of the Liberte', Egalite', Fraternite' Theme .....	127
Prophetic articles about events that had already taken place .....	133
Articles out of Order .....	135
Defining anarchism through Reframing .....	137
Trade Unions .....	137
Education .....	139
Organization .....	141
Conclusion .....	143
Chapter 5: Future Implications .....	146
Summary about the rhetorical character of Vanguard Group's Anarchism .....	146
Anarchism and Looking Ahead .....	148
Appendix .....	165
Glossary of Key Rhetorical Terms.....	165

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### **A Multifarious Beginning**

In 1840 Pierre-Joseph Proudhon became the first individual to openly declare himself to be politically an anarchist in a period when the term was used as slander against the opposition (Woodcock 11). Although there was no indication he ever intended his seminal piece, *What is Property?*, to define a socio-political philosophy, his argument that a critique on authority did not denote disorder laid the foundation for other anarchist thinkers that came after him (Woodcock 12). From that moment on, the already paradoxical term became even more complex.

The definition of anarchism is notoriously difficult to pin down in one meaning. Not only does this come from its origins and historical usage, but also its continued usage. Thus, anarchist rhetoric is faced with rhetorical constraints specifically connected to adjusting to the complexity of the term. Due to the definitional multiplicity of the term anarchism and the amorphous nature of what an anarchist is, there are characteristics unique to anarchist rhetoric. Like Proudhon, an anarchist rhetor disregards the boundaries of what might otherwise be construed as appropriate or inappropriate and instead chooses to apply a meaning to anarchism that establishes most desired outcome. Thus, when examining the definitional multiplicity of anarchism, one must be careful not to get trapped into a set definition. Indeed, the very rupture that emerges from defining the term anarchism through its tension is the very nebulous aspect of the term that renders it malleable enough to be productive. We continue to see this occur even today.

On July 13, 2011, Kalle Lasn, editor of *Adbusters*, called individuals to “Occupy Wall Street” on September 17. From September until present day, the Occupy Wall Street movement (OWS) has not only been present on Wall Street, but remains part of our collective conversation. OWS’ use of horizontal organizational structures and grass roots organization, such as the use of consensus to make decisions, the absence of leaders, and the inclusion of voices outside the margins, has left some to draw a correlation between OWS and anarchism.

In “Occupy Wall Street’s Anarchist Roots,” anarchist anthropologist David Graeber (2011) argues OWS embodies four anarchist principles: 1) the refusal to recognize the legitimacy of existing political institutions; 2) the refusal to recognize the legitimacy of the existing legal order; 3) the lack of an internal hierarchy, but instead a consensus-based direct democracy; and 4) the embrace of prefigurative politics. That is, the participants of OWS embraced the concept that through the embodiment of anarchist principles, we see glimpses of a new world. While not all members of OWS claim these principles, nor are these principles all singularly anarchist, Graeber draws convincing parallels between attributed anarchist practices and activism today.

Yet, not all depictions of anarchism in OWS use this constructive definition. For some, anarchism is linked with destruction and violence. The *Weekly Standard* columnist, Matthew Continetti explained in a web article later picked up by NPR,

The reason that Occupy Wall Street has no agenda is that anarchism allows for no agenda. All the anarchist can do is set an example—or tear down the existing order through violence. Just as hostility to property is

inextricably linked to utopian socialism, violence is tightly bound to anarchism. (42)

Perhaps the most curious link made between OWS and anarchism can be found in the November 28, 2011 issue of *The New Yorker*. In the essay, “Pre-Occupied: The Origins and Future of Occupy Wall Street,” Mattathias Schwartz associates anarchism with consensus building, strategic violence, and chaos. We see the definition of anarchism change within the article depending on the context. In one paragraph, Schwartz draws attention to anarchist tactics. Schwartz explains, “The anarchists immediately agreed to use ‘horizontal’ organizing methods, according to which meetings are known as general assemblies and participants make decisions by consensus and give continuous feedback through hand gestures” (30). Through this definition, anarchism is associated with an egalitarian form of interaction. The emphasis is placed on giving everyone equal power. In another paragraph, Schwartz draws upon an interview with a self-identified anarchist who goes by the name of “P.” Schwartz reports,

Like most of Occupy Wall Street’s core organizers, P. is an anarchist, meaning that he is ‘dedicated to the eradication of any unjust or illegitimate system. At the very least, that means the eradication of capitalism and the state.’ He does not smash bank windows, though he said that he does not necessarily disapprove of people who do. (32)

Through this definition, anarchism is linked closer to strategic violence than consensus building. Rather than associating anarchism with an egalitarian mindset, the emphasis is on freedom of individual action, which also includes condoning violence.

Then, in another section of the article, Schwartz uses the term “anarchy” to denote chaos. He writes, “The problem, though, comes when multiple people try to summon the mike simultaneously. Then it can feel a lot like anarchy” (Schwartz 35). Although he does not equate anarchy with the anarchist participants in OWS, by using this definition, Schwartz uses a meaning that supposedly contradicts the other interpretations of what anarchism means.

In December 2014 following the occurrence of protests in Durham, North Carolina after the grand jury failed to indict two white police officers for the killing of two black men, City Manager Thomas Bonfield released a report on December 5. Within the report, he explains, “Anarchists use and take advantage of local citizens that are upset about a current event,” and “The anarchist element will commit acts of anarchy, and then afterwards run a propaganda campaign via the media to downplay their acts and demonize any police action as brutal and oppressive” (11). Five days later Elaine Yu’s article “The Anarchists of Occupy Central” appears in web edition of The New Yorker is released discussing how an active anarchist group in Hong Kong “rolled out a ping-pong table and prepared a hot-pot dinner in the streets” and “recently took part in a joint concert and farmers’ market, in collaboration with villagers facing displacement from the government’s development plan” (42).

As anarchists and anarchism continue to be present in our society, we ask ourselves, what is anarchism? Are those who identify as anarchists really peaceful protesters or are they clever propagandists? Are they proponents of violence, or are they political prisoners? Yet these questions fail to target what is at the heart of defining anarchism and why a universal definition of anarchism is so hard to pinpoint.



What these articles and the previously mentioned uses of the term “anarchism” reveals is a “definitional tension.” The tension is not simply two-sided, between the definition of anarchism as “constructive” and anarchism as “destructive,” but rather lies in a complex set of meanings, which must be negotiated in each interaction. Not only does the definitional tension create a messiness in how the term is defined, but also in how we come to perceive anarchism. There are several common definitions given to anarchism. By and large anarchism is defined through four different forms of interpretation.

### *Definitions of Anarchism*

Anarchism as a lack of order places the emphasis of meaning on the association between anarchism and chaos. For some, this lack of order or plan ultimately describes an overall state of disarray. For others, this lack of authoritative order clears the way for individual autonomy. At times, but not always, this interpretation of anarchism might be linked to individual anarchism, which entails each person acting in what she or he believes demonstrates her or his personal freedom. Eco-anarchists typically expand this interpretation to include human control over the environment. While some view this freedom from society as an excuse for human beings to behave as brutes, others view this as a peaceful state where everyone would be joyful.

Anarchism as a utopian ideal places the emphasis of the meaning of anarchism as a movement towards enacting the ideal utopian society. For some, this becomes a naïve dream of lifestyle unattainable in the world. For others, it becomes an egalitarian outcome that one strives to achieve. Some have viewed this definition as linked to a specific strategy of libertarian socialism or syndicalism.

The etymology of the term “no leaders” is another way anarchism is understood. This interpretation of anarchism rejects the idea of any form of authority. It focuses on rejecting any institutional authority, including nongovernmental institutions that historically have been given power through a hierarchical system. This interpretation creates a space to include forms of anarchism such as anarcha-feminists and queer anarchists that also challenge sexism, heterosexism, patriarchy, and transphobia in their socio-political approach.

Anarchism as hostile to the state also draws on the etymology of the term. However, the interpretation draws the line at “no government” rather than “no leaders.” Anarchism means hostility to the state, the use of revolutionary violence to remove state power, or a series of political philosophies that advocate the removal of the state (Van, der Walt, Lucien and Michael Schmidt 39). This interpretation is commonly embraced by Anarcho-capitalists who embrace capitalism, but challenge state authority.

#### *Disciplinary Differences in Negotiating Anarchism*

Although at first glance each of these definitions appears as equally concrete, they do not fall into neat categories. Instead, in some instances, they might contradict their original meaning. In other instances, they might take on several different interpretations of anarchism at the same time.

Researchers have taken a variety of approaches to navigate this definitional multiplicity. While some scholars rely on textual documents for the appropriate definition, others, like historians, try to identify anarchism by the community’s shared belief in the transformative power of radical thought. Social scientists, on the other hand, define anarchism through the way self-identifying anarchists interact with society.

Scholars have taken one of three approaches: 1) defining anarchism by textual documents; 2) defining anarchism by a shared affirmation of radical thought; or 3) defining anarchism based on the interaction with society.

Defining anarchism through etymology is perhaps the most common attempt at interpreting the term. According to the *New Oxford American Dictionary*, anarchism comes from the Greek word, “anarkhia, from anarkhos, from an ‘without’ + arkhos ‘chief, ruler’” (“Anarchy”). We see this approach repeated when turning to anarchist websites such as infoshop or interviews with self-identified anarchists (Infoshop, “What is Anarchism”). For example, when asked by Margaret Killjoy in an interview to define anarchism, graphic novelist Alan Moore declared, “All it means, the word, is no leaders. An-archon. No leaders” (42).

Still others look to the seven thinkers who have been deemed by Paul Eltzbacher to be the fathers of anarchism: William Godwin, Max Stirner, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Mikhail Bakunin, Peter Kropotkin, Benjamin Tucker, and Leo Tolstoy. In the introduction to his summary of the seven thinkers, Eltzbacher exclaims,

Two demands must be made of everybody who undertakes to produce a scientific work on anarchism. First he must be acquainted with the most important Anarchist writings....Second, he who would be equally at home in jurisprudences, in economics, and in philosophy. Anarchism judges juridical institutions with reference to their economic effects, and from the standpoint of some philosophy or other. (4)

Through this complex, theoretical, and time-consuming framework, Eltzbacher provided a definition of anarchism that would be adopted by many in the 20<sup>th</sup> century - “opposition

to the state.” However, even this definition was not without flaws. Michael Schmidt and Lucien van der Walt explain: “There was certainly little agreement between the supposed sages on the reasoning for opposing the state, or on the question of whether the state should be abolished, and if so, how” (39).

The second way of defining anarchism is by identifying the similarities in how anarchists think. For poet Hakim Bey, and fiction writer Ursula LeGuin, this is a shared affirmation of a radical transformation of thinking. Individuals using this approach argue that at the base of how to define an anarchist lies in a person’s cognitive ability to acknowledge the oppressive system and choose to challenge it.

Bey declares: “[T]he only true conflict is that between the authority of the tyrant and the authority of the realized self--all else is illusion, psychological projection, wasted verbiage” (48). Le Guin also asserts that an anarchist is, “One who, choosing, accepts the responsibility of choice” (298). In each of these instances, anarchism is the mental awareness of the individual in asking the right questions and making the correct choices. On the other hand, such an approach has earned many anarchists and scholars a reputation for arrogance. In defining anarchism, Isaac Kramnick argues, “Both forms of anarchist thought share a most important belief, a common conviction of superiority” (114). The association of anarchism with an enlightened form of thinking and behaving has caused some to write anarchists off as elitists.

Historians also draw upon how an anarchist thinks as a way to identify who should be called an anarchist. However, instead of defining anarchism as the conclusion the anarchist makes, they instead define an anarchist by what she or he believes. George Woodcock argues, “The anarchist believes in a moral urge in man powerful enough to

survive the destruction of authority and still hold society together in the free and natural bonds of fraternity” (416). For Woodcock, the anarchist is optimistic enough about the outcome after authority is removed. David Montgomery, another noted labor historian, takes the opposite approach. He argues that the individuals “shared the anarchist belief that pursuit of workers’ control under capitalism was futile” (195). In other words, workers could only gain influence in a society free from capitalism.

Paul Avrich, on the other hand, uses the shared beliefs that are pointed out by both historians and declares that anarchists are “united in their rejection of the state, their opposition in coercion and exploitation, their hatred of injustice and tyranny, and their faith that people will live in harmony once the constraints imposed by the government have been removed” (xii). Historians navigate the multiplicity by identifying common traits anarchists believe, however, the characteristics do not lead to identical interpretations.

Scholars in the social sciences attempt to define anarchism through the way individuals interact with the world. Anthropologists, for example, might borrow from the etymology of the term anarchism (no leaders), but they ultimately use case studies to identify the characteristic of an anarchist society. Depending on the anthropologist, this might involve one example or many.

For Jack Stauder, the Majang tribe was the only society that he defined as anarchist. He explained,

In a society lacking developed institutional means of settling conflicts, Majang mobility serves to keep an essential modicum of peace by allowing Majangir to avoid each other, if necessary, and so to let their

disputes 'settle' unresolved and be gradually forgotten. Such an anarchic mode of 'solving' problems-problems which in other societies generally stimulate the development of political organization and special institutions to handle trouble cases -is possible only in the context of the Majang economy and ecological relations. Not only is the availability of abundant and widespread natural resources necessary, but the economic disadvantages to residential mobility must also be minimal. (167)

By drawing on various definitions of anarchism, Stauder is able to identify what he feels fits within the definitional multiplicity. Not only does the aforementioned definition include relative freedom of individual choice, it also includes a lack of structure in resolving problems (167). His examples include cases when conflict could result in violence or chaotic behavior, as well as cases that result in peace and an overall egalitarian interaction. There are no leaders or individuals who have more resources than others in the Majang culture.

Anthropologist David Graeber also draws upon the concept of "no leaders" to identify interactions within an anarchist society. However, he takes a broader approach than Stauder. He claims, "[T]here are endless examples of viable anarchism: pretty much any form of organization would count as one, so long as it was not imposed by some higher authority, from a klezmer band to the international postal service" (40). For Graeber, if individuals make decisions without a higher authority then the group is anarchist.

Alternatively, political scientists and sociologists approach anarchism as a removal or reforming of structures that already exist. While political scientist John Clark

asserts, “[a]narchism seeks to liberate society through reshaping individual personality characteristics, family structure, moral values, and economic, social and political organization,” (163) he does not go into much detail as to what the reshaping looks like. Clark focuses on the anarchist interaction with society—or the means, rather than the ends as a way to identify how the societal structure is challenged.

Sociologist Christopher Forth ties the challenge of structure into another definition of anarchy—chaos. He explains, “The general sense of anarchy depended less upon actual violence and explicit propaganda than on the perceived subversion of acceptable hierarchies, connotating the general sense of disorder” (645). In other words, for Forth, anarchists challenge and attempt to change the current structure of power. While in some cases this may consist of a physical means of destruction, as a whole the emphasis is on the outcome of the subversion of the hierarchy rather than means for which the subversion occurs.

Paul Goodman, another sociologist, takes this one step further and attempts to rationalize the anarchist interaction with society. He explains: “Anarchism is grounded in a rather definite proposition: that valuable behavior occurs only by the free and direct response of individuals or voluntary groups to the conditions presented by the historical environment” (55). Thus, while the anthropologist navigates the definitional multiplicity through finding societies that mirror an origin of the term anarchy, sociologists and political scientists look at how disorder—for better or worse, emerges from the challenging of previously set structures.

Despite the fact that the previously mentioned scholars are able to identify definitions of anarchism to best suit their needs, the definitions are still incomplete. Not

only does each field define the term differently, but individual scholars focus on different variations of how the term is used. Whether scholars are looking towards documents, characteristics, behaviors, or societies, the line that determines what or whom to include, is blurred. If scholars define anarchism too narrowly, certain definitions are ignored. If the definition is too broad, the scholar cannot go into any real depth with the study. In cases like Eltzbacher, the terms used to define anarchism (in this case- “against the state”) contain almost as much variance in meaning as the term “anarchism” itself. In cases like Stauder’s, anarchism is only recognized when a society contains all of the characteristics previously ascribed to anarchism.

### **The Advantage of Rhetoric**

#### *Rationalization*

At the same time, the rhetorical character of anarchism has been muted. Rhetoric offers a way to encompass multiple definitions of anarchism. Likewise, anarchism needs rhetoric in particular, because the nature of anarchism calls every meaning into question. Specifically, anarchism’s rhetorical character is that it confirms and celebrates its contentedness, while at the same time calling that contentedness into question. In an interview at the Sydney Opera House on November 3, 2011, Noam Chomsky explains,

[A]t the core of the anarchist tradition, which again has enlightenment roots, is to ask and raise questions about authority, hierarchy and domination. And to point out that it is not self-justifying...If it cannot justify itself, then it should be dismantled. That's the core principle of anarchism. (18)



To isolate anarchism to a definitive instance or cultural phenomenon, loses the multiplicity of meaning associated with the term. This is also true for how anarchist rhetors construct rhetorical style. For example, in their article examining the rhetorical strategy of Voltairine de Cleyre, Thomas Rosteck and Michael Leff determined that since the practice of an anarchist rhetor varied, each speaker created a rhetorical style that fit her or his standard of propriety. Thus, we gain a broader comprehension of anarchism through allowing it to have a framework, or lack thereof, which permits a wide range of interpretations

In order to better understand this navigation, as well as make sense of the multiple ways in which to define anarchism, we can turn to rhetoric. Through rhetoric, instead of identifying a definition that is too broad or too limiting, we instead turn to the tension in defining and at times, definitional ruptures, that emerges from the various definitions of anarchism. In order to understand the rhetorical character of anarchism, we must acknowledge that the term anarchism is more than a collection of static meanings. Instead, through the multiplicity of meanings, what is defined as anarchism is consistently challenged, limited, shaped, and expanded.

Since rhetoric is a way of looking at the world through a multiplicity of meanings and tension, it is specifically suited for examining anarchism's definitional character. I plan to use rhetoric to understand the definitional ruptures that emerge from this definitional multiplicity, and use that understanding to provide insights, not only into anarchist rhetoric, but also rhetorical ways of defining.

Thus far, rhetoricians have defined and dealt with the rhetorical character of anarchism indirectly and directly. As a whole, anarchist rhetoric adapts to and uses the

rupture that exists in challenging the current structure. Indirectly, radical rhetoric, the rhetoric of revolt, and social movement rhetoric all include similar behavior and rhetorical strategies that are shared by anarchists participating in any of those genres. We see the rhetorical character of anarchism emerge indirectly through movement rhetoric and radical rhetoric when they continue to adapt and shift to the rhetorical climate. Directly, rhetoricians have also examined rhetoric specifically created by anarchists. By taking into consideration both the indirect and direct perspectives, we are able to see how the rhetorical character of anarchism converges and diverges with other forms of rhetoric.

Within movement rhetoric, that is, rhetoric that follows the rhetorical patterns throughout a movement, scholars examine how shifts in policy or power occurs rhetorically throughout time. Although not all movement rhetoric contains anarchist elements, some anarchist rhetoric is sometimes present. Because anarchism, and anarchist rhetoric specifically, lies in the tension between what is traditional and what should be changed, we see fragments of this form of rhetoric emerge when a rhetorical shift occurs. However, in order to see the distinction between movement rhetoric and the emergence of anarchism, we initially must discuss where we see elements of anarchist principles in movement rhetoric.

Thus, we can first turn to social movement rhetoric. In his groundbreaking essay “The Rhetoric of Historical Movements,” Leland Griffin outlines the rhetorical structure of social movements through the lens of the antimasonic movement (356). In order for a social movement to occur, there must be both a pro-movement and an anti-movement, which occurs in three stages. Drawing from Griffin, Herbert Simons then examines the functions of a social movement, the problems that might occur, and the types of

leadership strategies that are appropriate in a social movement (366). Although there is not an anarchist social movement that these scholars analyze, anarchist rhetors continue to take part in creating social movement rhetoric. Yet, unlike anarchist rhetors, social movement rhetors not only respond to other rhetors in each particular stage, their rhetorical goal is to end the movement by either preventing a change from occurring or resolving the problem that created the movement. For anarchist rhetors, while they might be participating in creating a favorable or unfavorable societal change, their end goal is a radical change of social behavior. For this reason, the rhetorical stages outlined by Griffin and Simons will not always apply to the anarchist rhetor's situation, constraints, or exigency.

Paul Brandes also draws from Griffin, but unlike Simons, he focuses on the revolutionary movements rather than all social movements. Yet, the rhetoric of revolt differs from other types of social movements because, "revolt rhetoric openly advocates lawlessness" (3). As a result, anarchist rhetors will at times, but not always align closer to this type of movement rhetoric.

While all three authors agree that movement rhetoric goes through three stages each individual takes a different approach to how those stages operate. For Griffin, in the period of inception, either a problem becomes more noticeable or an event occurs that creates aggressor orators. Then, during the period of rhetorical crisis, new arguments, additional changes, or the flooding of channels occurs, which leads to an influx of communication. Finally, during a period of consummation, a great proportion of aggressor rhetoricians abandon their efforts. Simons detours from Griffin and spends the

majority of his article discussing the different strategies employed by the movement leaders, whether they are militant or moderate.

The stages Brandes outlines are completely different. In the first stage of the revolutionary movement, respected individuals who would normally be expected to uphold the rhetoric of the current structure become public advocates against it. In the second stage new cultural values emerge, the dissidents continue their public critiques, and low and medium styles of rhetoric are primarily used. In the third stage, resistance to counterrevolution, the theme of moving the revolution to other countries, and the employment of *argumentum ad misericordiam* (appeal to pity) is used.

Although David Zarefsky (2006) does concur that applying rhetoric to movement studies provides a way to examine history from one point of view, he cautions scholars not to confuse the historical angle with a theoretical one (“A Skeptical View of Movement Studies” 126). While he acknowledges the value behind Griffin and Simons, he is not confident that the problem the rhetor faces is unique to social movement and persuasion. Ultimately, while a social movement might function differently than other types of organizations, the rhetorical elements often remain the same. From this perspective we are able to distinguish the difference between movement rhetoric and anarchist rhetoric.

While movement rhetoric primarily focuses on the development of the rhetorical situation, anarchist rhetors use their interpretation of anarchism to inform their rhetoric. As a whole, by identifying the points where the rhetoric of anarchists converge and diverge, we not only gain a better understanding of social movements, but also the rhetorical features of anarchist rhetoric.

Unlike social movement rhetoric and the rhetoric of revolt, radical rhetoric focuses primarily on the rhetoric of individuals and organizations. For example, in *Rhetoric of Agitation and Control*, John Bowers and Donovan Ochs (1971) explain that agitation exists when people outside the decision-making process advocate social change and encounter a degree of resistance. Control, then, is the response of the decision-making establishment to agitation.

Similarly, James Chesboro looks at the shift from protest rhetoric to revolutionary rhetoric that radical rhetoric took in 1968. Chesboro argues revolutionary rhetoric examines the response against capitalism, materialism, representative democracy, rationalism, and self-reliance. Matthew May on the other hand, uses a Marxist lens to examine the use of hobo orator unions as a way to organize migrant workers in the Spokane Free Speech Fight of the Industrial Workers of the World (155).

While each of the authors agrees the radical rhetor will employ a variety of different rhetorical strategies, the strategies they identify differ. Bowers and Ochs explain that while in vertical agitation, agitators will agree with the system, but not the distribution of powers or benefits. In lateral agitation, agitators disagree with the values of the system. Verbally, agitators employ petition and promulgation as principle strategies and solidification and polarization to reinforce members of the movement. Nonviolent *résistance* and escalation/confrontation are used then to confront the establishment.

Chesboro, alternatively, argues that the five rhetorical strategies, which emerge in the shift to radical rhetoric, are political revolutionary, cultural revolutionary, urban guerrilla, political anarchist, and superstar. Although these strategies appear distinct from

one another, they all work together in order to identify sources of oppression, and they present an alternative to the current structure. Like Bowers and Ochs's vertical agitators, Chesboro's radicals use rhetoric to change the current structure. We see this same technique employed by May's hobo orators. May concludes that the efforts to organize were the result of a deliberate choice to further the class struggle and to change the discursive practices surrounding the struggle, while at the same time demonstrating a rhetorical model that could be used in examining class struggle.

The attempt to challenge societal practices through the use of rhetoric can be seen repeatedly in anarchist rhetoric. Indeed, while not all anarchist rhetoric is movement rhetoric, all anarchist rhetoric falls into the category of radical rhetoric. Of course, not all radical rhetoric is anarchist rhetoric. Thus, while radical rhetors will adapt anarchist techniques, they still attempt to resolve rather than revel in the disruption or distortion of previous practices.

Scholars of radical rhetoric also examine the way in which the agitators draw upon particular terms or images to reach their audience, in addition to the strategies they rhetorically employ. After examining the word choice of radical rhetors in various orations, Robert Scott argues many of the rhetorical messages sent by radical orators were actually more conservative rather than revolutionary. Because the radical rhetors used conventional terms to defend their movement, they ended up supporting traditional values and structures.

