

Rediscovering the Heroic Conservatism of Richard M. Weaver

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[Part Two]

IN 1953, when Richard M. Weaver published *The Ethics of Rhetoric*, he advanced an argument with respect to the ideal conservative which has, since its original pronouncement and through the last half century, been misunderstood. The standard reading of Weaver has understood him, both in rhetorical theory and in political philosophy, as idealizing Abraham Lincoln while Weaver considered Edmund Burke, regarded by many as the father of conservatism, as the archetypal liberal.

The problem with this interpretation of Weaver's work is the problem with contemporary political dialogue: the reduction to simple bi-polarity. The conservative sees his own position as right and all others as being wrong. Conversely, the liberal regards anyone who disagrees with his position as a conservative. Given his passionate insistence that ideas be taken seriously, it should not be surprising that Weaver rejected this simplistic scheme and warned against its dangers. He did not suggest a Lincoln/conservative-Burke/liberal dualism but rather that Lincoln and Burke were extremes to be avoided, while it is John Milton who, for Weaver, represents the ideal in conserva-

tive ethics and rhetoric.

A broad reading of Weaver's other writings reveals an essentially hostile view of Lincoln; furthermore, a critical look at the examples Weaver used to demonstrate the terms upon which conservatism is possible⁷¹ reveals that those examples express philosophical positions, such as the leveling of hierarchies, the elimination of distinctions, and a singular and unitary vision of human nature, which Weaver rejected throughout his writings.

Plato's dialogue *Phaedrus*, which Weaver analyzed in the first chapter of the *Ethics*, suggests an organizational pattern or scheme for the whole of the *Ethics*. Where Plato offered three types of lover—the non-lover, the evil lover, and the noble lover—Weaver offered three types of orator: the neutered speaker who argues from circumstance, the base speaker who argues from definition not dialectically sound, and the noble speaker who argues from sustained and dialectically secured definitions. Edmund Burke was, for Weaver, the liberal who positioned himself as the victim of circumstance. Lincoln was the collectivist who undermined individual distinction in favor of mass society and centralized power. John Milton, whose place in Weaver's ethical, rhetorical, and political philosophy has yet to be truly understood, is the conservative and the ideal orator, and it

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is toward this final conclusion that the second part of this essay is primarily directed.

In their analysis of Weaver's writing, Richard Johannesen, Rennard Strickland, and Ralph Eubanks criticized Weaver's scholarship. With regard to Weaver's treatment of Lincoln, they expressed their concern that Weaver had failed to "indicate whether he based his generalizations on a careful examination of the entire corpus of the martyred president's oratory."⁷² They expressed a similar concern with respect to Weaver's treatment of Burke. Weaver's examples "failed to indicate whether his generalizations rested on a scrutiny of all Burke's speeches, letters and essays."⁷³ Although such criticism is superficial and fallacious, it would be difficult to raise even the suggestion that Weaver lacked familiarity with the work of Milton.

While it is well-known that Weaver completed his Ph.D. studies at Louisiana State University in 1943 and that his dissertation, posthumously published as *The Southern Tradition at Bay* (1968), was on the literature of the post-bellum South, Weaver's graduate work often escapes notice. He finished a year of graduate study at the University of Kentucky (1932-33) but enrolled at Vanderbilt University in 1933, where he completed both his coursework and his master's thesis, "The Revolt Against Humanism: A Study of the New Critical Temper," under the direction of John Crowe Ransom in 1934. According to Ted J. Smith III, Weaver then spent the next two years at Vanderbilt "completing coursework and other preliminary requirements for the doctorate" and, in June 1936, he began "searching for a full-time teaching position to support him while he wrote his dissertation, a study of Milton, once again under Ransom's direction."⁷⁴