Linda Lumsden came to a similar conclusion after using social identity theory to analyze seven radical periodicals. Lumsden determined imagery was used to create a radical group identity. Lumsden concludes, like Bowers and Ochs's vertical agitators,

Chesboro's radicals, and May's hobos, that the message "capitalism is the root of all evil" addresses the critique against the current structure. However, like Scott, Lumsden argues that the images failed to send messages that would forge a social identity with anyone other than the traditional white male.

Likewise Aileen Kraditor concluded when examining the rhetorical efforts of radical organizations that while the radical rhetors attempted to challenge the current structure, their use of metaphors and word choice sent the opposite message. By portraying workers as helpless victims, the radicals positioned themselves as the saviors and removed agency from the individuals they were trying to recruit. Although the rhetoric of anarchists was not singularly examined by any of the previously mentioned scholars, by focusing on the rhetoric of radicals as a whole, we gain insights into both their rhetorical strategy, as well as how they framed their messages. In some instances, the scholars identified ways in which the radicals used rhetoric as a way to challenge previously set notions. However, in others, the scholars determined that the radicals' use of rhetoric perpetuated the very norms they were trying to challenge.

We can next turn towards anarchist rhetoric directly to understand the rhetorical character of anarchism. Unlike scholarship that examines anarchist rhetoric indirectly, rhetorical analyses addressing anarchist rhetors are limited. Most articles examining anarchist rhetoric focus on the anarchist orators themselves, especially on women.

We can first turn towards anarchist orators to understand the tension that we see anarchist rhetors adapt to within their oratory styles. In their essay, "Anarchist Women and the Feminine Ideal," Linda Horwitz, Donna Kowal, and Catherine Palczewski explain that unlike those in the women's liberation movement, the anarchist rhetors

Voltairine de Cleyre, Emma Goldman, and Lucy Parsons did not see appearing appropriate, feminine, or motherly as a necessary tactic of promoting anarchism or even anarchist feminism (309). Martha Solomon drew a similar conclusion in both her article and book on Emma Goldman, explaining that Goldman used embodiment, like the previously mentioned anarchists, to demonstrate anarchist principles (188). In the aforementioned analysis of Voltairine de Cleyre's rhetorical style, Thomas Rosteck and Michael Leff also argued that de Cleyre does more than present a speech and also serves the purpose of demonstrating the characteristics of an anarchist (338).

We see this rationale emerge in Horwitz, Kowal, and Palczewski's analysis of Parsons, Goldman, and de Cleyre. While each speaker varied in style, the most important feature of their rhetoric was that it contained "elements that were consistent with each woman's conception of anarchism and each of which challenged prevailing norms of femininity" (341). In fact, one could very well argue that these anarchist rhetors were successful, not because they adapted to the norms of femininity, but because they did not. Their refusal to adhere to societal norms and their insistence on applying their own principles to both their ideological approach and their rhetorical style demonstrated their ability to enact the anarchist principle of individual freedom.

Through these articles we see the rhetorical character of anarchism being teased out of each speaker's style. Rather than adopting a rhetorical style that matches other anarchist rhetors, each speaker creates a style to exemplify and embody her definition of anarchism. In this way, the speakers embrace the rupture of defining, by incorporating anarchism into their actions.



Solomon takes this a step further and argues that Goldman's rhetorical style is limited and controlled by her ideology. Since her ideology and style do not align with that of Goldman's audience Solomon will argue Goldman fails to reach them. Solomon explains, "Although her techniques served well to stimulate thought and provoke reaction, they were less successful in attracting followers and support. Rhetorically, she was undoubtedly her own worst enemy" (154). Despite the fact Goldman's rhetorical style at times, turned away many of her audience members, Solomon also argues that these principles were the concepts that made her appealing to readers in the future.

While Rosteck and Leff agree that each anarchist speaker had to adapt in her or his own way, they assert that instead of being limited rhetorically by their ideology, anarchist rhetors are left without a consistent structure to follow. They explain, "[T]his contrast not only indicates that radical discourse avoids adaptation to the audience, but that it often must construct its own standard of propriety" (338). From this quotation we can once again see the rhetorical character of anarchism emerge. Rosteck and Leff's argument for an anarchist's need to construct propriety relates directly to the definitional multiplicity within anarchism.

Not every scholar examining anarchist rhetoric looks at specific anarchist rhetors. Both Christina Foust and Nathaniel Hong examine how perceptions of anarchism are rhetorically constructed. Using the backdrop of social movement theory, Foust maps how hegemonic resistance and more specifically, transgression, emerge as an anarchist tactic (3). Meanwhile, Hong examines 105 magazine articles indexed under anarchism in order to determine how the definition of anarchism has shifted in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (110).

While Foust focuses primarily on the productive nature of anarchist tactics, Hong is concerned with the description of the anarchist, in early American periodicals. Nevertheless, both authors argue that the depiction of anarchists as senseless purveyors of violence requires a second look. For Foust, that means examining the way in which transgression is a tool for creating change. For Hong, that means determining the rhetorical context that would support anti-anarchist sentiment. Regardless of their approach, the authors use rhetoric as a way to examine the tension present between competing images of anarchists.

The decade following Black Tuesday set into motion a number of events that would later influence scholars in rhetoric and other fields to change their perspective on scholarship that we use today. Citizens were recovering not only from the crash of the United States stock market, but also the aftermath of Wilson's Red Scare, the Bolshevik Revolution, and Prohibition. Economically, the world experienced a global depression, the effects which would be felt for the better half of a decade. Describing the plight of the American businessman Irving Bernstein explains, "his image as the decisive figure in the society was shattered; he was blamed for the stock market crash and the joblessness of the Great Depression; his enterprise was subjected to new and more rigorous government regulations" (790). Yet, the businessmen were not the only individuals suffering in the aftermath the stock market crash. In 1932 the unemployment rate was at an all time high at 24.9 percent and the presence of nearly an eight year long dust bowl left no one untouched by the hardship of the decade. To sum it up succinctly, we can turn to historian Tony Judt. Judt explains, "The social democratic 'moment'—or its American counterpart

from the New Deal to the Great Society—was the product of a very particular combination of circumstances unlikely to repeat themselves (152).

The world was also seeing the rise of new global leaders, for better and for worse. The United States saw the defeat of Herbert Hoover and the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932 that led the implementation of the New Deal. Adolf Hitler was elected chancellor in 1933 and Francisco Franco staged a military coup in 1936 that would lead to the Spanish Civil War. Both, along with Benito Mussolini saw success in the through the late thirties. Those opposing fascism were faced with indescribable hardship whether it was from Nazi concentration camps, French internment camps, death, military involvement, or life as a refugee.

This period of uncertainty was also reflected in literature found in the thirties. In an analysis of thirties literature Steven Matthews writes,

The temporal slippage here, from present to past, is precise by troubling, open, in this time of traumatic memory and future fear, to eternal repetition as much as to progress. The voice's status and authority in the present is vulnerable to charges of absurdity, at the same time as this historical pageant is paraded before us. (38)

Matthews eloquently identifies how the events occurring in the thirties shaped the way they were discussed. Even so, Matthews and his co-editor for the book *Rewriting the Thirties: Modernism and After* also cautions us to not view the thirties as one homogenous cultural decade. Indeed, cultural influence came not only from anti-Stalinist individuals and pro-communist proletariat writers, but also the increasing number of women and people of color entering the cultural canon (Foley 33).

Additionally, while anarchists were active during this decade, attention is rarely drawn to their contribution. My dissertation will use the *Vanguard*, an anarchist publication during the thirties, as a means through which to explore the definitional strategies used to negotiate the term “anarchism.” Serving as the only anarchist English language journal, *Vanguard* drew upon interpretations of anarchism to offer a concrete plan for revolution, to discuss the current economic conditions and labor movements during the thirties, critique other radical organizations, and to report on the actions of anarchists around the world.

Frustrated by what they saw as the elder anarchists’ lack of enthusiasm and anachronistic view of anarchy, the anarcho-syndicalist group, guided by Sam Dolgoff, Mark Schmidt, and Abe Bluestein, formed what would be known as the “Vanguard Group.” Identifying themselves as the “Anarchist Youth,” the Vanguard Group was comprised almost entirely of anarchists under the age of thirty-five. In the beginning, many of the founding members of the group, including Sidney and Clara Solomon, Abe and Selma Bluestein, Mark Schmidt, Sam Dolgoff, and Louis Genin, contributed one or more articles to the journal under the guise of a pen name. However, as more issues of *Vanguard* were published, authors from other continents and well-known anarchists like Emma Goldman and Rudolf Rocker also made contributions.

Although Vanguard Group was made up of many different members, throughout the publication of the journal the group provided “Declaration of Policy” statements and presented the official position of Vanguard Group. These statements and position articles aided maintaining a unified approach in *Vanguard*. Although the journal was made up of a variety of authors, their main mission was to be a political organization. Each volume

of Vanguard reflecting different positions demonstrated this best. While a writer might take a position in one volume of *Vanguard*, in a different volume the position would change to match the position of Vanguard Group.

Despite the presence of the Vanguard Group in various activities and actions during the thirties, most of what we know about its activities comes from primary sources such as the original minutes of the groups, interviews done by historians, or personal accounts by the contributors themselves.

At surface level, the Vanguard Group appears like most radical groups. The minutes from the last year of publication contain financial statements and reports of distribution efforts in Brooklyn, Philadelphia, Washington, and Chicago (Vanguard Meeting Minutes). Discussions on how to reach workers effectively and ideas for overall recruitment also fill the minutes. Social events were used as fundraisers for the journal and the group's efforts. Historian Paul Avrich, who interviewed many of the members of the Vanguard Group, identifies a familiar quality to the journal and its members. He writes, "[T]he ideas evolved in Vanguard, the organ of the group, differed little from those in *The Road to Freedom* or its foreign-language contemporaries; the denunciation of totalitarianism, the support for the anarchists in Spain, even the picnics, dances, and lectures announced in Vanguard's pages—all bore a familiar ring" (416). For all intents and purposes, *Vanguard* was what one would expect an English anarchist journal to be in the thirties.

By the same token, the Vanguard Group was not without rivals. After a political debate with members of the Vanguard Group, the Spartacus Youth Club, a Communist youth organization, gave its impression of the Vanguard Group in its own journal:

The Young Anarchist replies essentially as do all the Anarchists: no program for leading the masses towards revolution except the abstract slogans of the revolution; no understanding of the necessity for an organized, centralized uprising---which led to the disastrous putsch in Salente, Spain; ‘federal decentralization’ and the masses will know what to do after the revolution. (2)

Simply put, the Spartacus Youth Club argues that the Vanguard Group’s perspective is similar to other Communist organizations’ reaction to anarchists. Why is this important? By understanding that the Vanguard Group was not only responding to critiques of anarchism by mainstream political forces, but also other groups on the left, we are able to have a better concept of their formation of the definition of anarchism.

This negotiation of political approach, however, was not limited to youth debates in New York. In the late thirties, the Vanguard Group relied on well-known anarchists to respond to the critiques of the anarchist strategies during the Spanish Civil War. In a letter to Rudolph Rocker, Emma Goldman writes, “The *Vanguard* comrades have asked me for an article replying to the renewed scurrilous attack on the Kronstadt sailors, Makhno and the Anarchists in Spain by Leon Trotsky” (130). *Vanguard* also became a platform for Goldman to respond to Trotsky and other accusations made about her by Communist journals. However, the backdrop of this is not the only reason to study *Vanguard*.

Serving as the only anarchist English language journal, *Vanguard* attempted to offer a concrete plan for revolution, discuss the current economic conditions and labor

movements during the thirties, critique other radical organizations, and report on the actions of anarchists around the world.

As the members and purpose of the journal changed, so did its title. While the first issue was titled *Vanguard: An Anarchist Youth Publication*, by the second issue, the title changed to *Vanguard: An Anarchist Communist Publication*. When the second volume of the journal emerged in 1935, the journal was renamed *Vanguard, A Libertarian-Communist Journal*. This title remained until the third volume, when the title shifted to simply *Vanguard*, and then *Vanguard: A Libertarian Journal* in the final two issues of the fourth volume.

Running sporadically from April 1932 until July 1939, four volumes of *Vanguard* were produced. By the time publication ceased, a total of twenty-five issues of *Vanguard* had been printed, averaging fifteen pages in length. Although not unique to each author contributors wrote an essay in a font available to them, and then each of the articles were combined into a complete journal, running on mimeographed paper for the first issue, and then multigraphed for the later issues. The publishers, calling themselves the Vanguard Group, consisted of roughly sixty first- and second-generation immigrants under the age of forty, all living in New York. However, by the second volume, contributors extended to other demographics and locations. In addition to the regular writers, the journal contained reports from strikes within the United States and international uprisings.

Designed to reach an “American audience,” the topics of the articles described the anarchist beliefs upheld by the group or discussed the anarchist movements in various parts of the globe (“A Declaration of Policy”). While some articles sought to explain the definition of anarchist-communism and the Libertarian movement, other articles

discussed the political environment of the thirties. Articles on Hitler, the Spanish Revolution, the New Deal, and the labor movement also appeared in the journal.

Although earlier issues attempted to create a distinction between the older generation and themselves, in the later volumes a distinction between anarchist ideologies became more prominent. We gain an insight into rhetoric and the character of anarchism through examining the Vanguard Group's language choice and how the writers adapted the term anarchism to the climate of the thirties. Mitch Miller, founding member of the Anarchist-Communist Federation of North America and the Workers Solidarity Alliance, declares in his online article, "A glimpse of Anarchist-Communism in the 1930's USA," "In April of 1932, the New York City Vanguard Group began a new public chapter in the history of the North American anarchist movement." Although the last issue of *Vanguard* was published during a period that historian George Woodcock would later call "the death of anarchism" (9), *Vanguard* reflected the way in which anarchist rhetoric sought to adjust to this rhetorical situation.

While little else is written about the Vanguard Group, the group plays a pivotal role in the development of anarchist history. Not only do members draw upon previous anarchist thinkers, but also many of the ideas discussed in the journal continue to be discussed today. The debates that the contributors to *Vanguard* had with other radical groups are still reproduced in publications and in the implementation of strategies in movements such as Occupy.

I argue that in order for the term "anarchism" to be truly comprehended; scholars must acknowledge its rhetorical character, which resides in the rupture of this definition. Second, because the *Vanguard* is written during a time when the rhetorical context of



anarchism was shifting dramatically, it offers an ideal text for analysis. The groups' purposeful decision to write the journal in English, making it the only English anarchist journal at the time, provides us with an additional insight. Due to the fact anarchism is dependent upon challenging set notions and adapting to the situations, the rapidly changing political climate of the thirties demanded the Vanguard Group continually revise how anarchism was defined. What's more since the readers, especially in the later publications of the journal, were a combination of younger and older generations spanning globally, the Vanguard Group had to incorporate various definitions of anarchism. Lastly, the criticism against anarchism from the mainstream American media and other radical groups created a need for the *Vanguard* to continually negotiate the meaning of anarchism.

### *Rhetorical Approach*

In *Defining Reality*, Schiappa is quick to draw a distinction between definitions of "is" or "facts of essence" versus definitions of "ought" (10). He explains that while "is" is the history of the term's usage, such as a dictionary definition, the "ought" in words establishes a societal norm. In other words, when we look at the "ought" behind a word, we are looking at the value being extolled or subverted within the word's usage.

In the case of a "definitional rupture," how a term is defined is called into question. Rather than being able to refer to the dictionary in order to identify the meaning of a term, with a definitional rupture, the meaning is not readily found in the dictionary. Instead, one must look beyond previous usages of the word in order to define it. Therefore, scholars must ask the following two questions

1. How do anarchist rhetors adapt to and negotiate definitional ruptures in their rhetoric?
2. What are the central definitional strategies in the *Vanguard*?

Through examining anarchism rhetorically we are better able to understand the tension that occurs from the definitional multiplicities.

There are three challenges anarchist rhetors typically face that we can also see occurring within *Vanguard*. The first challenge is to apply limits to what is and is not anarchist rhetoric. Although anarchist rhetoric does indeed have a nebulous nature, the importance of indicating what is and what is not anarchist rhetoric is equally significant. The second challenge is that not only must anarchists establish the limitations of what is and what is not anarchism; they must also redefine previous notions of anarchism. The third challenge anarchist rhetors face is that they are challenged to create a rhetoric that continues to be productive in the current situation.

Drawing from Schiappa, my dissertation will focus on three definitional strategies the Vanguard Group used to negotiate the definition of anarchism: describing, entitling, and framing. Through these definitional strategies the Vanguard Group was able to navigate the aforementioned challenges. We also gain a broader insight into how the rhetorical character of anarchism influences the definition of anarchism.

Vanguard Group's rhetoric was not only influenced by the context where they were located, but also how they were situated in the discourse of the decade. This influence is best described as the rhetorical situation. Rhetorician Lloyd Bitzer, argues a rhetorical situation is made up of exigence, audience, and constraints. While a rhetorical exigence is an obstacle or event that can be modified by the rhetor through discourse,

constraints are the limitations, both positive and negative that the rhetor faces. In the case of Vanguard Group the events of the thirties, their readers, and their use of the term anarchism all played a role in their rhetorical situation. What is more, how they chose to use definitions shaped how the exigence was formed.

### **Preview of the Chapters**

#### *Chapter Two: The Youth Publication*

Chapter two will address the first challenge Vanguard Group faced in defining the term anarchism in volume one of *Vanguard*. That is, apply the limitations of what is and is not anarchist rhetoric. Because definitional ruptures allows for a wide breadth and depth of meaning, anarchism can take on a wide variety of definitions. As a result, anarchist rhetors must find a way to signify what is not anarchism while upholding the values it promotes. They did this by calling into question the current interpretation of anarchism and other anarchist publications. One way this is done is through dissociative definitions. In *The New Rhetoric* Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca explain, “it [definition] is also an instrument of the dissociation of concepts, more especially whenever it claims to furnish the real, true meaning of the concept as opposed to its customary or apparent usage” (444). In other words, a term becomes defined by the association of meaning to some concepts and the disassociation of meaning to other concepts, especially those that are commonly used.

Schiappa adds an extra dimension to this concept. He argues that through naming and describing, the rhetor attempts to identify the characteristics of a term. By locating the naming of an item (entitling it) within a set of beliefs about the world an argument is made regarding how a term is defined. By introducing the topoi of youth as the stewards

of the revolution, shifting the ideological topoi, and stressing the topoi of enactment, they laid the groundwork for their next challenge.

### *Chapter Three: A Militant Press*

The third chapter will address the challenge of redefining depictions of anarchism that contradict the values ascribed by self-identified anarchists. One way this is countered is through the process of redefinition. In his book examining President Johnson's War on Poverty, David Zarefsky explains, "successive redefinitions may be used so that the focus of the symbol gradually shifts while its force remains" (17). One way the process of redefining takes place is through entitling. Schiappa explains that entitling occurs in two ways. In domestication, ordinary language, such as metaphors, are used to define an instance. In bureaucratization, technical terms are used to "sanitize the concept so that it appears neutral and inoffensive" (130). We see this move towards a redefinition of anarchism through domestication and bureaucratization as early as the second volume of the *Vanguard*.

As news of the revolutionary actions in Spain were picked up within the United States, the tone of what constituted anarchism shifted. In the second volume of the *Vanguard*, the journal was no longer referred to as an anarchist publication, but instead a "libertarian communist" publication. There was also a shift to a more clinical and technical language. Unlike other forms of anarchism described in the journal, libertarian communism is less abstract and more technical. Not only is there a separation from other ways of interpreting anarchism, libertarian communism also is presented as more advanced with a strategic characteristic applied to it. As a result, the definition of anarchism upheld by the members of the journal shifts and it counters some of the earlier

critiques of anarchism as being idealistic. What's more they overcame the second challenge by establishing themselves as the voice of experts.

#### *Chapter 4: Sanguine Reporting*

In the fourth chapter, the need to continually create an evolving and productive notion of anarchism was the third rhetorical challenge faced by anarchist rhetors that will be addressed in my dissertation. Like other forms of rhetoric, anarchist rhetoric is a productive art. That is, through rhetoric the way one understands the world is created. Through the process of framing, one encounters the appropriate interpretation of the situation at hand. Schiappa explains, "the act of defining a situation, especially in public discourse, simultaneously identifies a competent audience for the contested issue, specifies a type of knowledge being sought, and suggests appropriate modes of analysis" (156). Through framing, while a particular definition might not be assigned to the meaning of anarchism, by positioning it within a broader framework, we gain an image of the qualities that the term possesses.

In the last issue of *Vanguard* published in 1939, we encounter an example of this method of framing. Because the anarchist led Spanish Revolution failed, the members of the *Vanguard* Group were faced with the task of reaffirming the values of anarchism, rebuking the approaches of anarchism that contributed to the lack of success in the Spanish Civil War, and identifying an approach that would both characterize anarchism and move the readers forward. Simply put, the members of the *Vanguard* Group needed to create a definition of anarchism that responded to the current situation. By framing anarchism within the broader context of the Spanish Civil War, they were able to do just that.

By framing the previous discussions of anarchism as fragments of a broader understanding of anarchism, the definitions of anarchism not only shift, but also adapt to fit within a concept of anarchism that continues to be productive. What's more, by presenting steps that the anarchist movement should take, the authors of Vanguard strive to evolve the perceptions of anarchism that continue to reflect the evolving definition of anarchism.

### **Chapter 5: Future Implications**

The fifth chapter addresses the implications derived from the rhetorical analysis by summarizing the rhetorical character of Vanguard Group's anarchism. I also offer suggestions for future research and identify the limitations of the study. I end with a note on the nature of defining anarchism.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THE YOUTH PUBLICATON**

#### **Establishing the Rhetorical Situation**

*1929-1934*

Following the crash of the stock market in 1929, the United States entered a period of depression that was consistent with the economic depression in the rest of the world. President Herbert Hoover focused on strengthening banks, railroads and corporations in response to the economic turmoil rather than using federal funds to provide direct relief (Carcasson 349-365). Regardless of whether Hoover's approach to economics was correct, he sustained a loss of voter confidence because his policies did not lead to changes quickly enough (Houck 155-181). Franklin D. Roosevelt's persona and policies made him an attractive presidential candidate to voters frustrated with Hoover in 1932. In Ritchie's words, Roosevelt "confounded his political opponents by adopting a varied and creative program of relief, recovery, and reform that appealed broadly to the electorate" (209-210). By the time Roosevelt took office in 1933, the Great Depression was well underway. He went to work immediately. He implemented the New Deal, which was designed as a recovery program for the failing economic system. Despite high unemployment and widespread poverty in the United States, there were very few instances of strikes or uprisings in the early stages of the Depression. "In some ways, the most surprising phenomenon of the depression," Dulles and Dubofsky explain, "was this apathetic attitude on the part of the industrial workers while the unemployment figures steadily mounted and the bread lines lengthened" (252). Nevertheless, there were

several instances in the early thirties in which Americans, particularly second-generation immigrants, protested their circumstances.

### *The Founding of Vanguard Group*

The Free Workers Centre at 219 Second Avenue was the central gathering place for young, Jewish, second-generation anarchist immigrants in New York in the early thirties who did, in the midst of the Great Depression, seek another direction. From dinners to dances, Free Workers Centre provided a place for friends to meet, reading groups to form, and political discussions to occur. But the Free Workers Centre was not exclusive to anarchist Jewish Americans. The events also attracted other second-generation immigrants and African-Americans. Despite the first-generation immigrants' past political participation, the younger generation felt the older generation failed to grasp the role anarchism played in the United States. A 1932 meeting held in the New York home of Russian revolutionary Daniluk led to a decision to start the journal *Vanguard* (Solomon 5). Those in attendance included: Mark Schmidt, Sidney and Clara Solomon, Lou Slater, Lou Genin, Eddie Wong, Zina and Ruth Dickstein, Glenn Carrington, Sam and Thomas Dolgoff, and a woman named Violet. This group would later refer to themselves as Vanguard Group. Despite the fact that a Jewish anarchist paper written in Yiddish (*Friere Arbeiter Stimme*), an Italian anarchist monthly (*L'Adunata*), a Spanish anarchist weekly (*Cultura Proletaria*), and a Russian anarchist monthly (*Diela Truda*) were already in existence, the group felt that a journal to address the English-speaking American youth was necessary (Avrich 416).

Containing only four articles and produced on mimeographed paper, the first issue of *Vanguard: An Anarchist Youth Publication* appeared in April 1932. By the time the



second issue of the first volume appeared in July of the same year, the name of the journal was changed to *Vanguard: An Anarchist Communist Journal*, and the journal was now multigraphed, allowing for a greater number of copies to be produced. The first volume contained eight issues and ran roughly every other month until June 1933.

Vanguard Group sought to create a journal that would address the limitations they saw present in other anarchist organizations and publications. Vanguard Group argued that other anarchist organizations focused on the wrong population, had an insubstantial approach to the anarchist movement, and used the wrong methods for implementing their perspective. Thus, throughout the first volume of *Vanguard*, Vanguard Group called into question the current interpretation of anarchism by identifying a new audience for their journal, challenging the ideology of the other anarchist groups, and arguing for a new way to address the issues faced by radicals. In the subsequent sections, I identify the three sets of topoi--youth, ideology, and implementation--that were used to address these limitations. As a whole, topoi serve as a common line of argumentation that a rhetor can use to approach a subject. The introduction of aforementioned common ideas or topics challenge what earlier generations viewed as befitting to anarchism, thus Vanguard Group's usage of them established a definitional rupture in how anarchism could be defined.