Weaver frequently referred to Milton in categorically positive terms; Weaver drew parallels between Milton's *A Ready*

and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth and the manifesto of the Southern Agrarian movement, *I'll Take My Stand* (1930).⁷⁵ The inseparability of freedom and right reason, the necessity of which pervades Weaver's philosophy, he identified as "the Miltonic doctrine."⁷⁶ Weaver levied criticism at social scientists for their inability to conceive of "a dominant image of man" that offered "unconditional reason for trying to save him from his threatened collapse."⁷⁷ In "Parson Weems: A Study in Early American Rhetoric," an essay which Ted Smith III believed was first intended for the *Ethics*,⁷⁸ Weaver praised Weems by identifying the similarity between Weems's style and Milton's.⁷⁹

Even without the parallel between the structure of the *Phaedrus* and the structure of Weaver's *Ethics*, in which the noble lover, like Milton, is the last to be considered, it is clear from his other writings that Weaver did not equate liberalism with evil. Rather, liberalism was for Weaver middle-of-the-roadism, a position he makes clear in two separate essays, "The Middle of the Road: Where It Leads," published in 1956, and "The Middle Way: A Political Meditation," in 1957. Therein Weaver reiterated that the liberal is incapable of dealing with ideas and can only be compelled by circumstances. "Circumstance is not the only the last, it is the *only* refuge of those who have given up faith in ideas."⁸⁰

If Burke is a liberal who, by Weaver's definition, lies between "extremists' of whom the conservative is pictured as one,"⁸¹ it stands to reason that there must be two, not one, extremism. Lincoln being one, Milton must be the other extremist by default, there being but three options and Burke already occupying the middle position. All that remains, then, is to determine who is the noble and who is the base orator, and the evidence stacks up pretty heavily in favor of Milton.

Revisiting the *Ethics* and repositioning his ideal rhetor have significant implica-

tions for how Weaver and his rhetorical and political philosophy is understood. Indeed, one of the far-reaching consequences of the misinterpretation of Weaver's *Ethics* has been the irrelevance of his position to rhetoricians and to conservatives.

In particular, Weaver's rhetorical theory has not received much attention from rhetorical scholars, in part because the assumption is that the argument from definition is not only superior but also more ethical than other forms of argument. It is a difficult position to sustain. Russell Kirk ably pointed out the logical problems of this formulation:

Lincoln is a better conservative than Burke because Lincoln frequently referred to abstract assumptions; and Robespierre is a better conservative than even Lincoln because Robespierre *always* guided himself by reference to abstract definition, with indifference to particular circumstance. By corollary, Robespierre is a better rhetorician and a sounder ethical thinker than Burke or Lincoln.⁸²

Repositioning Milton as Weaver's ideal and denigrating Lincoln as the base and evil orator demand substantive rethinking of Weaver's entire rhetorical philosophy, which, in turn, demands a reconsideration of his political theory and his place within conservative scholarship and the new conservatism.

*The Rhetorical Vision
of Richard Weaver*

In order to redefine Weaver's rhetorical theory, it is important to make sure that his understanding of rhetoric itself is understood. For most, especially those who are unfamiliar with rhetorical study, the term "rhetoric" is pejorative. *Rhetorical* questions are not questions at all but statements disguised as questions. *Rhetoric* is contrasted negatively with *substance*, and the practice of rhetoric is a dressing-

up of ordinary speech. It is often understood, to paraphrase Plato, as the art of making the stronger case look weaker and the weaker appear stronger. At the onset of the *Ethics*, however, Weaver warned against this assumption when he suggested that the richness and the depth of Plato's *Phaedrus*, and also the inability to grasp its singular theme, resulted "because most readers conceive rhetoric to be a system of artifice rather than an idea."⁸³

Weaver's definition of rhetoric is not intelligible apart from his understanding of the nature of the human being, which cannot be reduced to a mere biological entity and "which breathes and moves and nourishes itself."⁸⁴ The human being's essential nature evolves from the spirit and "is made up of wishes and hopes, of things transfigured, of imaginations and value ascriptions."⁸⁵ At the core of man's spiritual self lies an image not of what he is but what he *ought* to be:

It is the nature of the conscious life of man to revolve around some concept of value. So true is this that when the concept is withdrawn, or when it is forced into competition with another concept, the human being suffers an almost intolerable sense of being lost. He has to know where he is in the ideological cosmos in order to coordinate his activities. Probably the greatest cruelty which can be inflicted upon the psychic man is this deprivation of a sense of tendency.⁸⁶

This is a vision of the world which is both descriptive in the sense that it incorporates all that is and all that is possible, and prescriptive to the degree that it assumes that which is Good and that which ought to be.