In the first section, I examine how Vanguard Group's rhetoric created interlocking images of youth as the stewards of the revolution. In this role as stewards, the youth not only lead the anarcho-syndicalist movement, but also they would take part in building a popular movement. These images of the youth make them central in the discussion of who should belong to a vanguard party. Without this depiction, the argument for the

inclusion of the youth would not have been as salient. Because the youth were a cornerstone in the movement, their break with the other anarchist organizations was justifiable. This deterministic approach to the youth leading the revolution bolstered the limitations Vanguard Group was able to make on the term anarchism and their ability to question the current interpretation. The rhetorical construction of the youth as stewards also allowed them to suggest a new strategy and orient themselves to the future.

In the second section, I examine how Vanguard Group's language of anarchist political principles established a distinction between appropriate and inappropriate forms of anarchism. Vanguard Group shifted from an application of political policy in utopian communities and anarchist communities to a perspective that embraced a more active involvement in a broader American culture. This rhetoric also allowed Vanguard Group to justify a revision of anarchist ideology. Because the motives of other anarchist groups in the early thirties were aligned to the liberal movement and a failure of the anarchist movement, Vanguard Group's revision to the ideology was depicted as well-timed within journal.

Additionally, Vanguard Group's revision to the approach warranted a shift in the way anarchist-communism was implemented. In the third section, I examine how Vanguard Group's use of heterosis functioned rhetorically to critique the way in which other anarchist groups enacted anarchism. By rhetorically positioning the other anarchist groups in the past and establishing themselves as innovative, Vanguard Group elevates the significance of their role in drafting the new blueprint of the anarchist movement. This also allows them to justify the existence and future longevity of the journal.

## Youth as the Stewards of the Revolution

*Vanguard* went through several name changes throughout in the beginning. The first title was *Vanguard: An Anarchist Youth Publication*. Although the name had changed by the second issue, the impetus for starting the journal remained. Vanguard Group felt the first generation of anarchist immigrants did not give enough attention to anarchists under thirty-five. Vanguard Group drew attention to the need to focus on the youth movement and to the lack of attention given to the youth by the other anarchist groups by focusing on three aspects of the youth: youth and national linguistic identity, youth and organizing strategy, and youth and their connection to the future.

### *Youth and National Identity*

Although several anarchist journals already existed at the inception of *Vanguard*, none were in English. For Vanguard Group, the use of English was a significant factor in building an anarchist movement. In their declaration of policy, Vanguard Group explains,

We shall welcome the opportunity to state before the anarchists of the English-speaking world, the fundamental principles of our future activity. We shall welcome it, for we believe that the primary task of each and every anarchist group, is the formation of a definite set of principles governing its attitude to all of the most important problems of our movement. (“Declaration of Policy” 1)

In this section, they use the repetition of the phrase “we shall welcome” as a way to emphasize their eagerness in presenting their principles. However, Vanguard Group’s target audience is equally significant. Specifically, Vanguard Group considers their audience to be the anarchists of the English-speaking world. Thus, the audience is not the

same audience that is addressed by the Yiddish, Italian, or Spanish journals. Nor is the audience any member of the first-generation anarchist immigrants. Anarchists of the English-speaking world became central to Vanguard Group's primary or first task of identifying definite principles. Although Vanguard Group will later go on to declare they are not attempting to leave out the previous generation, by emphasizing the anarchists of the English-speaking world; they are simultaneously de-emphasizing the anarchists whose first language is not English.

Vanguard Group focuses on a specific group in the English-speaking world, American youth:

But we do want to orientate our work upon the American youth mainly.

We are of the opinion that the anarchist movement of America has woefully neglected the elementary task of building up a youth movement ("Declaration of Policy" 1).

The work they are presenting to the English-speaking world is to the youth of America. Vanguard Group stresses further that the majority of the organizing will be directed towards this type of youth. Vanguard Group declares this focus is an elementary task, a task that needs to be one of the initial steps when building an Anarchist Movement, and yet, it is also a task neglected by other anarchist organizations. By declaring that building up the youth movement is a primary step, a creation of youth movements becomes foundational in organizing an Anarchist Movement. In this way, the Anarchist Movement becomes one with a youth movement. Since youth becomes a distinction between Vanguard Group and previous anarchist groups is also established, it becomes part of the justification for creating a new anarchist group.

This sentiment is continued in the editorial notes in the second issue of the journal. Vanguard Group writes,

The realization that the revolutionary anarchism must be maintained, developed further and made popular among the masses of this country, has brought together a group of young students and workers to carry on this work, who will concentrate upon the neglected rising generation (Editorial Notes 1).

Unlike the previously examined passages, the focus towards the youth is not treated as a commonly-known approach to building an anarchist movement. Instead, Vanguard Group justifies their approach of shifting their attention towards the youth by calling it a “realization.” This realization is not merely directed towards a focus on the youth, but also the process of maintaining, developing, and popularizing revolutionary anarchism in the United States.

The editors argue this responsibility falls on both young students and workers. As shown in the previous passages, while the connection of the students to the workers unifies these two groups, it also excludes the older generation of anarchists. However, the rationale for this exclusion can be found in the statement that follows the aforementioned text. The other anarchist groups have neglected their responsibility to focus on the youth. The youth generation is significant because they are part of the momentum that is building towards an anarchist federation. They are a rising generation: a generation that is moving upward towards progress, the same direction Vanguard Group wants revolutionary anarchism to go.

This progress is linked both to the fact that the generation is young and that they are American. Although the United States was in a period of depression, the association of the United States with progress and movement was still potent. Even as FDR stepped into office, he argued that the New Deal would revitalize the nation. Vanguard Group's desire to connect to this version of the United States is best demonstrated through a fictional speech, also published in the second issue. In the speech, the orator declares,

So we saw that if we were not to fall into oblivion, we must modify our ideas, a little, once more: we must become one hundred per cent-Americans—there was no other way out. Our own nation would now have to come before all other nations, our workers before all other workers.

(Coleman, "If" 12)

For Vanguard Group, the anarchist movement was falling and failing. This fall was into oblivion. The anarchist movement was disappearing, and the solution was to link anarchist principles to American identity. By declaring that the American nation must be the priority, they elevated the meaning of what it means to be an American and touted Americanization as the key for overcoming the fall into oblivion. However, through Vanguard Group's desire to assimilate into American culture, they also disregarded the cultural values that are part of the other anarchist groups. But for Vanguard Group, Americanization, in order to appeal to the youth, was an important part of their organizing strategy.

#### *Youth and Organizing Strategy*

In the aforementioned "Editorial Notes," Vanguard Group explains that this focus on the American youth is part of their organizing strategy. They declare,

We aim at the establishment of a federation of autonomous youth groups, a militant press, and a coherent plan of action, for the realization of a successful social revolution which will abolish the existing bourgeois society and institute an anarchist-communist society. (Editorial Board, “Editorial Notes” 1)

The youth are significant because they will be the members of the anarchist federation, but they will also be autonomous in their activities. They will uphold the values of an anarchist-communist society by being part of a federation, specifically, an anarchist federation. This federation is connected to a militant press and a coherent plan of action. Vanguard Group aims to establish self-directed youth groups that share the ideology of Vanguard Group. Vanguard Group places an emphasis on a social revolution instead of a political revolution. Therefore, the youth will be acting to restructure the societal structures beneath a political structure.

In “Essay on Anarchist Communism,” Sam Weiner describes how American youth will become part of the anarchist movement: “Outside of the labor movement as such, Anarchist-Communism must be propagated among the intelligent youth through study groups, propaganda centers and through the dissemination of literature” (13). Although Vanguard Group did believe the labor movement should be an important aspect of their strategy, they also believed that, separate from the labor movement, Anarchist-Communism must be spread by the youth. Although Vanguard Group advocates spreading Anarchist-Communist propaganda, the objective is not to trick them into following Anarchist-Communism. While propaganda centers are mentioned, so are study groups and the dissemination of literature. This approach further promotes the idea that

Vanguard Group's principles of Anarchist-Communism are logical, and an intelligent student would come into agreement with these values simply after participating in a study group or reading literature on the subject. Furthermore, the emphasis on intelligent youth becomes an indicator that these youth will be part of the aforementioned autonomous youth groups, which will be making decisions in the revolutionary movement.

In the final issue of the first volume, The Secretary of Vanguard Group writes,

We appealed time and again, in the Anarchist press, to groups and individuals to help us organize youth groups in their localities. The response was slow and ineffective, showing that all the talk of building a 'youth movement' was insincere verbosity. The 'Vanguard' was born, not in the spirit of competition or isolation, but as an attempt to give expression to the specific approach we formulated in the course of our activity, and that is why we found it necessary to establish national and international contacts of our own. (14-15)

This section draws attention both to the importance of Vanguard Group including the youth in the anarchist movement, as well as to their argument that other anarchist organizations do not meet this need. The first part of the section addresses Vanguard Group's appeal to other anarchist groups to organize the youth. Vanguard Group's interpretation of the other anarchist groups' efforts to implement this strategy was that while other organizations agreed to the idea, their actions were not sufficient. This lack gave birth to *Vanguard*. What is interesting to note in this passage is Vanguard Group does not credit the lack of action by previous anarchist organizations for the birth of Vanguard Group. Yet the non-action by the previous anarchist groups does create an



impetus for Vanguard Group's organization. The idea of the vanguard party as the forerunner and guide of a revolution becomes tied to Vanguard Group. They not only name themselves Vanguard Group, but they specifically argue the desire to place the youth central in their organizing strategy made them the group that would lead the revolution.

The Vanguard Group Editorial Board further emphasizes the importance of placing the youth as a central part of the approach later in the same article. The author explains, "The task of building up a youth federation of autonomous groups is, no doubt, our most important undertaking. A task in which every group and individual could and should participate" (Editorial Board, "The Vanguard Group" 15). Not only does the strategy play a central role, it is also considered the most important and primary task. This is an approach that would even outweigh a focus on the workers. Additionally, this is a strategy that should be used by any member of the vanguard. In order to understand why this organizing strategy was so significant, I would next like to turn to the connection Vanguard Group made with the youth and the future.

#### *Youth and Ties to the Future*

For Vanguard Group, the reason the youth should play a central role was their response to the economic depression. Although very few protests emerged during the publication of this issue, the students were one of those groups who did respond. Perhaps because of this reason, The Editorial Board writes in their fourth issue,

The Vanguard undertakes to attract and hold to Anarchist-Communism the awakening youth who are becoming responsive to radical ideas by the present economic conditions. To them we shall present a magazine alive to

present day problems, which will analyze them from an Anarchist-Communist standpoint, and at the same time, offer a background from past events and literature for a better understanding of the present. (“An Appeal” 15)

Because the youth challenged the economic conditions of that period, Vanguard Group viewed them as part of the awakening taking place at the time. The youth were radicalized by the Depression. The repetition of the term “present” reinforces the connection between the radicalization of the youth and the events taking place. However, the passage also notes the youth are becoming responsive to radical ideas, but not necessarily Anarchist-Communist ideas. The reason why the youth need to be of central concern is so that, in presenting them with an analysis from an Anarchist-Communist standpoint, the youth will become part of the anarchist movement.

In an issue published later in the volume, the author A. Shapiro discusses the effectiveness of this approach in relation to the International Ladies Garment Workers Union call for radical youth: “Our point of view which is beginning to take root among many of the youth who do not follow blindly, will be presented at subsequent discussion conferences” (“The I.L.G.W.U. Calls Upon Youth” 11). By arguing the Anarchist-Communist perspective is taking root, they are arguing their strategy is effective. Moreover, it means that the ideas are more stabilized and provide solid ground for the youth’s decision. The youth, whom Vanguard Group declares are “following blindly,” do not adhere to Vanguard Group’s point of view. This comment both discredits the motivations of the youth who do not adhere to Vanguard Group’s point of view and reinforces the notion that only youth who can think independently will choose to embrace

Anarchist-Communism. This process is significant enough that these ideas are worthy to be discussed at future conferences.

Indeed, Vanguard Group views the youth as part of the future. This is best demonstrated in the article discussing the student protests,

The mere fact that the students have been rallying to the slogan of academic freedom, and will continue to rally to it in greater numbers in the future, shows the nature of the under current that flows in the student movement, an under current which I believe must inevitably turn the movement into an Anarchist Movement. (Winter, "The Student and the Crisis" 6)

Vanguard Group describes the students rallying through the metaphor of an undercurrent, one that flows and one that is unstoppable. The author believes this unstoppable undercurrent will continue to gain more members and will turn into an Anarchist movement. In other words, the youth hold the key to the future of the Anarchist movement. The focus on the youth additionally sets the stage for a *topoi* in conjunction with anarchism. Although Vanguard Group will later move away from this deterministic perspective, in volume one it sets the stage for calling into question the first generation's definition of anarchism and, overall, sets limitations on the term anarchism.

### **Shift in Ideological Topoi**

However, making youth central to the organizing strategy was not the only aspect of Vanguard Group that separated them from other anarchist groups. Vanguard Group also felt other anarchist groups had adhered to the wrong ideology, focusing more on

individual freedom and too little on collective actions. This sentiment is best expressed in “A Declaration of Policy” in the first issue of their first volume:

We regard all the attempts to link up the anarchist idea of freedom with the middle class, nineteenth-century idea of property relationships as a mere contrivances, ingenious devices, mechanical combinations, ideas possessing but superficial resemblances, all these so-called individualistic constructions of the anarchist idea, there claims to 100 percentage notwithstanding, are nothing but vestigial remnants of a rapidly dying liberal movement. (Editorial Board 2)

Because Anarchist Individualists, today known as anarchists without adjectives, focus on the freedom of self-governance and individual action, connecting other anarchist organizations to the liberal movement would not be a difficult task for Vanguard Group. After all, Cochran explains that liberalism “tries to give individuals the space to be their own masters, to rule themselves as far as they are able” (6). However, anarchism and liberalism are not synonymous with one another. Vanguard Group embarks on a task to maintain the value of anarchism, while at the same time removing what they felt was a liberal tendency within Anarchist Individualism. The above passage demonstrates Vanguard Group’s use of dissociation to distinguish their ideology from the ideology of other anarchist groups.

In the first part of the passage, Vanguard Group treats the anarchist concept of freedom as a different entity from the freedom for everyone to own property. By declaring there is an attempt to link or connect the anarchist movement to freedom with the freedom to own property, the authors imply that there at least two distinct types of

freedom. While they have described the anarchist idea of freedom connected to the rights of the working class in other passages, Vanguard Group describes the right to own property as a middle-class idea. This idea is also one that is outdated, for it is a nineteenth-century idea. Moreover, the nineteenth-century idea of the right to own property, which Vanguard Group connects to the liberal movement, is not just outdated or old, but “rapidly dying.” The anarchist idea of freedom, which Vanguard Group depicts as being renewed in other articles, could not possibly be the same type of freedom tied to the middle class that is dying. Vanguard Group further emphasizes this point by calling the remnants “vestigial.” Like a vestigial organ that no longer performs a function that benefits the human body, a vestigial political ideology is no longer effective for a society that has evolved. Vanguard Group’s use of the term vestigial also accents the metaphor of anarchism as a living entity.

In the passage, Vanguard Group is careful to describe the difference between the two types of freedoms and treat them as separate entities. For example, Vanguard Group refers to the connection as an attempt to link. The link, Vanguard Group goes on to explain, is a superficial link. A link or connection that is not natural. Vanguard Group uses engineering metaphors as a way to highlight the mechanical nature of the connection. They begin by describing why Vanguard Group sees it as an unnatural link and a contrivance, something that has been cleverly designed make it seem as if the two types of freedom are the same. This concept is stressed when the authors go on to describe the link as an ingenious device that not only continues the engineer metaphor, but also serves as a way to identify the rhetorical nature of the supposed link between the

two ideas of freedom. The reference to mechanical combinations and superficial resemblances continue this approach.

Taken as a whole, the life and body metaphor in combination with the engineering metaphor creates a broader argument about the difference between the anarchist notion of freedom and the liberal notion of the right to own property. That is, the only way the concept of a liberal movement is still alive is due to the fact a mechanism has been created to tie it to the life of anarchism. Without the aforementioned ingenuity applied to creating a link or connection between the two types of freedom, the outdated dying concept would cease to function. Thus, Vanguard Group will argue in the first volume areas where other anarchist groups need to move beyond an outdated ideology. Throughout *Vanguard*, Vanguard Group identifies the economic, political, and societal ideologies that the other anarchists need to change.

### *Economic Ideology*

Vanguard Group argued the economic ideology of the other anarchist groups was lacking in substance. In a fictionalized speech called “If,” published in the second issue of *Vanguard*, the rhetor argues:

We then proceeded to examine our economic policies. Our original concept of the trade union, for instance was that it should serve as the instrument of Revolution. But such a concept is actually of no practical value, if you try to carry it out in real life. What real gains does it offer the worker—now? (Coleman, If 10)

The text is fictional, but the critique is not fictional. For Vanguard Group, the economic policies of the other anarchist groups were ineffective. However, instead of addressing

this directly, they construct a scenario that applies an alternative approach to economics. This scenario rested on three assumptions. First, the concepts were capable of application. Because Vanguard Group determined trade unions to have no practical value, they were deemed unnecessary in the fictionalized account. Therefore, regardless of whether Vanguard Group's approach to economics was effective, "If" was used as an arena to introduce an alternative perspective to anarchist economic ideology.

Accompanying the assumption that the policy must be applicable was also the assumption that the policy must be applicable at the present day. Even though this was a fictitious moment in time, the author stressed the present tense. There must be gains now, instead of merely in the future. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the "now" of the fictional speech and the "now" of the nonfictional publication become conflated.

The third assumption was that the economic policy must benefit "the worker." Unlike the sections of the journal that focused on the youth, the policies created by Vanguard Group were directed towards benefiting individuals in lower socio-economic classes. While Vanguard Group dissociates themselves in these sections from other anarchist groups by distinguishing between their policies and other approaches, Vanguard Group maintains a focus on what they call the worker, the same group that other radical organizations, including anarchists, often directed their attention.

The dissociation from other anarchist organizations' approach to economics is seen throughout the remainder of the first volume, but in the subsequent issues, the statements do not take place in an imagined scenario. In a remembrance of the Haymarket Martyrs, one of the authors, Hippolyte Havel repeats a passage written by one of the martyrs, August Spies.

We have further said that the wage system, as a specific form of social development, would, by the necessity of logic, have to give way to higher forms of civilization; that the wage system must furnish the foundations for a social system of voluntary co-operation; that whether this or that theory, this or that scheme regarding future arrangements were accepted was not a matter of choice, but one of the historic necessity; and that to use the tendency of progress seemed to be Anarchism- that is, a free society without kings or classes—a society of sovereigns in which liberty and economic equality of all would furnish an unshakable equilibrium as a foundation for natural order. (4)

While Spies argues that the wage system would eventually have to be abolished, he also acknowledges that the wage system was initially necessary. Using a building metaphor, the wage system was the foundation for the creation of an anarchist society. Indeed, although it was part of the development, and an important part as well, it was also one that was at the bottom of the development and would eventually have another, higher form built upon it.

Spies treated the construction of this structure as a necessity. This necessity was tied to the progression of a society. While the wage system would serve as a foundation, Spies is also quick to emphasize that logic dictates that there would be a higher or better form of this economic approach. The wage system was part of the development of a civilization. However, he argued it was not the end product. This change was necessary for historical development. Spies refers to it as an unshakable equilibrium and something



that was not chosen. Instead, it was a force tied to the logical and natural development of a civilization.

This civilization was linked to a movement through time. The momentum was tied to the future. The progress was not that of decisions or choices made, but instead was part of the history of the movement towards an anarchist society. In addition to Spies situating his argument in time, Vanguard Group relies on his testimony to place their economic approach on a historical continuum. Spies's future becomes Vanguard Group's present. The transformation to a free society was taking place, and Spies's writing from the past accounted for what had happened.

The historical emphasis on the usefulness of the economic policy is continued in the article "Whither the Libertarian Movement?" Within the article, Senex describes the different outcomes in Spain that are derived from anarchists choosing to follow Anarchist Individualism (the approach used by previous generations) or choosing to follow Anarchist Communism (the approach used by Vanguard Group). Responding to the critique that both Anarchist Individualism and Anarchist Communism are similar forms of anarchism, Senex argues:

And they have already broken up the general line of the libertarian struggles in two polar directions; one orientated upon an emerging form of economic relationships; the other clinging to a pattern of economic cooperation that is deeply rooted in the past and is still the most familiar one to the majority of mankind. ("Whither the Libertarian Movement?" 7)

Once again the distinction between an Anarchist Individualist ideology and an Anarchist Communist ideology becomes situated within a temporal framework. While the anarchist

groups supported by Vanguard Group become part of the emerging form of economics, the other anarchist groups struggling to retain property rights for the sake of individual freedom in Spain are tied to the past.

As in Spies' account, both Anarchist Individualism and Anarchist Communism contain the same foundation. However, while the struggle for equality and freedom originally were linked together, Vanguard Group argues that this line is now broken, because a struggle for individual freedom contradicts with the struggle to cooperatively own and farm land. Not only is this similarity broken through this struggle, it is broken in two polar or opposite directions. While they might have been conjoined at the beginning, the polar nature of the two ideologies now makes them distinct from one another.

The impetus for this break becomes an emerging form of economics, which, in the case of the Anarchist Communists in Spain, represents a move towards syndicalism and communism. This emerging form takes on the same depiction as Spies's higher form. Both forms express a progression to economics determined by a historical situation. The economic ideology that is foundational in Spies's account is the economic approach rooted in the past forms of anarchism. While Vanguard Group's roots are derived from previous notions of anarchism and take on a natural and biological function of supplying nutrients and vitality to the economic approach of the present, it nevertheless is different from the economic ideology that is needed.

In "The Economics of the Transition Period," found in a later issue of the first volume, Vanguard Group elaborates on the difference between these two seemingly similar ideologies.

The socialization of ownership is a revolutionary, violent ACT, the success of which is conditioned upon force, but the socialization of labor is a PROCESS which requires for its development a set of definite conditions and a certain period of time. That is why we may say that the Social Revolution will be able to introduce collective ownership at once in the whole country, but will not be able to do it in respect to LABOR. But collectivistic labor is the main base of communism, which is impossible of realization without the former. (Maximoff 5)

In this passage, an additional step is needed to create an economic revolution rather than just a social revolution. Thus, the author argues a transition period is needed. The socialization of ownership moves beyond the aforementioned liberalism approach of the freedom to own property to socialization of ownership. This movement occurs as part of a revolution. The break between the old and the new economic system is through a coercive move. Vanguard Group is clear to explain that the shift occurs as part of a revolutionary and violent act or action, and the outcome of a new economic ideology is derived from a forced position. However, this shift is only the beginning of a transition to a new economic system.

Vanguard Group argues that the complete new economic ideology is not automatic, but instead must occur through a specific program of definite conditions developed over time. This contradicts previous descriptions that describe the shift as part of a natural process moving forward towards the future. The approach to labor, specifically a collectivistic labor, addressed earlier comments on trade unions and the wage system. It also becomes tied to communism. The move to include communism

creates a clear economic distinction between Vanguard Group and the other anarchist approaches to economics that do not include an effort to have a collectivistic labor base. However, by also including a connection to a social revolution as part of the transition to the new economic system of the future, Vanguard Group conforms to traditional anarchist ideology as well. The foundation that is touted as part of the old economic system in other passages is still present.

Despite their efforts to create a distinction between their economic ideology and the ideology of other radical or anarchist groups, at times the differences between the two ideologies are difficult to identify.

While in some cases, the difference is based upon perceptions of property ownership, in other cases, the difference becomes whether or not trade unions are supported in the present. Still, others argue that while wage systems and economic cooperation lay the groundwork, the difference between the economic approaches is the desire to eventually move beyond the current structure. In cases like the previously mentioned section, collective ownership of property is part of new economic ideology, but it is not considered the future economic approach because it would not include a collective approach to labor. In all cases, because the past economic ideology lays the foundation or becomes the roots of the present economic approach, the line that separates the two ideologies is not as discrete as they indicate.

### *Political Ideology*

Vanguard Group was not just critical of the economic ideology of other anarchist groups. They also believed the other organizations had a limited political ideology. In the previously mentioned fictional speech, the rhetor hints at the lack of present orientation in

the other anarchist groups. He argues, “Finally, their firm stand, the intensity of their idealism, showed slight results” (Coleman, “If” 9). A common critique of the idealism within anarchist individualism comes through in this statement. This idealism is specifically linked to the belief of equal property ownership and freedom of individual behavior. Not only does the rhetor use the common assessment of individual anarchism, he ties it to a firm stand and high level of intensity. By drawing attention to the magnitude and intensity of the deemed idealistic stance, Vanguard Group stresses the irrational nature of this belief. This emphasis, coupled with the lack of results, creates the argument that the individual anarchists adhere to this political ideology, not through a logical choice, but instead through an impassioned dedication to an idealistic notion. This echoes the aforementioned critique of the connection between individual anarchists and the liberal movement.

Vanguard Group’s critique of the other organization’s political ideology, however, is best exemplified through the aforementioned article, “Whither the Libertarian Movement?” As with the economic ideology, the association of ideology with temporality creates a distinction between Vanguard Group, the anarchist-communists, and the other anarchist organizations, specifically the anarchist individualist: “One is the direction of the Anarchist-Communist movement, the boldest champion of the future of humanity, the other, that of the Anarchist Individualist which still clings to the outlived institutions of the past” (Senex, “Whither the Libertarian Movement?” 7). Once again, the anarchist individualists are depicted as holding fast or clinging to their political perspective. As before, their persistence is depicted not as adhering to the values of a traditional anarchist ideology, but instead the maintenance of anarchist individualism is

depicted as an anarchistic commitment to an outdated ideology. This concept is magnified through the authors' connection of the anarchist individualist philosophy to the institutions of the past. While these institutions might have been beneficial at one point, Vanguard Group argues these institutions are dying.

Anarchist-Communism, on the other hand, is again tied to the future. Like the economic ideology, it is the future of civilization and, specifically in this case, humanity. Vanguard Group heightens the value of the anarchist-communist movement by calling them not only the "future of humanity," but also the "boldest champion." Even though anarchist-communism deviates from the traditional anarchist philosophy, this deviation is depicted as a bold move rather than a blasphemous move. This bold move portrays them as champions or heroes that would lead the anarchist-communist movement, further accentuating Vanguard Group's role as the revolutionary vanguard.

In the same article, Vanguard Group justifies their approach by arguing,

This re-orientation of the general line of libertarian struggles is a difficult task and requires a long-range historical view, a scientific calculation of the organic processes of social life and steering clear of any mechanical schemes which would insure an automatic functioning of a libertarian system. It is these difficulties that frighten away many an Anarchist into the individualist camp which elevates the difficulties of libertarian Communism into the rank of intrinsic contradictions between Communism and individual liberty. (Senex, "Whither the Libertarian Movement?" 7)

Vanguard Group's representation of other anarchist groups intensely maintain a traditional individual anarchist ideology, regardless of its effectiveness and presents these

other groups as incapable of taking on the challenging task of logically choosing an anarchist-communist perspective. Their repetition of variations of the term “difficult” emphasizes this idea. Through the repetitions of the term, Vanguard Group alludes to the notion that the individual anarchists avoid the arduousness of libertarian communism. By repeating “difficult,” Vanguard Group identifies what makes a “good” anarchist. That is, true anarchists are individuals who are willing to work hard. Furthermore, Vanguard Group establishes that they are such individuals.

Vanguard Group also asserts that there must be a scientific calculation of the organic process of social life. A group leading the anarchist movement must be able to recognize how a civilization can grow, a task that, Vanguard Group argues in the previously mentioned articles, the individualistic anarchists could not do. Additionally, like the passage in “The Declaration of Policy,” the ideology is described as a body or biological entity. This entity is organic in both its development and naturalness.

Thus, anarchist groups lacking in this scientific or logical character will fall victim to mechanical schemes. The attention towards the contrived structures that have been created repeats the argument against anarchist-individualism presented in “The Declaration of Policy.” Vanguard Group supports their argument that the other anarchist groups are incapable of identifying the correct political approach by characterizing the individual anarchists as unable to identify the natural progression of society. Vanguard Group argues instead the other anarchist organizations align with a manufactured ideology. This natural progression that they identify is the deterministic temporality that they adhere to.

Vanguard Group's argument infantilizes the choices made by the other anarchist groups. Throughout the passage, they repeat that the decision to adhere to anarchist-communism is a difficult choice. They imply that not only are the other anarchist groups incapable of making a rational choice, the Individualist Anarchists are driven by their emotions, specifically fear.

As mentioned earlier in the same article, the individual anarchists lack a historical perspective. Their desire to hold fast to past ideas prevents them from seeing the broader nature of societal development. In other words, because the individual anarchists are situated within the anarchist philosophy of the past, they do not possess a "long-range historical view" or deterministic vision. Vanguard Group's visionary perspective makes them better suited for choosing the correct political ideology.

#### *Societal Ideology*

Despite critiquing the economic and political ideology of other anarchist groups, Vanguard Group nevertheless advocated in favor of working within a community of radicals and other groups. While challenging the other anarchist groups on their ideologies, Vanguard Group also criticized them for not taking into account the perspective of other radical organizations. In the same article, "Whither the Libertarian Movement?" Senex explains,

One, giving an altogether new turn to the struggles for the expansion of human liberty; the other, continuing the old line of entrenchments built by the militant individual in the past—the encompassing line of property relationships within which the individual obtained a certain degree of



freedom from the encroachments of the social herd. (“Whither the  
Libertarian Movement?” 7)

Again *Vanguard* uses the temporal spaces as a way to provide a contrast between themselves and other anarchist groups. Vanguard Group dissociates itself from other forms of anarchism. They argue they advocate a new or fresh perspective that is willing to work with and engage in struggle with other organizations for the benefit of human liberty and society. Conversely, other anarchist groups maintain old perspectives and entrenchments. Vanguard Group also draws attention to the fact that militant individuals created these entrenchments in the past, thus implying that these entrenchments are no longer needed.

Additionally, the old lines of entrenchments do not just refer to the other anarchist groups' refusal to shift perspectives. Instead, Vanguard Group creates the picture that the individualist anarchists isolate themselves from other groups. The individualist anarchists' desire for the right to own property creates a space that can be encroached or invaded. Like animals that cannot be contained, the social herd invades the space. Thus, the desire for the freedom to own property signifies the unwillingness of other anarchist groups to move beyond what each individual wants from working within a community.

The value of working across party lines is emphasized in other articles found in later issues of the first volume. When they discussed The First International, Vanguard Group explained,

The International Working Men's Association is independent of any political party; it is not linked with any one of them, struggling against all of them. It proclaims as its ultimate goal, the free communistic society,

developed upon the basis of an anarchistic federalism. (Winter, “The Policy of the International” 6)

For Vanguard Group, The International Working Men’s Association, also known as The First International, exemplified the ideal approach. Through Vanguard Group’s encomium of the organization, insights can be gleaned regarding Vanguard Group’s values. Instead of maintaining a particular party line, the International Working Men’s Association struggled instead for the ultimate goal. In this case, the goal was the free communistic society that had anarchistic federalism as its basis. Ironically, since the International eventually became divided into two camps, one following Marx and the other following Bakunin, Vanguard Group’s interpretation of the ultimate goal of The First International was a sectarian standpoint.

Nevertheless, Vanguard Group’s alignment with this interpretation of The First International and condemning the sectarianism of the other anarchist groups, provides a broader understanding of how they could depict themselves versus how they depicted other anarchist organizations. We thus gain a broader insight into their impetus for starting *Vanguard*. Vanguard Group associated the other anarchist organizations’ economic and political ideology with an outdated perspective of how a society would develop. The unwillingness of the individual anarchists to work with other organizations or groups perpetuated the antiquated approaches. Conversely, Vanguard Group’s willingness to consider the perspective of other organizations and groups established the case that they were better suited to lead the “expansion of human liberty.” The shift in focus of the youth combined with a new ideological approach simultaneously called into

question the definition by previous anarchists and established limitations of what anarchism was and was not.

### **Topoi of Enactment**

#### *Enactment of a plan of action*

In “Declaration of Policy,” the editors explained the necessity of a clear approach to anarchism. They explain,

And that means the continuing ideological bond of such a group must become something more definite than a vague adherence to elementary generalities of the anarchist doctrine. A higher degree of unanimity must be reached as to the fundamental principles underlying its activity. The members of such a group must agree upon the general tenants of its anarchist philosophy as well as upon its concrete form of expression.

(“Declaration of Policy” 1)

For Vanguard Group, the individual anarchists belief in each individual’s right to self-determine was ineffective. While the authors did acknowledge that the other organizations followed the anarchist doctrine also, Vanguard Group felt this allegiance was a “vague adherence to elementary generalities of the anarchist doctrine.” Moreover by focusing on the fact that this adherence was to elementary generalities, the authors imply the level of consensus was at a basic level. The ideological bond would need to continue and move beyond what it was.

Vanguard Group asserted that a more detailed and advanced approach needed to be developed. The focus on the phrases “more definite” and “higher degree” conveyed the idea that the anarchist ideology needed to be clearer and more advanced. Both the

anarchist philosophy and ideas, as well as the concrete form of expression and actions, needed to reflect the anarchist ideology. In order for this to occur, the anarchists needed to have a unified perspective and plan of action. Instead of each anarchist acting independently and adhering only to the principle of individual freedom, Vanguard Group argued that anarchists should have shared values and approaches to situations. The belief in a common approach prompted a need for also a common policy.

Vanguard Group reasoned that they needed to identify not only a universal advanced perspective, but also a standard policy of action:

And insomuch as the latter does not confine itself to the mere preaching of a social philosophy, it aims at an active participation in the social struggles of the day, its elementary units must be design so as to give full expression to this will to creative social historical action. The groups must rise above the level of a mere debating societies, they must not confine themselves to the routine work of running tenth rate forums of a miscellaneous character, competing with the metropolitan institutions of a similar educational nature (“Declaration of Policy” 1)

Throughout the passage, Vanguard Group contrasted the difference between talk and action. Perhaps referring to other anarchist groups, the editors asserted that the anarchist ideas must go beyond that of preaching, debating, and running forums. Although preaching does imply a religious undertone, it also highlights the instructional tone of the message, the same concept found in debating societies and forums. Using “mere” and “tenth rate” as adjectives to describe these instructional forms further undercuts the value of the discussions held by the other anarchist groups. Similar to other passages found in

the journal, Vanguard Group also associated this repetition of ideas with stagnation. The repetition of the term “confine” emphasized the limited nature of discussion without a unified plan of action. In other words, clarity of the enactment becomes movement, and abstraction becomes stagnation.

Vanguard Group used the desire to enact a plan of action as a way to dissociate themselves from other approaches. Vanguard Group encourages not just participation and expression, but *active* participation and *full* expression. This activeness is situated within a temporal framework. They associated their plans of action with the forward movement of a civilization and argued that there will be “creative social historical action” and the groups “must rise.” The momentum found within Vanguard Group’s plan of action contrasted sharply with the stagnation they identified in the other anarchist groups.

Nevertheless, despite their adamant advocacy of a plan of action and their denunciation of other anarchist groups’ lack of a clear plan, Vanguard Group did not mention the plan of action again until the final issue of the first volume. In an article entitled “The Vanguard Group,” the Secretary of Vanguard Group explained,

Although this policy has not been formulated yet, we have advanced considerably in this direction in a series of closed meetings specially devoted for the purpose of clarifying our position on that matter. We realize that such a program of action cannot come as the result of half a year’s discussion by a small group but that we did lay the necessary foundation for it. (14)

In this passage Vanguard Group used the theme of momentum, found in other articles throughout the first volume, to submerge the fact that they do not have a plan of action

yet. They draw attention to the fact that they have both “advanced considerably” and have “laid the foundation.” The association of their approach with both movement and building maintained their position as moving towards the future and continued to separate them from other anarchist organizations that they have argued, remain in the past.

Additionally, they drew attention to the time that has passed, half-a-year, to also account for the lack of a plan. They explained that the position needed clarification, indicating that there was indeed a position, but one that needed refinement. Both the need for clarification and the time restraints of the six months acted as a way to justify why they did not accomplish what they declared they would do in the first issue.

Lastly, the discussions were in “closed meetings” rather than “open meetings.” The nature of the meetings added two perceptions to the passage. First, there was a level of confidentiality involved while creating the policy. Because the meetings were only open to members of Vanguard Group, they could not share a plan of action before it was finalized. Second, the status of a member of Vanguard Group is depicted as privileged. Not only did the members have access to the meetings, more importantly, they were the ones who determined a clear plan of action.

#### *Enactment of Anarchism through a Vanguard Party*

Vanguard Group believed a clear plan of action needed to be enacted. However, instead of believing that individuals could free themselves, they instead felt that a group of individuals should lead the masses. In the aforementioned “Declaration of Policy,” the editors argue,

We call ourselves a Vanguard Group. We want to revive here, in America, the great anarchist idea of a revolutionary Vanguard, the anarchist idea of

the role and place of an active revolutionary minority in the great mass struggles of today and the near future. The idea of an active revolutionary Vanguard is not a specifically communist idea. (4)

Vanguard Group's self-identification as a vanguard party positioned them as central in organizing an anarchist movement. By arguing that they were going to revive the vanguard party, they implied that this notion was, at some point, alive, but now it is dead. It should be noted that, while it is at times associated with anarchism, a vanguard party is more often associated with communism.

Through the use of repetition, Vanguard Group aligned themselves with the notion of the vanguard while at the same time distancing themselves from other anarchist organizations and radical groups. By describing the concept of a revolutionary vanguard as anarchist, Vanguard Group attempted to maintain their identity as anarchists. They stressed this notion again by specifically stating that the idea of a vanguard party is not merely a "communist idea." They also emphasized the idea of an active revolutionary group. A vanguard group is not simply a group leading mass struggles; they are also active in this role.

Like many other passages, Vanguard Group placed themselves within a temporal framework in this section. By arguing that a vanguard party should be active in the present and the future, as a self-identified Vanguard Group, they justify their presence in the "mass struggles" taking place both presently and in the future.

Vanguard Group's belief in the necessity of a vanguard to implement a clear plan of action is found in other articles throughout the first volume as well. In an article entitled "Notes on Spain," Vanguard Group responded to Trotsky's critique in the 1931

pamphlet, *The Revolution in Spain*, that anarcho-syndicalists lacked a vanguard. The author begins:

This misinterpretation (or perhaps misrepresentation) is contradicted not only by our own theory [We believe that the "party" should be a vanguard of militants who understand the intricate workings of our economic, social and political life, not a group of ambitious politicians or a hierarchical dictatorship]. (Morrison 13)

Within the article, Vanguard Group challenges Trotsky's critique. Although there were other anarchist groups that rejected the idea of the vanguard party, Vanguard Group embraced it. However, this is not the main focus of the aforementioned article. Instead of drawing attention to the differences between their belief and the belief of other anarchist groups, Vanguard Group instead argues they believed in a vanguard party. As a result, Trotsky's argument is flawed because he either misinterpreted or misrepresented anarchism by arguing that anarchists do not believe in a vanguard. Additionally, the lack of attention to the anarchists who did not believe in a vanguard party challenges the legitimacy of other anarchist groups. This move also placed Vanguard Group's philosophy as the definitive stance on anarchism. Vanguard Group reiterated their position as an anarchist rather than a communist perspective by critiquing the hierarchical nature of communism.

Vanguard Group's rhetorical construction of the vanguard can best be exemplified in a passage found in the article, "The Paris Commune."

More than half a century of the development of the class-struggle has taught that now, as never before must we develop a strong revolutionary



Vanguard, that shall be capable of providing a program of action not only for the present, but also for the coming social upheavals. (Weiner 4)

Like many other passages, the historical and the temporal space in which anarchism was embedded played a role in establishing a distinction between Vanguard Group and other anarchist organizations. By discussing class struggle in terms of a half-a-century rather than a couple of decades, Vanguard Group gives itself the appearance of a long-ranged view of the struggle. This also negates the experience of other, older anarchist groups. Because Vanguard Group was taught by the half-a-century of struggle to develop and enact a vanguard, and the other anarchist groups had not learned from this struggle, Vanguard Group's understanding is elevated over the other anarchist groups.

Nevertheless, Vanguard Group is still situated within the present and the future. By describing the social upheavals as still coming, Vanguard Group is tied to the anarchist movement they describe. Vanguard Group's vanguard becomes the anarchist vanguard group to lead the masses. Their vanguard is the one that created the clear plan of action. In this way, Vanguard Group does not just argue they are different from other anarchist organizations, but instead they are the singular anarchist organization. By drawing attention to the lack of clarity in the other organizations' plans and their lack of a vanguard, Vanguard Group usurped the concept of what characteristics and topoi were central to the definition of an anarchist.

#### *Enactment of a Militant Press*

In order for these ideas to be discussed and disseminated, there must be a militant press. In the aforementioned "Editorial Notes," published in the second issue of the first volume, the editors call for a "militant press" as a necessity, in addition to a "federation

of autonomous youth groups.” This need is repeated in other articles throughout the first volume. In the article entitled “Anarchist-Communism Concluded,” Wiener argued, “The field of education, the co-operative movement, the anti-war leagues, every mass organization, must be invested with a revolutionary character. Anarchists must turn them into organs of successful social revolution” (13). Continuing the theme of action, Vanguard Group urged their readers to go beyond education, movements, and leagues. Arguing a revolutionary character should be invested within these groups presented the perspective that this character is not an inherent part of the group. Instead, another facet, in this case a revolutionary character, must be added. This is accomplished through the organs of education, movement, leagues, and mass organization. While the organ does tie into the notion of the body, Vanguard Group also uses this to describe their publications. In other words, the anarchist organs established by Vanguard Group enacts the ideology.

The use of an organ to describe a militant press is also seen in the article, “An Appeal.” Within the article, the Weiner argues, “The need for an Anarchist-Communist organ is most pressing. There never was a time when so large an audience, shorn of all hope, faced with uncertainty and hunger in this crisis, would lend so receptive an ear” (16). Although there were other anarchist publications at the time, none of these publications were in English. Vanguard Group’s argument in favor of an anarchist-communist organ than disregards the usefulness of these other anarchist journals in other languages. What is more, the call also provides insights as to the target audience of this anarchist-communist organ. Not only does this audience speak primarily English, they also were a desperate audience. According to *Vanguard*, due to their conditions, their ear was receptive and willing to listen to the teachings of Vanguard Group. This removal of

agency from their target audience also further elevated the significance of Vanguard Group. Their militant press was the one that would guide the masses. Harking back to the metaphor of the body found within the term “organ,” Vanguard Group’s militant press would be a key tool in the body of the society.

Vanguard Group’s belief in their own militant press can be found in the aforementioned article, “The Vanguard Group,” published in the final issue of the first volume. Although Vanguard Group acknowledged their inability to identify a clear plan of action, they nevertheless proclaim the value of the publication of *Vanguard*. The Secretary of the Vanguard Group explained,

Comrades have undoubtedly noticed the growing militancy of “Vanguard,” its abundance of constructive material, and its clarity. Our next step is to increase the number of pages to twenty-four. Comrades and sympathizers who wish to see a militant, organized, revolutionary Anarchist movement, who wish to see our paper expanded should give their cooperation and support in helping to realize the outlined program.

(15)

Repetition is used throughout the passage to emphasize the connection of *Vanguard* to the anarchist movement as they have been describing throughout the journal. While Vanguard Group felt the other anarchist groups lacked clarity, the authors of the article draw attention to the clarity of the material, their organization, and the outlined program found within *Vanguard*. Even though Vanguard Group mentioned in the same article that their outlined program was not ready; they still touted the significance of the program.

Additionally, the use of radical and building metaphors functioned to connect *Vanguard* and Vanguard Group to an anarchist movement. Instead of referring to their audience as readers, they specifically build allegiance by calling them comrades and sympathizers. This move tied the readers to the movement that Vanguard Group was creating. Furthermore, by including the readers in the movement, they are placed within a role where they are encouraged to take part in building this movement. In this particular passage, the call to action for the readers from Vanguard Group was to provide material and financial support for the anarchist movement.

Vanguard Group relied on the metaphor of building terms to maintain the perception of a continuing anarchist movement. The articles within *Vanguard* provide constructive material that is both useful and added to the imagery of a structure being created. Vanguard Group's description of their wish to add more pages as the next step in building a movement created the impression they understood the sequence that should be followed in creating a revolutionary anarchist movement.

Vanguard Group created a distinction between itself and the other anarchist organizations through the use of what they determined to be a militant press. While the other publications might have been anarchist publications, Vanguard Group describes the other presses as nonmilitant due to their Anarchist Individualist ideology and the lack of a vanguard party. Thus, the militant press became a cornerstone for enacting a clear plan of action and a vanguard party.

### **Conclusion**

By examining how Vanguard Group challenged the commonplaces of anarchism including who the audience was, anarchist ideology, and the practice of other anarchist

groups, we gain better insight into what they argued were limitations to the previous versions of anarchism. These insights allow us to identify how Vanguard Group dissociated itself from other anarchist groups and challenged the definition of anarchism. We can derive four implications about Vanguard Group based on this chapter's analysis.

First, the youth as the central focus establishes who qualifies as a member of the vanguard party, and who does not. Although Vanguard Group does state that they do not exclude anyone, the rhetorical analysis demonstrates this is not true. When they identify youth as one of the defining characteristics of the leader of the anarchist movement, this excludes individuals who do not possess this trait. The youth as a defining characteristic excludes both the majority of the workers and other anarchist organizations. Yet, at the same time, the presence of young anarchist workers allows them to maintain the traditional anarchist focus on the working class.

Similarly, the desire to adapt to the English-speaking audience and the American culture submerged the culture that came with the first-generational anarchists. Vanguard Group's desire to assimilate played to the cultural tendencies present in the United States vis-à-vis the nation. This form of nationalism was contradictory of the commonly perceived definition of anarchists as against the state.

Furthermore, throughout much of the first volume, there were only very subtle differences between Vanguard Group and the other anarchist organizations. All the organizations had a militant press and did not have a clear plan of action. Yet, even their choice to use English to appeal to an American audience became a rhetorical tool designed to distinguish themselves from other anarchist organizations. They also used time as a distinguishing characteristic. By aligning other anarchist groups with the past

and situating themselves in the future, Vanguard Group critiques the applicability of the other anarchist groups' ideology. The positioning of themselves and other anarchist organizations in terms of the temporal justifies, in their minds, why Vanguard Group and *Vanguard* should be elevated over other forms of anarchism.

Lastly, this temporal orientation limits the presence of other anarchist organizations in the present. Because Vanguard Group's definition usurps the definition of anarchism in the present, other definitions of anarchism lose credence. The ideas of the other anarchist groups become subverted.

Nevertheless, this was only the first step in Vanguard Group's act of redefining the term anarchism. Although Vanguard Group's definitional strategies in the first volume called into question the current definition of anarchism; the heightened political and economic climate of the next few years would soon require the organization to use additional definitional strategies. These strategies would prove to be useful in adapting to and negotiating the definitional rupture of anarchism and positioning themselves as the voice of authority.

## CHAPTER 3

### A MILITANT PRESS

#### **A New Rhetorical Situation**

*1935-1937*

Although the years surrounding the circulation of the first volume of *Vanguard* were quiet, the subsequent years were completely the opposite. The effects gained by the NRA (National Recovery Act) were fading, and both labor relations and the economy were suffering (Dulles and Dubofsky 264). This changed February 21, 1935. Senator Robert Wagner introduced the National Labor Relations Bill, to the Senate (later known as the Wagner Bill) in an effort to make section 7(a) of the NRA into clearer legislation (Bernstein 324). The passage of this bill provided legislation that would support the employees' legal right to organize and bargain collectively (Degler 14).

However, the United States was not the only place in the world that saw an increase of tension in the mid-thirties. While Adolf Hitler built his military in secret, he signed non-aggression pacts with Germany's neighbors and promised to recognize the British naval strength. In June, Great Britain approved German rearmament, and by September 5, 1935, Hitler exercised his new power by enacting the Nuremburg Laws (Bullock 189).

In Spain, dissatisfaction with a center-right government from 1933 to 1935 led to the Poplar Front government winning national elections in February 1936 (Ackelsberg 90). On July 19, 1936, the right-wing generals of the military, including Francisco Franco, committed mutiny against the Spanish Republic in Barcelona, and workers responded with a general strike that quickly led to a workers' revolt (Damier and

Archibald 120). The revolt was not solely focused on challenging the military force. It also set in motion the enactment of the principles of a social revolution. Communal cafeterias, non-monetary forms of exchange, and worker-owned industrial enterprises, social services, and transportation were all organized within a week (Damier and Archibald 120). This spread to other areas of the country, and by November 4, 1936, the ministers of the Anarcho-Syndicalist National Confederation of Labor (C.N.T.) joined the government (Peirats et al. 24). While the Spanish Government aligned with France and the Soviet Union, the military sought alliance with Germany and Italy—ultimately creating the “Berlin-Roman Axis” (Fest 501).

#### *The Growing Vanguard Group*

For nearly two years, no issue of *Vanguard* was published. Then, in March 1935, *Vanguard: A Libertarian Communist Journal* emerged. The silence, explained by Vanguard Group, was due to a lack of funding. However, once they were able to purchase and operate their own multigraph machine, the second volume of *Vanguard* became much easier to produce. After running for a year, *Vanguard: A Libertarian Communist Journal* volume three was released in April-May 1936.

When the Spanish Civil War broke out in 1936, *Vanguard* was at the height of its circulation. The journal distributed three thousand papers a month (Avrich 450). Vanguard Group had close connections to some of the key anarchists of the period. Both Emma Goldman and Rudolph Rocker were occasional contributors to the journal and referenced its articles when writing to one another (Goldman and Porter 131). They had close ties to many of the foreign anarchist groups as well, including the *Fraye Arbeter Shtime*, *Il Martello*, *Cultura Proletaria*, and *L'Adunata*.



Additionally, Vanguard Group had its own library and would often have lectures that would draw over 150 people (Avrich 458). Sidney Solomon, Abe Bluestein, and Roman Weinrebe did speaking tours in the steel mills at Youngstown and went to Boston, Philadelphia, and other cities (Avrich 450). There were also demonstrations, dinners, speaking tours, parties, and spontaneous street fights (Avrich 462).

Many of the members were heavily involved in other events taking place throughout the world. Franz Fleigler was a helmsman on a ship that aligned with Soviet Russia in order to fight the Nazis. Yat Tone traveled to Spain, but then established a Modern School in China (Avrich 424). Abe and Selma Bluestein went to Spain in May 1937, and Abe was in charge of the English Language desk that put out radio and news broadcasts of CNT-FAI activities (Avrich 439). However, not everyone fared so well when going to Spain. Bruno “Americano” ran guns to Spain, but was captured by the Communists. Many were never heard of again (Avrich 451).

By the time the second volume of Vanguard went to print, the rhetorical situation had changed drastically. The tumultuous economic and political climate created an environment for Vanguard Group’s initial plans to be tested. However, this was not a seamless application. The changing climate required Vanguard Group to move beyond past uses of the term and instead adjust the definition to fit the present context. The second challenge Vanguard Group faced was to redefine previous notions of anarchism. Vanguard Group used three definitional strategies: definition by negation, bureaucratization, and domestication. These rhetorical moves matter because they provided a space for Vanguard Group to develop a more concrete definition of the term anarchism that fit within the current political, social, and economic environment.

In the first section, I will address how Vanguard Group used definition by negation as a redefinitional tool. Through definition by negation, Vanguard Group draws on the historical usage of the terms to reassign the anarchist philosophy to libertarian communism, socialism, and anarcho-syndicalism. By identifying the distinction between the theoretical origin of the terms and how the terms have been used historically, Vanguard Group maintained a definition that could still be linked to anarchism. By assigning a new political meaning to these terms, Vanguard Group ties the political, social, and economic climate to the theoretical approach already embedded in the terms. Through this definitional strategy Vanguard Group demonstrates they have both a theoretical background and a fresh perspective. Unlike volume one, in volume two and volume three of *Vanguard*, Vanguard Group uses their inexperience with past anarchist historical events due to their age to demonstrate the relevance of their emerging role in the anarchist movement and validate themselves as the voices of authority.

In the second section, I will address how Vanguard Group used bureaucratization to redefine the meaning of anarchism. The use of technical jargon and specialized knowledge allows Vanguard Group to justify their redefinition of the term. Because of their demonstrated knowledge, they portray themselves as being the voice of authority. This specialized knowledge also allows them to reclaim the authority they lose by separating themselves from past anarchist movements.

In the third section, I will address how Vanguard Group uses domestication as a way to create a digestible interpretation of anarchism. Through domestication, Vanguard Group relies on the metaphors of the revolution as a journey, the revolution as a living

entity, and the revolution as water. These “friendly metaphors” highlight particular aspects of the revolution to make it appear as part of a natural process.

### **Definition by Negation to Distance Themselves from Negative Connotations**

#### *The Negation of Socialism*

By the time the second volume of *Vanguard* was produced, the National Socialist German Workers’ Party had gained control over Germany. Due to the prevalence of the Nazi Party socialism began to be linked to values of the National Socialist German Workers. For Vanguard Group this was troubling due to their own identification with socialism. As Haymarket martyr Adolph Fisher explained in his final testimony in 1887, “[E]very anarchist is a socialist, but not every socialist is an anarchist” (Foner 81). That is, socialism makes up a broader umbrella of political thought that includes anarchism. Thus, when the National Socialist Workers’ Party emerged in Germany, Vanguard Group was left with a rhetorical and political exigency to redefine the growing and harmful perception that their version of socialism was akin to the socialism found in the National Socialist Workers’ Party.

In order to redefine their relationship with the Nazi Party, Vanguard Group shifted their definition of socialism away from the socialism found in the Nazi Party. Vanguard Group begins to redefine Nazi socialism by arguing the National Socialist Workers’ Party was not socialist. Senex explains,

In the light of all that it is nothing short of sheer renegacy to identify government control and state ownership with the socialist ideal. It takes not very little of intelligence and integrity of opinion to realize that for as the Japanese government and Nazi party may pursue their policy of

socialization of economic life, they are in relation moving in the direction opposite to that of true socialism. (“Socialism Redefined” 21).

The author begins by arguing that comparing government control and state ownership to socialism is an issue of renegacy or denial of “true socialism.” Although the article is in regards to the National Socialist Workers’ Party, this statement distances Vanguard Group from the other radical movements, while at the same time emphasizing the value of anarchism. Anarchism is traditionally categorized as against the state, although the definition of what constitutes the state varies. By arguing there is no connection between the state and socialism, Vanguard Group places a greater emphasis on anarchist forms of socialism. Making the case with the information presented, that drawing a connection between the socialism in Germany and the anarchist form of socialism would be “nothing short of sheer renegacy,” Senex calls into question the credibility of the group making such a claim.

Vanguard Group again draws attention to the supposed obvious distinction between the National Socialist Workers’ Party and themselves in the same passage. The author begins, “It takes not very little of intelligence and integrity of opinion to realize...” Vanguard Group again utilizes their definition of socialism as a way to detach from the Nazi Party. By making the case that recognizing that the Nazi Party is moving away from true socialism requires little intelligence and integrity of opinion, Vanguard Group criticizes anyone who makes that association. Additionally, in Vanguard Group’s redefinition of socialism, they argue that their version of socialism is the true definition of socialism. In other words, there is a false socialism, just as there is a true socialism. A person conflating the two concepts of socialism should not be taken seriously.

Vanguard Group further solidifies the definition of true socialism by using terms that include their definition of socialism. One example of this is through the term “libertarian socialism,” which places a heavy emphasis on individuals and generally rejects hierarchy. Vanguard Group incorporates this definition by explaining, “Libertarian socialism started out as a cosmopolitan idea. It proclaimed the ideal of a free individual within a united humanity. The time has now come to reassert those ideas with an increased vigor” (Senex, “Nationalism-The Root Source of Fascism” 5). By drawing on the supposed historical origin of the term, the author argues in favor of a particular definition. When Vanguard Group establishes that libertarian socialism “proclaimed the ideal of a free individual within a united humanity,” they draw upon a tendency of socialism that connects the individual with humanity. The connection of socialism to humanity depicts Vanguard Group’s socialism as normal or part of a logical progression. This normalcy aids in establishing Vanguard Group’s definition of socialism as the dominant definition. This also bolsters the credibility of Vanguard Group’s definition of socialism.

At the same time, Vanguard Group depicts the definition of socialism used by the National Socialist Workers’ Party as faulty. Vanguard Group explains the error in defining socialism incorrectly:

In spite of the lessons of the 1913-1918, the policy which raised socialism from “utopia” to “science” and placed it on the basis of “reality,” shows itself in 1935 for what it really is. Authoritarian socialism has lost all creative capacity and has become enmeshed in the maze of capitalist entanglements. (I.A.C. Press Service, “War and the Labor Movement” 2)

Once again they draw upon the foundational use of the term to help establish the “real” definition of socialism. However, in this instance, instead of using history to identify the traditional usage of the term, they instead use history to demonstrate when the usage of the definition fell short, arguing that shift from “utopia to science” “shows itself in 1935 for what it really is.” The authors also uses a different term, authoritarian socialism, to describe what is taking place.

Furthermore, they assert that “authoritarian socialism” fails because of its connection to capitalism. By declaring that it “has become enmeshed in the maze of capitalist entanglements,” the author implies that capitalism and this usage of the definition have become so intertwined that they cannot be distinguished from one another. This entanglement further demonstrates that authoritarian socialism is not “real” socialism.

### *The Negation of Communism*

In order to counter the negative connotation of anarchism, as well as to distinguish Vanguard Group’s version of anarchism from previous uses of the term, Vanguard Group began to replace the term anarchism with the terms “libertarian” and “libertarian communism” in the second volume. This is seen clearly in the editor’s note in the article “Libertarian Communism in the Twentieth Century”:

And what faces the anarchist movement of Spain as a present day actuality may emerge as such in the not too distant future for the libertarian movement of other countries where the bankruptcy of the authoritarian communists is bound to result in an active effort to solve the revolutionary

problems along the road of libertarian communism. We therefore welcome the attempt made by comrade Cornelissen to place the problem of a constructive libertarian program before the attention of our movement.

(“Editor’s Note” 5)

Although the articles in volume one stressed the importance of developing a program, in volume two of *Vanguard*, Vanguard Group begins to etch out a plan. Drawing on a current event, Spain, Vanguard Group “welcomes” programs that they feel are complementary to the goals of Vanguard Group. Because of the events in Spain, as well as a shift to move beyond what would normally be deemed solely as anarchistic, Vanguard Group’s imagined role in history changes as well. Unlike in volume one, when Vanguard Group establishes its ideas as part of a longstanding history, in volume two, as they move towards making the term “libertarian communism” synonymous with anarchism, they place the term anarchism only in the past and the present. By situating anarchism only in the past and present, they open up a space for the use of the term libertarian in the future. In order to do this, Vanguard Group relies on temporal terms such as “present,” “future,” “before,” and “movement.”

These terms are also located within a broader journey metaphor. This journey metaphor treats the temporal movement of the anarchist movement as a pilgrimage from one place to another. The physical conditions of the present day become tied to the narrative of the shifting from anarchism to libertarian communism. The physical problem “faces the anarchist movement” and “may emerge” “along the road of libertarian communism.”

Additionally, by connecting libertarian communism to anarchism, the editors create a distinction between authoritarian communism and libertarian communism. In addition to creating an association between the anarchism of the past and the anarchism of the future, the Vanguard Group writers also continue to draw a distinction between different forms of communism. In the second volume, Vanguard Group attempts to shift the meaning of the term to another word entirely, libertarian communism, while still maintaining the essential features of the meaning associated with anarchism.

This division can be seen clearly in Sam Weiner's response in *Vanguard* to the article published by George Miles in the July 13, 1935 *Workers Age*. Within the article "In Answer to the 'Workers Age'" Weiner writes,

Mr. Miles claims that our Libertarian Communism is a misnomer since he can find no communism in the Vanguard. We are pleased to state that Mr. Miles brand of 'communism' will not be found in the Vanguard. A communism based upon the complete suppression of individual rights, upon a fascist regimentation of the great mass of people, is abhorrent to us to the same degree as the 'socialism' of the Nazis. As for Libertarian Communism, Mr. Miles will have to unlearn a great deal of his Marxist dry rot before he can hope to understand it. (15)

While Vanguard Group chooses the term libertarian communism to create the distinction between old and new anarchism, like socialism, the term "communism" is embedded within a negative connotation, such as "the complete suppression of individual rights, upon a fascist regimentation of the great mass of people." While the term communism



fits the political climate of the thirties, Vanguard Group is still left to distinguish an anarchist form of communism from other connotations of anarchism.

In order to redefine communism in a way that ties it to anarchism, they employ the same technique as they did with the term “socialism.” That is, Vanguard Group draws upon an etymological and historical definition of the term communism in order to justify their use of it. By situating their term in a broader definition of anarchism, they map out a distinction as to what can qualify as communism. Furthermore, they use what they describe as a false use of the term “socialism” by the Nazis as a way to draw attention to the “abhorrent” usage of the term “communism” by other political groups. To emphasize this point, Weiner argues that those who do not understand this distinction, specifically Miles, who wrote the article in *Workers Age*, have been exposed to “Marxist dry rot” or a form of decay.

Nevertheless, Vanguard Group is left with the task of justifying why they chose to use the term libertarian communism rather than anarchism. In the fifth issue of the second volume, one of the readers writes to the journal to ask the question,

Don't you think libertarian communism is a contradiction in terms? How can liberty be reconciled with the social order that goes the furthest in breaking down the most valid defense of the individual against the encroachments of the social herd, that is, private property? (“From Our Mailbox” 18)

Regardless of whether this question was actually produced by a reader or manufactured by Vanguard Group, the choice to print this indicates a felt need to explain how

libertarian communism is not a contradiction and how it still fits within an anarchist ideology. In order to answer this question, they begin,

The link between libertarian struggles and private property is of a historical but not a logical nature. In the past the struggles for liberty centered around private property because of the large place held by individual labor in the production of wealth. (“From Our Mailbox” 8)

Like in previous passages, the authors of *Vanguard* rely on the history of the term’s usage to identify the definition of the term. Yet, in this passage, Vanguard Group does something different. Instead of solely relying on the term throughout the past two hundred of years, they also draw upon the basis behind the initial usage of the term to argue that the association of libertarianism to private property was “not logical in nature.” In other words, those who produced wealth created the historical usage of the term libertarianism in conjunction with private property.

Vanguard Group’s move to make the distinction between a logical and “not logical” connection provides another definitional strategy that they used. They gain the grounds for assigning a new meaning to the term by critiquing the motivation behind the historical usage of the term. Furthermore, they justify their own usage of the term by relying on reasoning (logic) to provide the “appropriate” definition.

### *The Negation of Anarchism*

Despite Vanguard Group’s attempt to use the term libertarian communism in order to replace the term anarchism, another term, “anarcho-syndicalism,” becomes used more frequently in *Vanguard* and internationally. Although the connection between

anarchism and syndicalism, and the notion that unions played a role in benefiting the workers, had been around since the late 1880s, the application of anarcho-syndicalism to Revolutionary Spain and other parts of the world brought the idea to the forefront of discussion. This is also demonstrated in the fifth issue of the second volume:

The position of the Anarcho-syndicalists in France, Spain, Sweden, Holland and Norway calling for wide strikes against war productions by the workers in their own countries is the only logical stand that socialists can adopt. (I.A.C. Press Service, "War and the Labor Movement" 2)

Although Vanguard Group played a significant role in strikes of the thirties; other anarchist groups were also active during that period. Vanguard Group, nevertheless, aligned themselves with the Anarcho-syndicalists from other countries. Once again, they use reasoning as a way to justify the shift from one meaning to another. By declaring that the anarcho-syndicalist call for strikes "is the only logical stand," Vanguard Group maintains their authority. This is done by granting themselves the authority to condone the strikes, which in turn challenges the notion of individual anarchism and aligns socialism and anarcho-syndicalism.

The alignment of Vanguard Group to anarcho-syndicalism can be seen clearly in volume three of *Vanguard*. Instead of treating anarcho-syndicalists separate from themselves as found in the previous passage, in volume three, the author establishes Vanguard Group members as Anarcho-syndicalists. Souchy declares,

We anarcho-syndicalists were never the opponents of direct participation in public life by the workers themselves. We preached and led the struggle against oppression and exploitation. From the strike to armed insurrection,

from the general strike to general revolt—we used every means to weaken the power of the entrepreneurs and of the state. (“Why Malaga Fell” 6)

While the previous passage treated the actions of the anarcho-syndicalists as something that socialists should support, in this passage, Vanguard Group claims these actions as belonging to the group. Additionally, through the repetition of the term “we,” Souchy ties Vanguard Group to anarcho-syndicalism. Because the term anarcho-syndicalism already has a rich history in Europe, by identifying Vanguard Group as anarcho-syndicalists, American anarchism through Vanguard Group becomes redefined to carry the same meaning. Souchy explains the actions Vanguard Group took, such as “preaching” and “leading the struggle,” strengthens this association. Additionally, the clarification of what anarcho-syndicalists did do (such as strike or general revolt) and did not do (not being opponents of direct participation) identifies the characteristics associated with this definition of anarchism.

In an article entitled “Anarchism and Anarcho-syndicalism,” located in the final issue of the third volume, Vanguard Group clarifies their move from anarchism to anarcho-syndicalism. To do this they analyze a report of the direction of anarchism and Anarcho-syndicalism.

Anarcho-Syndicalism is an organic and organized movement. It takes its doctrine from Anarchism and its form of organization from Revolutionary Syndicalism . It is the current expression of Anarchism in the economic and social field, and is the main agency, as shown in Spain today, of revolutionary activity. (Shapiro, “Anarcho-syndicalism and Anarchism” 10)

Harkening back to early issues of *Vanguard*, the author, draws attention to the “natural” character of anarchism. Yet this passage moves beyond anarchism as a force of nature, which we see in the first volume of *Vanguard*. Instead, the historical condition of the anarcho-syndicalist movement in Spain creates a rhetorical situation that demands a more concrete definition of anarchism. Anarcho-Syndicalism emerges as a way to merge with the revolutionary syndicalism taking place internationally.

This strategy of drawing upon the rhetorical situation to redefine the term anarchism is repeated in the same article, as Shapario (1937) explains, “The C.N.T. in Spain represents the Anarcho-Syndicalism of the I.W.M.A. Anarcho-Syndicalism represents the organic expressions which Anarchism takes in its fight against capitalism” (10). Once again, specific instances are used as an example to demonstrate the significance of negation from some common associations with anarchism by redefining anarchism. The author repeats the notion of anarchism as organic, and therefore, natural. However, now the organic nature of anarchism is tied to anarcho-syndicalism. This shift of characteristics allows anarcho-syndicalism to retain the same meaning of anarchism, and the shift also allows Vanguard Group to retain their position as the leaders of a broader anarchist movement. Because anarcho-syndicalism is articulated as the future direction of anarchism, and Vanguard Group depicts themselves as experts in this arena, they validate their role as leaders.

### **Redefining through Bureaucratization**

Vanguard Group continues to highlight their authority through the use of bureaucratization. Through this definitional strategy, they once again positioned themselves as an authority over the political and economic situation taking place. Unlike

the first volume, Vanguard Group took steps in *Vanguard* to provide a more concrete analysis and description of the events taking place locally and around the world. At the same time, they adopted more jargon to describe the events—thus creating the appearance of a specialized approach. Their primary method of doing this was in the form of “report backs” from various contributors to the journal. This took form in three ways: reports from the labor front, reports on Spain and other international revolutions, and overall reports on revolutionary strategy.

*Reports on the Labor Front*

One of the areas Vanguard Group examined was that of the labor movement. In the fourth issue of the fourth volume, Vanguard Group addresses the appropriate approach to unions. They explain,

Regardless of the question whether unions are to become the instrumentality of the realization of the anarchist ideal (and we believe that it should become one of such instrumentalities), it is clear that anarchists who do work in the unions should be guided by the principles of anarchist ethics. Whether anarchists should center their work on revolutionizing the unions is a question that can be debated in our midst. But we certainly cannot even debate the question whether anarchists should confine their work in the unions to job holding, ‘yessing’ and time serving the corrupt officialdom. (Editorial Board, “Our Mail Box” 13)

Throughout this passage, Vanguard Group establishes the parameters for what are unquestionable anarchist principles versus what is capable of being debated. Even in the case where they allow a flexible interpretation of anarchist principles, they still put

forward what they believe is the appropriate position to take on the topic through the side comment, “and we believe that it should.”

In comparison, the definition of “anarchist ethics” takes on a rigid interpretation. Several phrases in the passage indicate this inflexibility on the topic. By declaring that “it is clear” that the anarchists “should be guided,” and “we certainly cannot even debate the question,” the author seeks to eliminate any reservations about the approach used by those in the union.

Furthermore, by declaring certain actions and behaviors as part of an anarchist ethic, the passage ties behaviors to an abstract philosophical doctrine. “Anarchist ethics” become a set of principles that are known by Vanguard Group and other anarchists who also follow these principles. Not only is this ethic unchangeable, but also the knowledge of this ethic becomes a reason for why they have the expertise to determine what constitutes an anarchist. What is more, those who attempted to debate the issue were construed as uneducated in what constituted anarchist ethics, instead of simply questioning the concepts. The aforementioned openness to debate furthers the idea that while Vanguard Group was willing to discuss what actions the anarchists should take, anarchist ethics were unchangeable.

This uncompromising stance on concrete anarchist principles and behaviors also occurs through Vanguard Group’s discussion of the American Federation of Labor (A.F. of L.). In the subsequent issue of *Vanguard* they declare, “But no mere change in structure will make the A.F. of L. a real labor organization. Industrial unionism without revolutionary principles and tactics is just as easily adaptable to reactionary purposes” (I.A.C. Press Services 4). In addition to challenging the validity of the changes taking

place in the A. F. of L., they question whether it qualifies as a labor organization. By contending that the A.F. of L. might not be a true labor organization, Vanguard Group creates a space for the A.F. of L. to exist instead of being considered “fake” or an imitation of a labor movement. Additionally, through Vanguard Group’s use of the terms “industrial unionism,” “revolutionary principles,” and “reaction purposes,” they further the bureaucratization of the term anarchist. Although they draw attention to the behavior that they feel is not anarchistic, the terms to describe this behavior are couched in technical terms. Behavior that counters anarchist principles is still placed within this same bureaucratic terminology. Although Vanguard Group’s analysis of the labor movement is more detailed than in the first volume, their use of specialized language also functions rhetorically to fix the meaning of the term anarchism. Through their attempt to be more specific in defining what anarchism is Vanguard Group simultaneously distances itself from other anarchists by virtue of an abstract technical terminology.

The approach of reporting on the labor front continued into the third volume of *Vanguard* as well. After a report on why sit down strikes are important, the author explains, “It is with the foregoing facts as a point of vantage that it is all possible to view the politics brewing within and circling round the General Motors conflict” (Zack, Gentleman, Be Seated!” 12). Through this statement, a better insight into Vanguard Group’s bureaucratization is gained. Vanguard Group’s use of specialized knowledge is treated as an enlightened perspective. Although technical language is used especially throughout the second and third volume, references to the visual are utilized to strengthen this language. They explain that the facts are a “point of vantage,” and that you can “view the politics brewing within and circling round.” The claim that the specialized knowledge



has given Vanguard Group a vantage point in regards to the political atmosphere gives their use of specialized terms a visual form. Even though the terminology remains inaccessible to the readers who do not have the specialized knowledge, Vanguard Group justifies the necessity of these terms.

Above all, Vanguard Group's justification of their approach to the labor movement aided the redefinition of anarchism. By providing details of their plans, they challenged the notion that the anarchist ideology was vague. In the second and third volume of *Vanguard*, they use bureaucratization to reinvent not only how anarchism had been depicted in the late-nineteenth century, but also to reinvent the anarchism they themselves defined in the first volume. Rather than self-identifying as the young anarchists still creating a plan, bureaucratization granted them the ability to redefine themselves as more seasoned activists. This shift is evident in the article "New York W. P. A. Unions," in which the author known only as M.W. espouses ideas for the best approach to the labor movement:

A long-range program is needed, one that will genuinely tie up the problems of the unemployed with the rest of the working class. Better conditions for those working conditions, a shorter work week, would be of some immediate help. The employed taking over closed down factories and mills would be an immense step forward, and the above all would concretely point out to all workers the direction in which they must go.

(14)

Although the terminology does not appear specialized, the details of the long-range program still operates to "sanitize the process" being used to describe the revolution. For

example, each of the demands for better conditions and the suggestion of how to achieve those conditions are no longer isolated actions. Instead, they become part of what the author deems a “long-range program.” The revolutionary process is removed from ordinary experience, and placed within the realm of an anarchist plan of action. The author’s argument that these actions would “concretely point out to all workers the direction” repeats this same strategy. The use of “concretely” indicates that these actions follow a programmatic methodology, thus negating the natural process. Once again, the actions become depicted as more than isolated behaviors. The reports of labor movement and the prescriptive passages serve as a way to reestablish the meaning of Vanguard Group’s anarchism.

#### *Reports on Spain*

Another example of bureaucratization taking place was through Vanguard Group’s report of the Spanish Revolution. Like the descriptions of the labor movement, these reports were noticeably absent from the first volume of *Vanguard*. However, as the Spanish Civil War began to develop and *Vanguard* entered into its third volume, these reports became more frequent. One example of this was in the third issue of the third volume of *Vanguard* where they write,

The revolution was saved from the first, almost ideally planned, attack of its powerful enemies not by vigilance of the government and the parties backing it, but by the spontaneous upsurge of mass resistance. Like Russia of 1917 the saving grace of the situation consisted in the fact that the state power disintegrated sufficiently to allow the revolutionary initiative of the

masses to assert itself in time of a dangerous crisis. (Weiner, “On the Class War Front” 1)

In recounting a moment in the revolution, Vanguard Group draws on revolutionary reference points. This use of terminology then characterizes the aforementioned state power denigrating as part of a revolution. Similar to that of a metaphor, the use of specialized language establishes the parameters of what characteristics of the event should be highlighted and what characteristics should be overlooked. The use of revolutionary terminology becomes appropriate to describe the uprising. The adoption of the specialized language further characterizes the uprising as part of a broader strategy. Additionally by identifying the actions as revolutionary, it connects them to a broader history of revolution. The author furthers this connection by drawing attention to the similarities between Spain in the 1930s and Russia in 1917.

The author uses this similarity to then emphasize the virtues of the anarchist approach of not relying on the government and political parties to bolster the revolution. Through this passage, “the revolutionary initiative of the masses” is to credit for saving the revolution. Vanguard Group’s anarchist notion of the masses leading, rather than the government or political parties, is validated.

Vanguard Group continues to use the rhetorical strategy of bureaucratization in the reports of the Spanish Civil War throughout the remainder of the journal. In the article entitled “Problems of Revolution in Spain,” Senex writes,

Every great revolution has its ups and downs, its alternating phases of development characterized by great outburst of creative energy on one hand and a purely defensive attitude on the other. The Spanish revolution

is now going through the second phase. It has entered into a period of retrenchment, consolidation of positions won during the days of storm and stress, thus giving the impression of retreat before the gather forces of the opposition. (3)

By characterizing the Spanish Revolution as part of a militaristic operation, it places it within a broader revolutionary history. This placement simultaneously broadens the scope of the events taking place while at the same time limiting the interpretation of what is taking place. Couched within the history of great revolutions and the pattern of the “outburst of creative energy” and the “purely defensive attitude,” the period of decline in the Spanish Civil War is given a deeper understanding. Conversely, through the use of this specialized language, the author minimizes other contemporaries’ interpretations of the events. That is, minimizing, if not eliminating, the interpretation of the waning period of the revolution as a failure.

It is through this connection to other revolutions and through the use of specialized language that Vanguard Group justifies moving beyond previous definitions of anarchism. Because not all revolutions were characterized as anarchistic, Vanguard Group subtly links a defined anarchist revolution to other radical revolutions, thus endorsing some form of those ideologies. This endorsement justifies moving beyond past notions of anarchism without completely abandoning the anarchist ideology. Instead, the specialized language creates a space for anarchism to be redefined.

Vanguard Group employs the technique of placing the technical language in the same historical context in subsequent issues of *Vanguard*. In the closing paragraph of “The Betrayal of Spain,” S. Morrison writes,

The Spanish revolution will forge ahead to greater revolutionary conquests; to the final destruction of capitalism; to the socialization of wealth; to a free political and cultural life. Neither Franco and his foreign allies nor Stalin and his international political machine shall be allowed to stand in the way of the road to liberty. (4)

Similar to the previously mentioned passages that discuss Spain, the Spanish Revolution is tied to other revolutionary movements. However, in this case instead of referring to the revolutions of the past, Morrison ties the Spanish Revolution to the future, stating that it will “forge ahead to greater revolutionary conquests.”

Here we also see parallels with the earlier volume, which associates anarchism with something natural and opposing viewpoints with something mechanical. Thus, the fascists become part of the “machine” that must be destroyed by the anarchists. However, the use of militant terms, such as “conquests” and “destruction” shifts the direction of the metaphor to one of a battle, and this changes the agency of the individuals enacting the anarchist principles. No longer is anarchism simply an unnatural unpredictable force, but instead it is something that is performed by anarchists.

Bureaucratization comes into play, because the specialized language acts as a way to shift the direction of the metaphor. Coupled with phrases like “capitalism,” “the socialization of wealth,” and “free political and cultural,” anarchism moves from an unforeseen natural force to something that is methodical, but still organic. In other words, through bureaucratization, the original force of the meaning of anarchism (in this case, something that is natural) is maintained, yet it is also transformed into another meaning.

This acts as a form of redefinition, because anarchism moves from the previous abstract definition to one that is more grounded in action.

*Broader Revolutionary Strategy*

The labor movement and the Spanish Civil War were not the only areas that Vanguard Group reported in *Vanguard*. Additionally, members of Vanguard also brought in letters and contributions from movements, both national and international, regarding the broader revolutionary strategy. One example of this approach can be found in the fifth volume of their second journal where they explain,

We want to repeat again that it is our wish to have the Vanguard be the representative of the movement and not merely the organ of a single group. Though we have assumed the responsibility of publishing this magazine, we cannot shoulder the burden of financing it alone. This magazine is the only libertarian communist journal in America. It should be the chief concern of all libertarians, it should get their unqualified support at all times. (Editorial Board,

“For Your Immediate Attention” 22)

Vanguard Group’s authoritative claim as “representative of the movement” adds support to their application of anarchistic ideology to events. This serves a way to establish them as a legitimate paper and validates their journals and their ideas. It also functions to locate *Vanguard* within the realm of a sanctioned anarchist paper.

In this case, the term “libertarian communist” operates not only as a way of redefining through assigning the connotation of “anarchist” to the term, but it also serves as a way of adding specialized language to the discussion. The term libertarian

communist becomes a way of removing what is traditionally thought of as simply “anarchist” and instead functions to “sanitize” the political direction of the paper. This also makes *Vanguard* distinct from other anarchist groups. They take advantage of this idea by claiming the journal should get everyone’s “unqualified support at all times.”

As before, the significance of the journal is tied into a broader historical approach to revolutions. Yet one noticeable shift that occurs is that this history becomes a bureaucratization process, tied to a methodical approach to the revolution. The shift to have the history offer a technical interpretation of the events that took place can be found in the article “The Russian Jacobins,” where the anonymous author argues,

The historic perspective afforded by subsequent developments of the French revolution allowed the following generation to visualize clearly the role of those monstrous trials and executions in driving the revolution toward its humiliating end. Anyone can see now how important a landmark those trials were in the process of degeneration of the high hopes of the revolution to low level reached by the crowning of the erstwhile revolutionary general with the title Holy Emperor. (10)

Within this passage, Vanguard Group’s radical interpretation of history is a form of specialized knowledge. This specialization operates as bureaucratization, because it elevates the understanding of the experience by shrouding it with an ideological interpretation. The use of ideological interpretation thus shifts the meaning of the event. The emphasis on a specialized outlook appears in several points of the paragraph through a “lens” or “visual” metaphor. The author declares that the “perspective” “allowed the following generation to visualize clearly,” and that “anyone can see now.” Embedded

within these visual metaphors is an additional rhetorical move that occurs. The use of the terms “clearly” and “anyone” creates the claim that this ideological interpretation is self-evident. The treatment of the ordinary event in history as extraordinary reassigns it a more complex meaning. This added complexity further distances those who do not recognize this meaning from those who do. The distancing then reinforces Vanguard Group’s authority as leaders of the revolution.

The comparison to other events is not limited to political approaches, but also occurs when Vanguard Group brings up economic approaches. In Senex’s article, “The Transition Period,” he writes,

It means that in respect of distribution the transition economy will be of a two-fold character; communistic in respect to basic necessities and collectivist to the rest. This alone will necessitate some medium of measuring the equivalent of social energy-contained in the products.

Without such a yardstick the economy assumes the barbarous aspects which made communism so odious to many a liberal and libertarian thinker, that is, the loss of the right to dispose of one’s income, the tyranny of the collective (and in Soviet Russia of the bureaucratic State official) in imposing its standards upon the consumer. (13)

Throughout the passage, Senex draws upon terminology specifically designed to characterize a radical interpretation of economic policy. This radical terminology serves as a way to sanitize the economic instability during the period of time after the war.

Although Vanguard Group clarifies the meaning of many technical terms including the ones listed within the above paragraph, such as “communistic,” “collectivist,” “liberal,”



and “libertarian,” the readers are still left with specialized terms that mystify the economic process by placing it within anarchist ideology instead of clarifying it.

Additionally, many other phrases remain abstract such as “social energy-contained,” “the tyranny of the collective,” and “the bureaucratic State official.” This process sanitizes the steps necessary to switch economic systems in what would be considered a transition economy during a revolution. As a result, a transfer to an anarchist economic system is connected more to an economic process and less to a chaotic revolution. Nevertheless, remnants of the latter definition still emerge in the characterization of the transition period.

Although there is not any mention of violence in the description of the transition period, a strictly communist approach to economics is demonized. Senex argues that there are parts that are both “barbarous” and “odious,” alluding to the idea that a strictly communist perspective should be rejected. The use of such a depiction also creates a clear distinction between Vanguard Group’s approach and a communist approach.

### **Redefining Through Domestication**

While identifying alternative terms to associate with anarchism and attempting to make the definition appear more methodical are important rhetorical strategies that were used to redefine previous notions of anarchism, Vanguard Group still had another meaning associated with anarchism they had to confront. As a radical organization, redefining the revolution associated with anarchism was equally significant. One definitional strategy that Vanguard Group used was domestication. Schiappa (2003) explains, “Specifically domestication is the use of ‘friendly’ metaphors drawn from ordinary language to name otherwise objectionable nuclear weapons, strategy, and war.

Domestication combines some of the potent trivializing resources available in a culture, and hence is powerful rhetorical strategy” (132). Through the use of “friendly metaphors,” Vanguard Group not only highlighted particular aspects of the revolution, but also used the metaphors to present the revolution in an appealing way. Vanguard Group, as part of the domestication strategy, employed three metaphors: the revolution as a journey, the revolution as a living entity, and the revolution as a body of water.

#### *Revolution as a Journey*

One way the revolution is depicted by Vanguard Group is that of a journey. Although the journey is often depicted as going into battle, in the case of Vanguard Group, the metaphor of the journey does not always include battle. The best example of the journey metaphor used by Vanguard Group is found in the article “Landmarks of Thermidor.” Within it, Senex writes,

The Rubicon has been crossed. From now on there will be but two camps facing each other the forces of the growing revolt inspired by the principles of the October revolution and the camp of new privilege driving the revolution toward its ultimate degeneration, preparing the ground for the next consecutive step to follow the last bloody events-the seize of power by more military adventurer. (“Landmarks of Thermidor” 6)

The title of the article sets the tone of the journey-into-battle metaphor found within this passage. The term “landmarks” indicates that there is progression upon a particular passage. This progression along a passage depicts the journey to anarchism as a path that is being followed. Instead of depicting the revolution as a spontaneous outcome, the revolution as a journey metaphor portrays it as a gradual process.

However, this journey does not take place along just any road. Instead, this journey takes place alongside a historical revolutionary path. The author not only refers to Thermidor, a revolt in the French Revolution, but also the Rubicon, the moment and place when Julius Caesar took the decisive step to commit a civil war. Both of these historical movements are demonstrative of Vanguard Group's strategy of polarization. While Thermidor was a consequence of individuals being persecuted for their indecisive stance, the Rubicon indicated an action that commits oneself to move towards a revolution. Through polarization, a group challenges followers to take a committed stance either for or against the organization (Bowers and Ochs 157). The group is then able to discern between loyal members and individuals unwilling to make a commitment.

Through the use of a journey-into-battle metaphor, Vanguard Group creates a metaphor that encourages an "us versus them" mentality within their movement. This continues throughout the passage as the Souchy continues the metaphor with the term "camp." Writing from Sweden Souchy declares,

The growing youth movement consistent of 5000 young militant syndicalists, inspired with anarchist ideas, are ready to fight war through direct action. A heroic youth! A powerful organization! A splendid fighting spirit! A new hope for Libertarian Socialism the world over.  
(“Sweden” 18)

Although both the growing youth movement and their perception are indeed literal, the remainder of the passage is figurative. In an earlier passage of the text, the author explains that they would “fight war through general strike, to boycott the war industries.” While there are literal wars taking place, in this passage, fighting the war consists of

striking and boycotting. Through the use of the journey-into-battle metaphor, these actions become aligned with the other revolutionary wars taking place. The militancy found within youth boycotting is connected to the militancy found in the youth in the other parts of the world participating with the revolution.

Not only is the youth “ready to fight war” and have a “splendid fighting spirit,” but they are also described as “a new hope.” Like many of the definitional strategies found in *Vanguard*, the potential of the youth becomes a key focus. Unlike volume one, and similar to other strategies found in volumes two and three, the emphasis on the youth comes not in the form of grounding the youth’s idea with the present understanding of anarchism, but arguing that the youth are uniquely suited for the future. Instead of arguing the previous generations had not approached anarchism correctly, they now argue that the situation demands a different approach. By using the journey-into-battle metaphor to frame the actions of the youth in Sweden, the Souchy ties the revised anarchist ideology to the revolutionary events taking place throughout the world.

This approach can also be seen in other passages found in the second volume. In an article entitled “Class War Prisoners,” J. Garcia argues,

The history of the working class is the history of proletarians who have given up their lives in the struggle for the emancipation of their class.

Those suffering today are still battling for the rights that should belong to the proletariat. Our responsibilities in their defense and support should never be forgotten. Contribute heavily toward labor defense. It is your battle! (22)

Again, the metaphor of the forward movement of the battle emerges in this article. In this instance, it is tied to a larger historical process. The battle is tied to the character of working class history. Through using terms such as “struggle,” “suffering,” and “battling,” Garcia connects the strikers to a larger war being fought. The passage also draws upon terms that are reflected in the labor movement during that period as well. As a result, the struggles of the anarchists in the labor movement are tied to the labor movement, as well as the revolutions.

Garcia takes this one step further by connecting the reader to this battle. It is their battle, and fiscal contributions are tied to participating in the battle. The reader, through identification with the labor movement, is thus tied to supporting those arrested while striking. They are also tied to the literal revolutions. This metaphor places Vanguard Group as the voice of the authority because they now become the accepted source that dictates what the reader should do to participate in the battle. Additionally, by means of this definitional approach Vanguard Group positions itself as the organization that knows the best strategy for fighting this battle.

#### *Revolution as a Living Entity*

Another metaphor used within *Vanguard* is the revolution as a living entity. Although this is similar to the previous metaphor of the revolution as part of a natural force, distinct differences exist. By positioning the revolution as a living entity, the revolution is given a body in one form or another. This living body becomes something that has life, fits within the confines of its physicality, and performs tasks.

The metaphor of the revolution as a living entity can found in the article “Reversing the Trend” where the Editorial Board declares, “It is only upon the

completion of the full structure of the communist society that liberty will sprout spontaneously from the already prepared soil of an adequate social environment” (2). Drawing on terms such as “sprout” and “soil,” the author draws on the metaphor of nature to describe the behavior taking place. The use of this metaphor is reminiscent of other anarchists’ use of this term. However, in this context, the metaphor contains a slight alteration. Instead of being contrasted as oppositional to infrastructure and building metaphors like in volume one, in this case, the building metaphor and the nature metaphor work hand-in-hand. Anarchism is no longer depicted as a destructive and creative unruly force, but instead is part of something that emerges out of the right environment. The structure of communism creates the environment best suitable for “liberty” and in turn, anarchism to grow. Anarchism and liberty are part of nature, but in this metaphor they are living entities instead of a natural force, like a storm.

Because the metaphor highlights the importance of the right environment for liberty to grow, that means that not all environments are suitable for anarchism/liberty to grow. The argument that liberty can only grow under the right conditions furthers the importance of having the right structure in place. Not only does Vanguard Group make the case that the previous structures were ineffective, but in the second and third volume they establish that their approach is the most effective.

The metaphor of the revolution as a living entity is transformed once again in another issue of *Vanguard*. Instead of being depicted as a plant, it is now humanized. Senex argues,

The old world is tottering, and along with it the old, circumscribed, cribbed, confined kind of liberty. This does not spell the death of liberty as

such, violent as a temporary swing away from it might be. It is the birth pangs of a new broader type of liberty coming to life in the great elemental passions of the mass movements of our times, in the crash of the political and economic institutions, and the rebuilding of a new world upon a broader basis of justice for all. (“Peter Kropotkin-The Struggle For a New Liberty” 2)

Like the previous passage, the metaphor of life is connected to the metaphor of building. However “old world is tottering” is also being shown in contrast to “the rebuilding of a new world.” This differs from volume one. While in volume one a particular notion of anarchism is dying, in volumes two and three, it is given life. The natural direction of anarchism is no longer something being repressed by a structure, but instead, the structure is providing it with life. The contrast between the two frames of reference emerge through the usage of the terms “death” and “life.” The author counters the notion that liberty is dying and instead emphasizes that the removal of one structure means that another one can take its place. This new structure is once again tied to “liberty coming to life” and “it is the birth pangs of a new broader type of liberty.” At the same time that there is a “crash of the political and economic institutions” and death of the old approach to liberty, previous forms of anarchism are concurrently rendered useless. In adapting to the rhetorical situation of failing political and economic institutions, Vanguard Group place themselves in a position where they are best suited for guiding the future direction of anarchist thought.

The connection of the revolution-as-a-living-entity metaphor with the building metaphor is best demonstrated in the first issue of volume three. The author declares,

And throughout its long course of development the socialist movement remained true to this initial impulse, having built around the bare idea of social ownership a complicated scaffolding of values derived from the great humanistic sources upon which our civilization was fed. (Senex, “Feudal Socialism: Is it an Historical Possibility” 6)

Within this statement, the relationship between anarchist ideology and its practice is brought to the forefront. While the values of anarchism make up the source of nourishment, the structure becomes the means for which the values can be enacted. The notion that anarchism must be incorporated into a broader political and social system challenges previous definitions of anarchism. At the same time, it also remains true to some of the core beliefs articulated by past anarchists. The belief that there is a connection between anarchist ideology and anarchist action aligns with the individualist anarchist perspective that anarchism should be embodied. It also aligns with the argument in volume one that there must be a collective focus to anarchism.

However, instead of making these mutually exclusive positions, the metaphor of building and life combines these two approaches. Anarchism must be embodied, but in order for it to work, the embodiment must be by the structure operated by the collective instead of the individual. Both volumes two and three provide greater detail than volume one as to what political, social, and economic structures exist. Through the use of the life/building metaphor, Vanguard Group simultaneously challenges previous approaches to anarchism, maintains some of the core tenants of the ideology, and situates their interpretation of anarchism within the rhetorical situation.



### *Revolution as Water*

The third way the revolution is depicted in *Vanguard* is as a fluid force, such as water. This depiction of the revolution primarily occurs in the third volume more than the second volume. In the article, “On the Eve of the Spanish October” the anonymous author explains,

Five years ago the political regime of Spain was swept out of existence by a tremendous wave of popular revolt. Although directed in its first phase against political institutions, this revolt had much deeper roots than mere dissatisfaction with the monarchical regime. (“On the Eve of the Spanish October” 2)

While the passage does contain land metaphors, such as describing the “deeper roots” of the revolt, Vanguard Group relies heavily on also describing it as a “wave.” In other passages in this same volume they explain, “The wave of independence has thrown reform overboard” (Winter, “The Role of the Progressives in the A.F. of L.” 9). Later in the same volume, they affirm, “The great wave of organization applies not only to the bona fide union but also to the company unions as well” (Winter, “The Role of the Progressives in the A.F. of L.” 10). In each instance the wave becomes part of an unstoppable, but mutable force. It is one that builds, swells, and then has an encompassing influence. However, it does not have a concrete form, but instead takes the form of the container or space it inhabits. The fluidity found in revolt and move towards independence underscores the necessity of a concrete structure.

The metaphorical description of the source of the wave is equally important as the space it fills. In one of the later issues of volume three, the author, Joseph Zack, alters the fluidity metaphor of the wave and declares,

But such measures will not give the masses the one thing they need:  
economic well-being and security. That cannot be arranged from the top; it  
must come by class conflict from the bottom, for the masses are the  
fountain from which all progress flows. (“Rise of the C.I.O.” 13)

Unlike the other passages that treat the revolt as a wave, in the above passage, “progress” comes from the masses. Additionally, the masses also take on the role of the container of this progress. Instead of predetermined social and political structures creating the containers for the revolution, in this section, the masses become part of the structure itself. What is more, instead of the fluid flowing from an unknown and uncontrollable source, it is located within a solid “fountain.”

Like the living entity/building metaphor, the revolution-as-water metaphor joins together metaphors that were previously presented as mutually exclusive, but now perform the same function. The revolution-as-water metaphor also emphasizes the necessity of having the best container to control the water. Without the right structure, the revolution is a wave, but using the masses as a fountain, the force of the revolution is now controlled. Vanguard Group already establishes in volume one that the previous generations of anarchists did not have a structure in place. Therefore, when they establish in volume two and three that an appropriate structure leads to a controlled revolution, all they have to do is establish that their approach would be effective.

## **Conclusion**

By examining how Vanguard Group adjusted their definition of anarchism to the rhetorical situation of the time, we gain a better idea of how they redefined previous notions of anarchism. Through definition by negation, bureaucratization, and domestication, Vanguard Group established a definition of anarchism that would position its members as leaders of the anarchist movement. There are three implications that can be derived from this chapter's analysis.

First, the political and economic situation prompted a shift in the rhetorical situation. Because the rhetorical situation changed, new definitions were needed to describe what was taking place. However, this did not occur automatically. Instead, Vanguard Group needed to rhetorically construct the new meaning through the process of redefinition. In this transition from old meaning to new meaning, the terms took on dual meanings. One meaning was tied to the definition that represented the historical usage of the word, and another meaning was tied to the definition that fit the needs of the present situation. Because the new definition of the term relied on the rhetorical force derived from the old definition of the term, and the old definition of the term needed the redefined term to fit the rhetorical situation, neither definition could operate in isolation from one another. Throughout the second and third volume, Vanguard Group needed to create a definitional strategy that would allow them to bring the redefined term to the forefront.

Second, Vanguard Group's authority on the topic is bolstered through the use of terminology that is adjusted to the rhetorical situation. Not only do they gain dominance over the discourse that surrounds the situation, but also they are able to distance

themselves from individuals who are not familiar with or who do not accept the redefinition. What is more, through the use of specialized language that comes through the process of redefinition, Vanguard Group no longer has to work to gain legitimacy in the anarchist movement. Instead, the very acceptance of Vanguard Group's redefinition of the rhetorical situation grants them the legitimacy.

Third, the redefinition has a performative quality to it. That is, Vanguard Group's redefinition is also prescriptive in how one enacts anarchism. Individuals who accept the redefinition are invited to enact the structure associated with the terminology. Vanguard Group's redefinition includes a description of what a political, social, and economic structure should look like. Thus, they are granted authority not only over the discourse, but also over the proper course of action that should be taken to create the structure.

While this strict adherence to a definition of anarchism was suitable for a world where industrialism was increasing, revolutions and wars were starting, and the global economy was in decline—it was not a sustainable definition of anarchism. As the global climate changed, Vanguard Group would soon need to meet their third challenge: the need to establish a definition that would continue to be productive in the current situation.

## CHAPTER 4

### SANGUINE REPORTING

#### **A Disconcerting Rhetorical Situation**

*1938-1940*

From 1930 to 1940, membership in unions went from 3.5 million to nine million (Degler 15). During this period, The New Deal was yet again revised, leading to fewer punishments for being involved in the union, Big Bill Haywood passed away, Tom Mooney and Warren Billings had spent over a decade in prison, and perhaps the most significant policy was passed—the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) (Cannon 67). With the FLSA signed by Franklin D. Roosevelt in June 1938, the minimum wage was set at 25 cents, child labor was outlawed, and the workweek was limited to 44 hours a week. The FLSA, the other labor policies, and the increased unionization were all factors in the narrowing of wage differences between North and South manufacturing industries (Bernstein 775).

As the United States saw incremental changes in the political and economic landscape, fascism continued to rise in Europe. In order to avoid war, many of the countries that would later make up the Allied Forces of World War II encouraged Czechoslovakia to make concessions with Germany in 1938 (Bullock 256). By early 1939, the Spanish Civil War had been lost, and by August 1939 Hitler and Stalin had formed alliances with one another (Fest 592). The success of Franco in Spain concealed another reason for the advancement of fascist régimes. Explaining Hitler's approach, Fest clarified, "it might be wise to encourage Mussolini to undertake additional expansionist

moves, in order to create a *casus belli* between Italy and the Western powers” (540).

Some anarchists began to shift their focus against all forms of fascism. Still for others, anti-fascism was not the correct approach either. For them, anti-fascism “serves only as a screen for the interests of Capital of one of the groups of warring States” (Damier 186).

### *The Aging Vanguard Group*

The members of Vanguard Group were not isolated from these events. They encountered a range of financial, personal, and political reasons causing the group to split late 1939. Financially, the group was strapped for money. Despite their frequent requests for money and attempts at fundraisers, the group’s diversified needs and interests continually required income. Speaking tours, publications, parties, book clubs, and even a decision to change paper types to make a better quality journal cost money at a rate that did not make the group financially solvent. As reported in Vanguard Group’s *Meeting Minutes*, while a social event might make the group eleven dollars, after paying the expenses for the event, the overall income from the event was no more than six dollars.

Since the journal’s inception, the group had also grown older. The group that prided themselves on being the “Young Anarchists” were now entering their thirties—an age they had originally deemed as old. As explained through a series of interviews done by Paul Avrich, the members were becoming professionals, going back to school, and starting families. Their attention began to turn more towards their personal lives and less towards the organization. As their dating lives grew and intensified, so did disagreements. Originally dating Lou Slater, Clara Freedman started dating Sidney Solomon. Then when Mike Schmidt was living with Slater and his girlfriend Elsie Milstein, Milstein began to show interest in Schmidt. Slater accused both men of stealing

his girlfriends, while both men insisted that the women were not owned by anyone. As the individuals involved began to take sides, Abe Bluestein refused to participate and instead started the journal, *Challenge*.

Financial and personal issues were not the only reason there were divisions amongst the founding members of Vanguard Group. Members also had mixed approaches to pacifism. While some believed there should be a firm stance on pacifism and antimilitarism, others felt the fascist régimes needed to be challenged (Avrich 459). Still others wanted to participate, but were disenchanted by their previous experience collaborating with Communists. In an interview reprinted in Paul Avrich's *Anarchist Voices*, Irving Sterling explained, "Though the Jews opposed Hitler, the Italians opposed Mussolini, and the Spaniards opposed Franco many were restrained by their antimilitarist and pacifist traditions from supporting the war effort" (458). This complexity was enhanced with Stalin's opposition to Germany until the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. While Vanguard Group opposed the principle of Stalinism; they were nevertheless divided over whether to support it due to Russia's war against Germany (Avrich 453).

Even with the defeat of the anarcho-syndicalists in Spain and the disbandment of the original members of Vanguard Group, Vanguard Group's version of anarchism continued. Both Audrey Goodfriend and David Koven who were members of Vanguard Juniors became key players of another anarcho-syndicalist group. Goodfriend and her roommate Dorothy Rogers founded the *Why?*, which initially reflected the same style of *Vanguard* (Cornell 107).

Because their previous definitions of anarchy no longer fit the political, social, and economic landscape, Vanguard Group needed to establish an alternative definition of

anarchism. Thus they encountered their third challenge: the definition of anarchism they chose needed to be one that could continuously be productive regardless of the situation. In order to do this they needed to be productive in the current situation. In the final issue of *Vanguard*, Vanguard Group faced this challenge by resolving a disjunctive framework by moving from prescriptive definitions to proscriptive definitions, situating the definitions within a disruption of time, and redefining the meanings associated with particular actions.

In the first section, I will address how Vanguard Group used aporia, a statement regarding the impossibility of the situation, to frame the direction anarchism was going. Perhaps without meaning to do so, Vanguard Group's final volume reflected their sense of disillusionment. Throughout the final version of *Vanguard*, Vanguard Group situated themselves within three seemingly impassable situations: a clear plan, revolution coming out of a singular act, and organizing only with those in a lower socio-economic class. Despite the abstraction that was derived from their disillusionment, Vanguard Group also needed to distinguish themselves from the critiques of disorganization they had made earlier about the previous generations. By shifting their definitions of the situation from a prescriptive set of instructions to a proscriptive encouragement of what not to do, Vanguard Group was able to maintain an authoritative position over the definition of anarchism, yet at the same time adjust to their sense of failure both nationally and abroad.

In the second section, Vanguard Group defined anarchism through a framework of hysteron, a rhetorical disruption of time. This rhetorical disruption of time is demonstrated three ways in the final volume of *Vanguard*. First, they draw upon the timelessness of the motto of *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*. By emphasizing the



timelessness of this motto, they place the events taking place during this period as part of a consistent anarchist experience. Second, they include prophetic articles about events that have already taken place. On one level, the events nationally and internationally moved so quickly that the articles written about these changes would not have a chance to go to print. Yet, on another level, the editors still made a choice to include these articles, only with an addendum rather than removing the entire article. Additionally, since these events did not take place in the manner in which was described in the article, the decision to include the article further adds to the use of hysteron as a rhetorical tool. Third, unlike the previous volumes of *Vanguard*, volume four's articles did not follow a logical sequence. Instead, the articles were divided into two or three sections, and scattered across both the issue and subsequent issues. Even though these framing practices did relieve some financial burden, it also changed the way in which the article was read and shifted the way in which Vanguard Group's anarchism was perceived. Instead of proceeding in a linear fashion, Vanguard Group's anarchism remained part of an overall concept of anarchism. That is, instead of situating anarchism in the realm of the past and the present, the possible and impossible, and the sequential---the definition of anarchism was omnipresent.

In the final analysis section, I examine how Vanguard Group established an alternative definition of anarchism by redefining the meaning behind the actions of those involved in the struggle. As Kenneth Burke explains, "Through 'reality' (the 'world') as thus symbolically conceived, embraces a potential 'universe of discourse' far beyond the realm of physiological motion (the basic conditions that determine whether the individual organism lives or dies)" (814). Through redefining the meaning behind particular actions,

the actions in turn become part of what makes up an anarchistic characteristic. Through the inclusion of a historical framework, Vanguard Group challenged the definition of what it means to be a trade union member, educating individuals, and organizing. This inclusion of a historical framework then shifted the symbolism associated with these commonly rejected practices. By adding symbolism to these actions, Vanguard Group attempted to resolve the definitional rupture associated with the term anarchism by associating these actions with anarchist ideology. That is, the embodiment of these new anarchist actions becomes a way to define anarchism.

### **Defining Through a Framework of Aporia**

#### *A Clear Plan*

As mentioned in chapter two, one of the biggest complaints Vanguard Group had regarding the previous generation of anarchists was their inability to enact a clear plan. Yet, with the defeat in Spain underway, the belief in their clear plan began to diminish. Instead of making the argument through the perspective of how anarchism had been described by previous generations, Vanguard Group drew from the most recent experience of the members of the group. In an article comparing the labor movement to the revolution in Spain, the Vanguard Group Editorial Board argues,

For it is obviously much of an illusory hope to expect the conversion of the greater part of the workers to the idea of revolutionary unionism before the great social crisis arrives. Even in Spain, where anarcho-syndicalism was in the field for more than half a century, the forces were about evenly divided—that is in point of numbers and not the driving dynamic power — between the revolutionary and reformist unions. That was true of the

situation prevailing on the very eve of the fascist rebellion. History is much less generous in its time allotment as far as the development of revolutionary unionism in other countries is concerned. (“CIO, AFL, and Syndicalism” 13)

Although Vanguard Group supported the notion that the working class would play a role in the revolution, they no longer aligned with the idea that the majority of individuals needed to be radicalized for the revolution to begin. This perspective aided them when they were forced to respond to the critique that not all unions are radical or anarcho-syndicalist. Drawing from the early stages of the Spanish Revolution, Vanguard Group uses the evenly divided union affiliations to argue that a revolution could occur even with reformist unions. By arguing a split union affiliation was still effective in starting the Spanish Civil War, the impossibility of winning everyone over to an anarcho-syndicalist perspective is overcome. This also destabilizes the prescriptive argument that there is a “right time” for a “revolution.” Instead, “history is much less generous in its time allotment,” thus making a clear timeline impossible to measure. What is more, Vanguard Group is relieved of resolving the impossible task of winning everyone to their side prior to the start of a revolution.

Vanguard Group elaborates on the contention between the struggle for liberty and the impossibility of having a clear plan in the Questions and Answers section in the following volume. The group explains,

The struggle for liberty cannot be deduced from economic necessity. It is rooted in a world of its own, actuated by factors which are just as primary as economic drives. This struggle must of course be expressed in the

language of economic realities WHICH IMPOSE UPON IT CERTAIN CONDITIONS and limitations. But that does not make it a mere super-structure, a subordinate form of human activity following faithfully the contours of the primary factor of economic development. (Editorial Board, “Questions and Answers” 14)

Vanguard Group separates themselves from radical organizations like the communists by making the claim there is a distinction between liberty and economics. By framing the upcoming revolution as separate from economic factors, they also distance themselves from the argument that one can follow a plan to achieve a revolution. Instead, the economic guidelines serve as a way of placing proscriptive limitations on what can or cannot be done.

The pursuit of liberty nevertheless exists, proclaimed Vanguard Group. However, it exists “in a world of its own.” Through the description of this pursuit as a “struggle,” it becomes depicted as an action that is befitting for an individual placed within this world. The “root” of this struggle becomes the ground of this specific world. Thus, the struggle for liberty is one that is an innate drive for individuals in this world. By separating the struggle for liberty from an economic structure, Vanguard Group removes the imposition of a plan from someone else. Additionally, by arguing that the struggle for liberty is an innate drive for certain individuals, Vanguard Group is absolved of the need for a clear plan they argued in volume one that was necessary for anarchists to have.

Instead, Vanguard Group cautiously embraces the impossibility of identifying a definitive definition to anarchist actions. This is best demonstrated in the article that appeared in the final issue of in *Vanguard*. In “Lessons of Spain,” Dashar explains:

Anarchism gives no rules of conduct appropriate for all times—its only rule is the will to libertarian activity; creative construction from below; the resistance against dictatorship, against regimentation, against sapping the initiative of the people. Neither is Revolutionary Syndicalism, in which many Anarchist see one of the most important means in the struggle for liberty, a mechanical recipe for the changing of human society. It is mainly a principle of the movement of the struggle, a definite tendency of reconstruction. In no book is this formula laid down. (11)

Within the final issue of *Vanguard*, Vanguard Group establishes their definition of anarchism in relation to the notion of having a clear plan. Anarchism as described in the above paragraph means more about the resistance that comes out of the political philosophy and less about guidelines or plan of how an anarchist behaves. While in the earlier volumes Vanguard Group moved away from defining anarchism as the pursuit of individual freedom, in the final volume of *Vanguard* the pursuit of individual freedom was intertwined with the motivation to collectively resist.

Throughout the passage Dashar repeats the term “against.” This particular term aligns with Paul Eltzbacher’s frequently repeated 1908 definition of anarchism, “against the state.” In this passage, however, anarchism’s resistance is not limited to merely against the state, but also to dictatorship, regimentation, and sapping the initiative of the people. In this spirit, having a clear plan of action can serve as a restriction to anarchism. Accepting that following anarchism means resisting all forms of extreme control, beyond that of only state control, means also that one accepts that there cannot be any concrete plan of action to create a revolution.

The mutual exclusiveness between enacting a clear plan and anarchist resistance is detailed further in the sentence that follows. Dashar distinguishes between the principle of the struggle and a recipe for revolution. In short, in volume four, Vanguard Group's definition of anarchism becomes a definition that is proscriptive instead of prescriptive. The transition out of a prescriptive definition is clear both when they argue that there is no "mechanical recipe" and "in no book is this formula laid down." The lack of a clear plan and the acceptance of a proscriptive definition grants Vanguard Group a definitional strategy that can adapt the definition of anarchism in a way that is productive regardless of the situation. The impossibility of a clear plan allows for the definitional rupture to maintain its malleability.

*Revolution Coming out of a Singular Act*

A clear plan was not the only characteristic of anarchism Vanguard Group now articulated was not possible. In two different issues of the fourth volume Vanguard Group repeats the same passage regarding the removal of authority: first, as an answer to a question supposedly posed by a reader; second, as part of a book review that took up one-third of the final issue. Vanguard Group attests:

Authority cannot be abolished by a single historic act: it can be uprooted and weeded out only in a long process of social transformations, re-education of the great mass of humanity in the school of mutual aid and solidarity afforded by a socialized economy and a free political order. The immediate task facing our generation is not that of an integral realization of the libertarian ideal of the total disappearance of authority from social relationships, but of laying the chief basis for a new social order enabling

it to evolve by the cumulative process of its own progressive development toward the ideal of a non-governmental society. (Editorial Board, “Question Box” 12; Lawrence, “Apostates of Revolution” 7)

Unlike previous generations, Vanguard Group moved away from the notion that a singular act of transgression is an efficient approach for removing authority. While direct action is still upheld as the method for achieving authority, the type of direct action becomes increasingly important. Instead of one specific action leading to the disruption of an authoritative force, the direct actions are described as part of a “long process of social transformations” and evolving toward a “cumulative process of its own progressive development.” Re-education is indeed a form of specific direct action, but it does not have the specific prescriptive nature that an act of destruction contains.

That is, in repeating this passage Vanguard Group describes the anarchist characteristic as part of a process revealing a form of human development rather than a type of behavior. Instead of being destroyed, authority is “uprooted and weeded out.” Within this metaphor, authority is depicted as obstructing the natural progression, and anarchism is defined as the process that is used to help the natural progression “evolve.”

The proscriptive description of condemning a violent act and the vague description of anarchism as a process achieves the same definitional outcome as arguing that there is no concrete plan. It simultaneously establishes a definition of anarchism that differs from previous definitions while at the same time creates a space for a definition of anarchism that is not limited to a particular moment in time.

*Organizing only with those in a Lower Socio-economic Class*

Vanguard Group also moves from a prescriptive approach of organizing by specific class lines to a proscriptive approach. This shift is the most apparent in the article reflecting on the Spanish Civil War that appeared in the final issue of *Vanguard*. Within “Lessons of Spain,” Dashar, the author, explains why the anarchists in Spain did not follow the principle of only organizing the working class. Drawing from his own experience in Spain he argues,

The formula of class struggle must be supplemented by the realization that Socialism if it does not want to degenerate into a brutal dictatorship, is possible only as an alliance between workers, working peasants, and the working middle strata of the city as well as intellectuals. (Dashar, “Lessons of Spain” 12)

Although at first glance, Dashar appears to be instructing the readers of *Vanguard* to align with all groups, his comments are nevertheless more instructive of what not to do than what to do. For Dashar, class struggle is not a formula of policies that should be followed, nor an instructive means of organization. Instead, it is aided by an additional command to not alienate any individuals that might align with the principles of socialism. In other words, a form of socialism that is more inclusive and aligns with intellectuals and those in the middle class is far better than one that is exclusive and possibly indicative of a brutal dictatorship. The proscriptive nature is one of a syllogism. If socialism does not want to degenerate into brutal dictatorship, then you should not follow the previous formula of focusing primarily on the workers. Or, to put more succinctly,



following a formula for class struggle leads to a deterioration of socialist principles, that is, a brutal dictatorship.

He further justifies this seemingly unusual alliance with the inclusion of the term “work” before both peasants and middle class. Thus, a working class not only includes “workers,” but also working peasants” and “the working middle strata.” The proscription of supplementing the formula with a realization that all workers and intellectuals must be included removes the stipulation that there must only be one formula to follow. Instead it focuses on avoiding the pitfall of dictatorship.

Dasher moves more to this proscriptive tone when in another section of the same article:

It stands to reason of course that cooperation between workers and the middle classes does not mean that we have to fall upon the neck of the petty-bourgeois. The workers have to be alert, vigilant, astute. But anyone who wants to solve everything by the method of a mere struggle of the industrial proletariat is either a utopian or a partisan of dictatorship. It is pure nonsense to substitute the realization of freedom with the extermination of all other currents within the social movement. This is the line taken by some of our comrades. (12)

Dasher draws upon what he describes as logical in order to create the argument of not alienating the middle class. Although he affirms, “the workers have to be alert, vigilant, astute,” he also describes the exclusion of the middle class as “pure nonsense.” Like other arguments made within the journal, individuals who disagree with Vanguard Group are depicted as lacking sense. Yet in the fourth volume, instead of emphasizing who the

readers need to follow, Vanguard Group instead reminds the readers whom they should not be preventing from joining the movement. The movement from prescriptive to proscriptive comes directly out of a situation where Vanguard Group witnessed a variety of allies and enemies in the Spanish Civil War. The individuals choosing to focus on solely the industrial proletariat struggle are described as either “utopian or a partisan of dictatorship.” That is, those focusing only on the proletariat were too idealistic about the revolution or had a hidden agenda. Revolutionaries focusing on the proletariat did not have a realistic approach to the revolution. Lastly, by describing an exclusion of the middle class as an “extermination of all other currents within the social movement ” opened up the possibility that there were other classes that had approaches that could advance the movement.

Through the use of a proscriptive tone of who not to exclude rather than a prescriptive tone describing who to include, Vanguard Group created a definition of an anarchist that could include a wider variety of demographics. Since Vanguard Group had been meeting for the better half of a decade; they no longer needed to distance themselves from previous generations in order to establish their authority. A more inclusionary approach to anarchism also created a broader base of individuals who were tied to the anarchist movement. Out of this approach, Vanguard Group nevertheless creates an alternative definition of anarchism. Instead, the proscriptive instruction not to limit what groups could be involved meant anarchists were not only located in the immigrant and African American communities, but across nationalities, generations, and classes.

## **Defining through a Framework of Hysteron**

### *Timelessness of the liberté, égalité, fraternité theme*

Throughout the fourth and final volume, the theme of liberty, equality, and fraternity continually emerge. Although this motto is taken from the French Revolution, within the first issue of the fourth volume, Vanguard Group takes care to specify what they mean by liberty, equality, fraternity. The definition they choose to apply to these three terms outlines the characteristics they deem necessary in anarchism. This section appears in the corner of the bottom left hand of the article. Asterisks next to each word written in all caps create the impression that these definitions serve as a footnote to the remainder of the article:

\*LIBERTY is the freedom from natural and human restraints limited only by the laws of nature and by the material needs and (and complexities) of civilized life which nevertheless must not leave the individual with unsatisfied basic needs or with the feeling that the development of his personality has been frustrated

\*EQUALITY means that individuals shall have the right to obtain their needed share of the products of social wealth without depriving others of their needed share. This requires an organization of opportunities that is consistent with social needs so that each person may do what he desires, participate in any field of endeavor without the scales being weighted against him beforehand.

\*FRATERNITY is the practice of social solidarity and mutual aid, the development of which knits society into a more cohesive responsible and

integrated body. (This requires also mutual respect of individuals for one another as human beings.). (S.M. and R.W. 13)

Each definition focuses on the relationship of the individual to the rest of the world.

Liberty focuses on individual needs; equality addresses the relationship with the individual to the process of obtaining these needs, and fraternity refers to the relationship of the individual to others. By defining liberty, equality, and fraternity in this way Vanguard Group is able to once again reframe the previous notion of anarchism as individual freedom. Rather than rejecting the notion of the individual completely, in the fourth volume of *Vanguard*, Vanguard Group instead ties the organization of economics and the importance of social cohesiveness to the underlying definition of anarchism.

Liberty entails freedom not only from limitations created by individuals, but also freedom from limitations created by nature. That is, unlike earlier definitions of liberty in association with anarchism, Vanguard Group's revised version of liberty describes it as a type of freedom that goes beyond what occurs in nature. But liberty is also not something that evolves out of nature. The definition of liberty simultaneously includes limitations by the law of nature and civilized life. The emphasis on both nature and civilization presents a balanced interpretation of liberty and anarchism that is not present in earlier volumes or by earlier anarchists. They do not argue a return to anarchism, liberty, or freedom in a natural form. Nor do they present it as an advancement of human civilization. Instead, nature and civilization are part of a larger form of existence.

The joint interaction between nature and civilization is found in the other definitions. In the definition of equality, Vanguard Group argues that allowing individuals to have access to social wealth in an equitable manner required, "an

organization of opportunities that is consistent with social needs” (13). In other words, equality does not occur naturally, but instead requires organization. As with the definition of liberty, the definition of equality is vastly different than previous definitions of equality by anarchists. Unlike the previous anarchists, Vanguard Group does not make the argument that the removal of all political systems will create equality or that equality occurs within nature. However, they also do not argue in favor of a particular form of government. Instead, they treat the presence of being born with “the scales being weighted against” a person as part of the natural condition, reflecting a more cynical approach to human nature than had been present in past connections of anarchism to nature.

Only when the definition of fraternity occurs does the concept of a better form of human nature appear. This “development” of nature comes from connecting what is in existence. Society is “knitted” together through “the practice of social solidarity and mutual aid.” However, similar to the previous definitions, Vanguard Group does not place their emphasis on a return to nature nor how a new society will be built. Fraternity is derived from joining together what is already present through a practice.

Although Vanguard Group relies on an old motto they adjust the meaning of the motto to fit the present. This adjustment allows them to also adjust the meaning of anarchism. This reframing of how anarchism is defined grants Vanguard Group the freedom to maintain some semblance of the previous definitions of anarchism while at the same time adjusting the definition to the present. By arguing these principles embody the practice of connecting civilization to nature, it opens the possibility for a definition of anarchism that continues to be productive. If either the natural conditions changed or the

principles of civilization changed, so too could the definition of anarchism. Situating the definition of anarchism within the disruption of time, grants privilege to the actions that create anarchism rather than a chronological process that would create an anarchist revolution. That is, anarchism becomes defined by the action of organizing civilizations and connecting to natural conditions rather than a prescriptive model to follow. This elasticity of process allows for a definition that continues to be productive regardless of the situation.

In the later issues of volume four when Vanguard Group treats liberty, fraternity, and equality as a foundational dictum further solidifies the connection of this motto to the definition of anarchism. Within a continuation of the article “A Note on Libertarian Communism,” S. M. and R. W argues,

In the first part of this article we noted briefly what the structural and moral foundations of a Libertarian Communist social order would be and we indicated that the vehicles for achieving such a social change (labor unions, etc.) the “shells of the new society within the old,” would have to travel on the firm humanitarian ground of liberty, equality, and fraternity. For, anybody can take the holy name of liberty, equality and fraternity (even the Fascists,), but to make these a living part of a social movement, embodied in its very structure and daily activities, is the central task of social revolutions. And in this respect the anarchist (Libertarian Communist) movement has more than amply demonstrated its superiority of the Marxist movements. (7)

Within this passage, liberty, equality, and fraternity become depicted as a part of both the groundwork and the material for creating a social revolution. Although Vanguard Group draws upon the past usage of liberty, equality, and fraternity, a greater emphasis is placed upon the present. Through the use of the building metaphor, the motto is referred to as the “foundation” and a “firm ground.” What also occurs is the process Vanguard Group follows is described as the material to build such a revolution. That is, Vanguard Group describes the process as “a living part” and “embodied.” Unlike depictions of anarchism in earlier volumes, the process of anarchism takes on a timeless quality. Even the past foundation that is used eventually becomes intertwined with the process itself. This timeless quality allows Vanguard Group to have a form of anarchism that can continue to adapt to the present situation.

The timelessness of the definition of anarchism is repeated in the same article. S. M. and R. W argue,

The ideal of a classless, stateless society whose structure and spirit would be built upon liberty, equality and fraternity is not merely an anarchist dream. It is presumably, what all good Marxists would like this world to be. (7)

As with the previous passage, liberty, equality, and fraternity serve as the foundation for the society that emerges out of the revolution. That is liberty, equality, and fraternity become the guiding principles in creating a new society. Vanguard Group is careful to note the solidness of these principles, reminding the reader that rather than being part of a dream belonging to anarchists, it is a universal goal of even Marxists. The reliance on a good Marxist to validate the idea demonstrates a dependency on the approval of other

political approaches. It also establishes a characteristic present in a good Marxist. Indeed, the statement implies that bad Marxists would not want such an outcome.

*Prophetic articles about events that had already taken place*

The timelessness of Vanguard Group's writing is also demonstrated in how they formatted the journal. Several articles appear in the final volume of *Vanguard* that were written prior to particular events. Despite the fact that these articles no longer addressed the current situation, Vanguard Group nevertheless published them. The frequency of "outdated" articles being printed in *Vanguard* increased as the journal moved towards its final issue.

The first time *Vanguard* published an outdated article occurs in the third issue of volume four. After an article discussing the response of the seamen to State control and the Communist Party, the editors include the following addendum:

As we go to press we learn the Curran has launched an attack against the Communist Party. But even more loudly he attacks the rank and file, going to the extent of expelling Loones from the N.M.U. for editing the 'Rank and File N.M.U. Pilot' The attack by Curran against the C.P. appears to follow from the great discredit that the C.P. has undergone among the maritime workers. It seems that Curran is leaving a sinking ship. (White 5)

In addition to Joseph Curran denying accusations of being communist in February 1938, he also fires Octave Loones for his alternative N.M.U. publication that critiqued leaders of the organization. Putting these two incidents together, the editors make the



conclusion that Curran has decided to abandon the Communist Party. However, he actually continued to be involved with the Communist Party until 1946.

Although the editors were incorrect in their assumption regarding Curran's actions, their choice to place this analysis separate from their analysis of the actions of the seamen is significant. Instead of rewriting the article to include Curran's actions, they add it onto the article in a separate section. This choice creates two impressions. First, that Vanguard Group is at the edge of cutting news. Despite the fact that *Vanguard* is a monthly publication that sometimes does not even get published every month, they are still providing the readers up-to-date information. This allows Vanguard Group to continue to emphasize their expertise on the issues and the interpretation of the issues.

Second, the inclusion of an addendum to the article, rather than rewriting the entire article, creates the illusion that no rewrite is necessary. The addendum instead provides the impression that the original article does not need to be edited. The lack of editing indicates the superiority of Vanguard Group's analysis over the current situation. That is, they have such a grasp of the seamen situation that they do not need to make any changes in their analysis as more information arises.

The inclusion of side comments increases in the later issues of volume 4. Most of these addendums are in regards to Spain. In one such example, the editors explain,

Note: This article was written before the tragic climax of the Catalanian struggle. The collapse of Catalanian resistance will afford additional ammunition to those who maintain that the revolutionary force of Catalonia had nothing to lose by choosing an extreme course. It will be

claimed that nothing worse could have happened to the revolutionists as compared to their present fate. (Besnard 11-14)

This note demonstrates the same urgency and infallibility as the previously mentioned passage. Referring to the loss of Catalonia, the editors choose to maintain the analysis previously presented rather than to rewrite the article. However, unlike the previously mentioned passage, the editors do not mention a critique of the current event. Instead, they frame the analysis within the historical context. This framing adds to the timelessness of *Vanguard*. Regardless of the particular events taking place, Vanguard Group nevertheless has an analysis that is applicable. Through this rhetorical strategy, they create a form of anarchism that is adaptable to a variety of circumstances. Because their analysis is applicable regardless of whether or not the anarchist organizations succeed, Vanguard Group's version of anarchism becomes the superior definition of anarchism.

A better understanding of how this strategy could be operative is found in another passage that uses this approach:

Written just before the final surrender of Madrid, he meant it as an explanation of the nature and causes of the Communist revolt the reasons for the CNT-FAI's adherence to the Defense Junta. That the Communist engineered this uprising, not to win, but to lose, and thereby walk out gracefully from the picture, can be judged by the rapid departure of the Stalinists bigwigs even before the curtain rose on this last sorry drama. And we regret that the Communists, long a potent factor in the defeat,

should have been permitted to successfully elude the direct historic responsibility of surrendering. (Ander 4)

Referring this time to the final surrender of Madrid in the Spanish Civil War, Vanguard Group critiques Communist involvement. Yet again, Vanguard Group does not adjust their analysis fit the current situation. Instead, they choose to add an additional note to frame the analysis within the most recent event. In this case, the framing of the article is the most noticeable. They claim, “[T]he Communist engineered this uprising, not to win, but to lose.” By blaming the Communists for the surrender of Madrid, they distance themselves from the critique that their analysis is incorrect. Although Vanguard Group has continued to critique the Communist Parties throughout all four volumes of *Vanguard*, this approach adds another dimension to their critique on the Communists. Put simply, Vanguard Group gains their authority of having an analysis that is applicable to each situation by not adjusting their analysis, but instead by identifying the ways in which the Communist Parties’ actions conflicted with their goals. Vanguard Group’s approach to anarchism is correct, but the incorrect approach by others has tainted their own approach.

#### *Articles out of Order*

The last example of the disruption of time created by Vanguard Group is their increased number of “continued on another page” articles. Throughout the entire four volumes, Vanguard Group has always indicated there was a limited amount of room in the journal. Additionally, intertwined with their requests for financial support were continual side comments apologizing for the lack of space for specific articles. These apologies created a sense of urgency regarding the financial status of the journal.

By the time *Vanguard* had reached its fourth volume, the amount of “to be continued” articles no longer stopped at a maximum of one article being split within the issue or continued in a subsequent issue. Instead, two to five articles used this practice. Although the motivation for this shift in how articles were published can be attributed to a number of factors, the overall effect of this change in framing the articles is worth noting. As in previous issues, the dividing of the articles adds a convincing persuasive argument that the funding for the journal is low.

Furthermore, having multiple articles lead the journal presented an opportunity for more than one author to have the front-page article. Since Vanguard Group was beginning to experience multiple factions at this time, having more than one lead article continued the appearance that these articles were all equally important.

However, most importantly, having one article dispersed throughout an issue and presenting multiple issues allowed the article to be presented in a nonlinear fashion. By having the reader jump from article to article rather than reading the issue from front to back, the articles did not have a dictated order for the reader to follow. Instead, the articles took on an order that was determined by the reader. Like the other previously discussed sections, the articles bore a quality that allowed them to be mutable to the situation. They continuously appeared throughout the fourth volume. This timelessness furthered the notion that Vanguard Group’s definition of anarchism continued to be productive regardless of what surrounded it.

## **Defining Anarchism through Reframing**

### *Trade Unions*

Unions were often the targets of conservative business owners wanting to maintain control over the working conditions. Despite the success of the radical unions, such as the Industrial Workers of the World, with government enforcement, some unions gained a reputation of collaborating with those in power. Nevertheless, Vanguard Group felt that even these unions were useful. They explain,

Anarcho-syndicalist unions give an incomparably higher training, but not before the process of social transformation has gone far its way, can we hope that the great majority of workers benefit by this superior type of preparation for the task of a genuine industrial democracy. And that is why the proper relationships between the new anarcho-syndicalist unions that are bound to crystallize from the great ferment new stirring within militant circles of Americana labor and the more conservative unions forms one of the important keys to the solution of the surpassing problem of building up the new industrial democracy with which our generation may be faced very soon. (Editorial Board, "CIO, AFL, and Syndicalism"

13)

Through a connection of the anarcho-syndicalist unions with the conservative unions, they depict all unions as useful to anarchism. The connection is achieved through hierarchical terminology. Anarcho-syndicalist unions are elevated as providing "incomparably higher training" and a "superior type of preparation." The anarcho-syndicalist unions become the definitive way to develop anarcho-syndicalism. However,

“the process of social transformation” into anarcho-syndicalism cannot occur until more individuals are involved. Therefore, Vanguard Group suggests working with the more “conservative unions.” Using phrases such as “great ferment new stirring,” the “conservative unions” are depicted as beneath the anarcho-syndicalist unions. Like stalagmites, the stirrings bubble up and connect to the anarcho-syndicalist unions. As a result, the crystallization functions as a conduit of members so the conservative union can serve as “one of the important keys to the solution of the surpassing problem of building up the new industrial democracy.”

Another example of attempting to redefine the trade union can be found in a later issue of *Vanguard*. R.W. explains,

There are no libertarian labor unions. They cannot be found, but they are the result of ceaseless work and struggle. Since we cannot hope to win the great masses to revolutionary unions at present, we must work in both the major unions, the C.I.O. and A.F. of L.—but only as Libertarian Communists. We will not be deceived into believing that these unions will ever play a dominant progressive role. (8-9)

Although in this section, Vanguard Group declares there are “no libertarian labor unions,” they are also quick to justify the purpose of continuing to participate within the unions. They depict these unions as significant to gaining mass support of revolutionary unions. On one hand, Vanguard Group devalues the importance of the trade unions by declaring the absence of their role in progressive matters. On the other hand, they extol the value of these unions in revolutionary issues. While the current trade unions maintain their negative connotation in the radical community, Vanguard Group also emphasizes

the role that work plays in creating libertarian labor unions. Unlike the anarchists of the past, Vanguard Group did not believe that libertarian unions occurred naturally, but instead believed that they were created. This perspective also added another characteristic to anarchists: they were individuals who were willing to put in “ceaseless work and struggle.”

The purpose behind placing an emphasis on the trade unions can be found in the final issue of *Vanguard*. Maintaining an aversion to political parties and elections, Vanguard Group describes their new approach to trade unions as a means to gain popular support. They explain, “The economic labor organization is as a means of struggle and social reconstruction superior over the political party as direct action is superior to parliamentary action” (Dasher 12). Like in the previous passages, organizing the labor movements is elevated. The stress on economic organization over political organization creates not only an either/or choice for the readers, but also promotes an alternative to supporting electoral politics. Repetition of the term “superior” changes the negative connotation of working with trade unions to a positive connotation. By redefining the value of the anarchists’ actions, the definition of anarchism is also redefined. Because a libertarian union is yet to be created, the anarchists’ roles within the trade unions are also flexible enough to adapt to any changes that take place within the trade unions.

### *Education*

Education continues to remain a consistent value for Vanguard Group. However, education goes beyond incorporating an anarchist pedagogical strategy into the curriculum. The Vanguard Organizing Committee explains,

One of the major causes for past failures has been the absence of a well-knit, self-disciplined English language libertarian federation acting on the basis of a common program. Our task is now first to form more of these groups, to create a network of active propaganda centers. In the immediate future, that is, the two or three months, we see excellent prospects of having ten such groups. (Editorial Board, “Vanguard Organizing Committee Reports Progress” 15)

As in the first volume, Vanguard Group places an emphasis on the importance of the English language in promoting the values of anarchism. However, what has changed in the fourth volume is who the English language represents. No longer is English tied primarily to the youth (individuals under the age of 35). Instead, English is connected to a broader anarchist program. This emphasis on the English language also removes Vanguard Group from the obligation of following established anarchist programs located in non-English speaking countries. Although they initially tied themselves to international anarcho-syndicalism in the second and third volume, the emphasis on English as part of the curriculum allows them identify only the policies that work best for their particular situation. Moreover, this emphasis also maintains their position as the voices of authority. While the non-English speaking anarchists might have achieved a revolution temporarily, the English-speaking anarchists, specifically Vanguard Group, are still leaders in the movement.

While education took the form of propaganda centers, Vanguard Group also incorporated self-education as part of the curriculum. The Vanguard Organizing Committee explained in another issue of *Vanguard*:



The slogan of the new group is 'To educate others you must educate yourself first.' In accordance with this method a program of study meetings and lectures is being undertaken. Socials and dances are also planned. This type of initiative should prove to be an example in doing organizing work. If you live in the neighborhood of Canton you can get in touch with the group at Cultural Club, 1919 Sixth St, N.E. (Editorial Board, "Vanguard Organizing Committee Reports Progress" 23)

Unlike the previous volumes of *Vanguard*, Vanguard Group does not have to primarily focus on establishing themselves as the voices of authority. After nearly a decade of distribution and a political climate that allowed them to test their approaches, recognizing their own fallibility can be incorporated into their place as leaders. As a result, education also takes on an additional dimension. Like the previous generations, a greater emphasis is placed on their own anarchist communities and the communal aspects of anarchism, including socials and dances. Nevertheless, because the attention is directed to the English language and community, the change in how anarchist education is defined changes the characteristics embraced by Vanguard Group. In turn, this also shifts the meaning of anarchism.

### *Organization*

From the very beginning, Vanguard Group attempted to move the meaning of anarchism from anarchist individualism to a collective form of anarchism. However, the meaning of an anarchist organization did not completely take hold until the final year Vanguard Group was together. The author R.W. explains this evolution:

Within our movement the word organization has ceased to alarm some of our octogenarian minds and their nervous cohorts. Unfortunately they have been shown that too often, nothing more dangerous was being proposed than a makeshift conference of two score veterans and a handful of insolent youngsters. In more recent times no one has been seen to jump at the sound of the syllables. But to the more serious comrades of the movement, to who the need of effective action and proper organization has become apparent, organization implies a whole series of necessary personal obligations without which no permanent liberation foundations can be laid. (8-9)

R.W. depicts the anarchist individualists as old and paranoid. While the depiction is a reiteration of the belief that the youth are the leaders of a new movement, their approach to anarchism is no longer viewed as threatening. Nor are all members of the older generation viewed as outdated. Instead, Vanguard Group's anarchism is an accepted form of anarchism. Nevertheless, Vanguard Group is still unsatisfied with how an anarchist organization is approached. They stress the type of organization through the use of adjectives. A distinction is made between "more serious comrades" and comrades, "effective action and proper organization" instead of simply action and organization. The descriptions establish a hierarchy that places Vanguard Group and those who adhere to their values above anarchists who accept simply organization within anarchist thought. The stringent guidelines of how to be dedicated to anarchist organization provides a definitional parameter that maintains a specific collectivist approach to anarchism, yet at the same time remains flexible.

As whole, Vanguard Group connects the idea of anarchist organization to a characteristic of anarchism. In a letter to Vanguard Group, Herbert Read explains,

Such a movement, whatever it was called, would inevitably take on an anarchist character, and though everything possible has been done to suppress all knowledge of the strength of anarchism in Spain, the civil war has nevertheless made the workers aware of a living distinction between communism and anarchism; and when the true history of the last phases of that war are written, the ambiguous role played by communism will be evident. (8-9)

Vanguard Group retains their focus on the English language, and they maintain a connection to other anarchist groups located internationally. Additionally, while they are quick to stress the significance of a collective group, they also maintain the difference between themselves and communism. This difference is once again located within time. Anarchism is depicted as “inevitable” and part of the “last phases.” Any failure of the revolution becomes linked to communism and the success is linked to anarchism. Even though Vanguard Group does not identify clear guidelines to defining anarchism, the placement of the collective movement at the end of the revolutions, becomes this way of defining.

### **Conclusion**

With the growing chaos during the end of the thirties, Vanguard Group needed to identify a way of defining anarchism that would continually be productive. By examining how they used a proscriptive approach in conjunction with aporia, situated themselves in the framework of hysteron, we can better understand how they established an alternative

definition of anarchism that nevertheless fulfilled the anarchist goal of challenging set notions of authority, hierarchy, and domination in a quickly changing environment. As a result, we can derive three implications from our analysis.

First, the rhetorical situation drastically influenced Vanguard Group's rhetorical style. The devastating social, political, and economic landscape during the time the final volume of *Vanguard* was written combined with a desire to focus more attention towards their personal lives, made their narrow definition of anarchism difficult enact. To resolve the definitional rupture between their previous definition of anarchism and their current rhetorical situation, they established a justification for proceeding with what was previously identified as impossible strategies, and they also describe their defeat in a broader metaphysical understanding of the world. This broader framing gives them a chance to not only redefine anarchism, but also other forms of action they believe to be associated with anarchism.

Second, by applying a rhetorical framework that was malleable, Vanguard Group redefined not only the term anarchism, but also who could be an anarchist. No longer were they solely focused on the English-speaking youth, but instead allowed for more individuals to be included in the definition. However, rather than this inclusion resolving the definitional rupture, it further complicated it. Nevertheless, this rhetorical move also created the possibility of a broader base of supporters. With fascism on the rise and key members becoming less active—Vanguard Group needed to be more inclusive to retain a sense of expertise over the definition of the term anarchism.

Third, the final volume of *Vanguard* exhibits a dizzying visceral quality to it. Reading articles from the fourth volume entailed skipping pages, moving onto the next

issue, and then doubling back to the beginning of the initial issue to read the next article.

Defeats to fascist military leaders and less than perfect labor unions were framed in a sanguine light. Yet, the ability for Vanguard Group to take this position rested within the rhetorical character of anarchism.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### FUTURE IMPLICATONS

#### **Summary about the Rhetorical Character of Vanguard Group's Anarchism**

The words anarchism, anarchist, and anarchy continue to capture the popular imagination. A simple search online reveals that one can not only buy books on anarchism, anarchist flags, and clothing, but also anarchist themed cookie cutters, clothes for pets, wall clocks, video games, thong underwear, body spray, mugs, Banksy prints, iPhone cases, pillows, sunglasses, water bottles, make-up, finger-puppets, Halloween costumes, lamps, garden gnomes, and many more. Nearly everyone I met when working on this project had his or her own interpretation of anarchism—some interpretations more positive than others. Only a handful of them had heard of Vanguard Group or knew that anarchists were active in the thirties. Yet, a close analysis of *Vanguard* reveals that Vanguard Group has something to offer more than just individuals who attend Sacco and Vanzetti fundraisers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Chapter One drew attention to the way rhetorical analysis can offer a way of defining anarchism that confirms, celebrates, and questions the contentedness of the meaning. I also gave an overview to the way various fields have approached anarchism, the approaches used by other rhetoricians to study radical rhetoric, and the significance of studying anarchism in the thirties and the suitability of *Vanguard* for such a task.

Chapter Two established how the first volume of *Vanguard* set limitations by shifting the topoi to youth, a particular form of ideology, and enactment. The focus on youth identified who qualified as a member of the vanguard party, and the desire to adapt to the English-speaking audience subverted the culture that came with first generation

anarchist immigrants. Chapter Two also drew attention to how Vanguard Group's use of temporal terminology justified why *Vanguard* should be elevated over other forms of anarchism and limited the presence of other anarchist organizations in the present.

Chapter Three analyzes how the rhetorical moves made in the first volume of *Vanguard* laid the foundation to later redefine previous notions of anarchism in volume two and three. Vanguard Group was able to use definition by negation, bureaucratization, and domestication to define anarchism in a way that would lend credence to their expertise as anarchists. Meeting the challenge of redefining previous notions of anarchism was significant because it identified how the political and economic situation prompted a shift in the rhetorical situation and how the use of terminology that fit the rhetorical situation could bolster Vanguard Group's significance as anarchists. My analysis also demonstrates how the redefinition of anarchism had a performative quality to it. In other words, the definition offers suggestions of how to enact anarchism within the current situation.

Chapter Four examines how Vanguard Group's position as experts on anarchism set the stage for them to create a definition of anarchism that could continue to be productive regardless of the situation. They did this through the frameworks of aporia, hysteron, and symbolic action that established an alternative definition of anarchism. This is significant because it illustrated how the rhetorical situation drastically influenced Vanguard Group's rhetorical style. In turn, this rhetorical style established who could be an anarchist and pinpointed how the rhetorical character of anarchism permitted simultaneous embodiment of seemingly contradictory definitions.

## **Anarchism and Looking Ahead**

The most revealing aspect of the analysis is that anarchism functions as its own form of rhetorical critique. The ability of Vanguard Group to employ a definition of anarchism that was embraced by the members of their group, their readership, and the next generation of anarchists suggests that the definitional strategies used by Vanguard Group to meet the challenges posed by the definitional rupture also allowed them to adapt to the constraints of a rapidly changing rhetorical situation.

Both the rhetorical limitations posed by the challenges of a definitional rupture and the paradoxical nature of the meaning of anarchism creates a rhetorical character that is unique to anarchism. As anarchists, their strategy in adapting to the rhetorical situation could be different than other political organizations, because the presence of a definitional rupture within anarchism that created a space for an inconsistent way of defining.

The inconsistency in defining anarchism from one volume of *Vanguard* to another also indicates that anarchist rhetors are not confined to the same constraints of consistency within an identity as other political rhetors. Due to their unapologetic critique of even their own cultural institutions, Vanguard Group was not constrained by the same rhetorical limitations of maintaining a consistent identity within a quickly changing global world. The continued presence of the definitional rupture suggests that this rupture prompted definitional strategies employed by Vanguard Group that could be useful to other anarchists, and perhaps even other marginalized groups, in retaining at least minimal control over the terms connected to self-identity.



Based on this information we can return to the research questions outlined in the first chapter. First, how do anarchist rhetors adapt to and negotiate definitional ruptures in their rhetoric? As demonstrated by each volume, Vanguard Group begins by identifying topoi connected to a rhetorical situation. They then use heterosis, proscriptive, and prescriptive terms to situate their anarchist terminology within the rhetorical situation. After establishing themselves as experts within the rhetorical situation, they identify a framework that identifies appropriate forms of embodiment of their definition. A definitional rupture within the meaning of anarchism emerges when the rhetorical situation no longer fits the earlier definition of anarchism. In order to negotiate the definitional rupture, anarchists must identify the topoi that best fit the situation.

Hence, this approach leads us to answer the second question—what are the central definitional strategies in *Vanguard*? On the most basic level, the definitional strategies included: shift in topoi, redefining through negation, redefining through bureaucratization, redefining through domestication, reframing through aporia, reframing through hysteron, and reframing through symbolic action. On a more complex level, the analysis suggests definitional strategies connected to the aforementioned strategies that offer a direction for future research.

The negotiation of tension and definitional ruptures within anarchism can be connected to both stasis theory and the noemetic moment. Specifically, a definitional strategy fits appropriately within stasis of defining. Moving to the stasis of quality often means conceding how something is defined. Thus refusing to alter one's definition serves as a form of resistance. Although the idea of "reclaiming" a definition is probably very similar to this move, I would argue a definitional rupture operates differently. For

anarchist rhetoric, the acceptance of a particular definition of anarchism identifies not only who should be considered an anarchist, but also how to interpret the rhetorical situation. To wit, the acceptance of an anarchist way of defining also determines who is and who is not to blame for a particular action. By holding this ground, these groups might not make sense to the dominant language user, but they also refrain from using a definition that places blame on them. My first suggestion for future research would be to examine the role stasis theory plays in a definitional rupture. Specifically, how does embracing the identity anarchists despite its use as a pejorative by members of the hegemonic group influence how the quality of an action is interpreted in an argument?

My second suggestion for future research is to explore the connection between anarchist rhetors enacting a rhetoric strategy that they feel will best lead to a radical society and the noematic moment. Because anarchist rhetoric and rhetoric in general is so dependent on identifying the correct moment, identifying the moments where anarchist rhetoric converges and diverges from traditional understandings of the right rhetorical moment would be a fascinating endeavor. What would be even more exciting is locating that study in the late thirties and early forties. One question might be what tropes did anarchists use to describe the rise of fascism in light of their desire to achieve revolutionary success?

My third suggestion for future research is to continue exploring the former members of Vanguard Group. Some of them go onto edit the Anarchist Yiddish paper *Freie Arbeiter Stimme* –picking up editorial responsibilities from their parents and grandparents. A long-term goal of mine is to learn Yiddish so I can continue this analysis.

I would also like to explore the similarities and differences among Jewish anarchist rhetors of Vanguard Group and present day Jewish radicalism.

My fourth suggestion for future research is to apply the aforementioned challenges anarchist rhetors face in approaching a definitional rupture to a moment of tension that takes place in the present day between marginalized groups and the current political structure. Anarchism as rhetoric offers another lens to view a rhetorical situation. By using it as a framework to critique a moment of definitional rupture, we are better equipped to identify terminology that best represents the actions that are taking place.

*Vanguard* and publications of Vanguard Group offer a rich area for exploring the connection between anarchism and rhetoric. My approach to *Vanguard* was limited by my focus on definitional strategies. As a result, I did not focus my analysis on the articles that did not explicitly discuss anarchism. Nor did I focus on other anarchist rhetorical strategies demonstrated in *Vanguard*.

Furthermore, my analysis only centered on the material related to *Vanguard*. Although there were many foreign language Anarchist journals and newspapers that the members of Vanguard contributed to, I did not examine those articles. I also did not compare the similarities and differences between how the members of Vanguard Group constructed anarchism in *Vanguard* versus how they constructed anarchism in other publications.

Lastly, my own perspective limits this dissertation. Although I approached this project in what appeared to me to be the most objective and logical application of rhetoric, I must acknowledge my own personal influence on this analysis. During the time this was written, I participated heavily in contemporary anarchist movements,

corresponded with influential and casual self-identified anarchists alike, lead marches, organized events, slept outdoors, lived communally, engaged in debates, gave speeches, wrote articles, threw fundraisers, and protested. Although I feel these actions contributed to this dissertation for the better, I am the first to admit that my subjective perspective leads me to be biased in favor of Vanguard Group. Nevertheless, like them, I admit even the most solid reading of a situation can have limitations.

In “Definition of Man,” Kenneth Burke argues, “What is more ‘perfectionist’ in essence than the impulse, when one is in dire need of something, to so state this need that one in effect ‘defines’ the situation?” (18). Anarchism continues to capture popular imagination, because the definition of anarchism continues to taunt this impulse for perfection. Anarchism is perfect in its imperfections. It is hard to pin down, but that fluidity is the very quality that continues to make it relevant regardless of the situation. The anarchist is both the perfect hero and the perfect villain, and pure anarchy, both heaven and hell. By examining the strategies used by Vanguard Group in the thirties to negotiate the definitional rupture of the term, we do gain a better understanding of the paradoxical rhetorical character of anarchism.

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## APPENDIX 1: GLOSSARY OF KEY RHETORICAL TERMS

**Aporia:** A statement made either in jest or sincerity that about the impossibility of the situation.

**Bureaucratization:** The use of a technical term or terms to complicate, formalize, and neutralize a concept so it is less disturbing.

**Definitional Rupture:** When how a term is defined is called into question. Rather than being able to refer to the dictionary in order to identify the meaning of a term, with a definitional rupture, the meaning is not readily found in the dictionary. Instead, one must look beyond previous usages of the word in order to define it.

**Definitional Tension:** When the claims about a term's usage conflicts to the degree that it extends and broadens the way in which the term can be used.

**Definition by Negation:** Defining something by identifying the characteristics it does not possess.

**Domestication:** Using "friendly" metaphors from ordinary language to make otherwise atrocious or objectionable terms appear mundane.

**Embodiment:** The demonstration of the rhetorical device through a rhetor's physical persona.

**Exigence:** An obstacle or event that can be modified by the rhetor through discourse

**Heterosis:** The substitution of one form of a word for another or one tense for another.

**Hysteron:** A rhetorical disruption of time.

**Movement Rhetoric:** A series of rhetorical moves that are designed to create a progressive change in the discourse of the status quo or resolve a particular societal problem.

**Noematic Moment:** The abstract sense of an action or event that might eventually be cast into language.

**Revolutionary Rhetoric:** A series of rhetorical moves that are designed in response to the dissatisfaction with the current institutional rhetorical framing. Specifically designed to establish a new set of rhetorical practices outside of the institution.

**Radical Rhetoric:** A series of rhetorical moves that are designed to create a progressive change in the attitudes and beliefs of the status quo. Unintentionally, often using conservative discourse in the attempt to achieve this goal.

**Rhetorical Situation:** The discourse of a moment that is influenced by the speaker's exigence, audience, and rhetorical constraints.

**Rhetorical Character:** The pattern of rhetorical practices that might be found in a particular situation, demographic, or association.

**Reframing:** Creating an alternative perspective of the situation through linguistic means.

**Stasis:** A series of questions that allow an individual to identify the central point of the argument.

**Stasis of Definition:** The question of what something is called.

**Stasis of Quality:** The question of whether or not something is justified.

**Tropes:** Figures of speech that add to the artistry of the word and provides a connotation that goes beyond the literal meaning.

**Topoi:** A common line of argumentation that a rhetor can use to approach a subject.