This vision, moreover, is embedded in language, and to use language presupposes a set of assumptions about the world. The type of argument one uses assumes certain things about the world. In a world where there are no absolutes there can only be circumstances. Those who find the brute force of material con-

ditions compelling do so only by the denial of anything which transcends the immediacy of circumstances. Those who argue from the essential nature of things, however, must assume essences which lie beyond the immediate realm of perception.

One's habitual mode of argument, then, reveals the underlying structure of thought and assumptions about the world. Along with bases of argument, Weaver developed three other aspects of rhetorical style: ultimate terms, or those terms which anchor the discourse as being unquestioned goods (god terms) or evils (devil terms); pertinences, or those topics or dimensions of a topic which the speaker considers relevant; and resonances, or a stylistic similitude with those figures or systems of authority.⁸⁷ The use of language did more than reveal one's assumptions about the world, however. For Weaver, language was sermonic.

To speak is not merely to express one's view of the world but "to handle the world, to remake it if only a little, and to hand it to others in a shape which may influence their actions."⁸⁸ When a speaker invites others to participate in the use of language, moreover, "...the listener is being asked not simply to follow a valid reasoning form but to respond to some presentation of reality. He is being asked to agree with the speaker's interpretation of the world that is."⁸⁹

Rhetoric "creates an informed appetition for the good"⁹⁰ and its "function is an art of embodying an order of desire."⁹¹ Language shapes man's understanding of reality and to adopt his language—its patterns, its pertinences, resonances, and assumptions with regard to valid and compelling reasoning—is to enter his world and dwell there. Mastery of language, quite literally, is mastery of the world.

Central to the *Ethics* is the distinction between rhetoric, or the manner in which language has persuasively conveyed as-

sumptions about the world, and dialectic, or the manner in which those assumptions about the world are tested and subjected to criticism. Rhetoric is the vehicle by which the truth is communicated; dialectic is the method whereby truth is discovered.

It is not possible to separate rhetoric from dialectic. "What a successful dialectic secures for any position...is not actuality but possibility; and what rhetoric thereafter accomplishes is to take any dialectically secured position (since positive positions, like the 'position' that water freezes at 32° F., are not matter for rhetorical appeal) and show its relationship to the world of prudential conduct."⁹² In the second chapter of the *Ethics*, Weaver compared and contrasted the arguments raised during the trial of John T. Scopes in Dayton, Tennessee. The position taken by the prosecution, which included William Jennings Bryan, was that the Tennessee State Legislature had passed a law which was clearly within the purview of its authority and that Scopes had violated that law. Scopes's defense, led by Clarence Darrow, argued that evolution was correct. The result was that "The law of the State of Tennessee won a victory which was regarded as pyrrhic because it was generally felt to have made the law and the lawmakers look foolish."⁹³

The lesson is a powerful one for conservatives both in Weaver's time and in the present. It is not enough to be right. One must also be compelling. The lesson for rhetorical scholars and ethicists is equally significant. There is no ethical rhetoric apart from a dialectically secured position. To speak well of that which is evil is unethical regardless of the particular application of a rhetorical device. Ethical rhetoric must rightly affect the soul, and "a soul which is rightly affected calls that good which is good; but a soul which is wrongly turned calls that good which is evil."⁹⁴

This is not, however, the conclusion of

ethical rhetoric. Rhetoric “at its truest seeks to perfect men by showing them better versions of themselves, links in a chain extending up toward the ideal, which only the intellect can apprehend and only the soul have affection for.”⁹⁵ Looking at the terms upon which Weaver extolled Miltonic rhetoric, at those aspects which Weaver found pertinent, provides the foundation of his ethical program.

An Ethical Rhetoric

The title of the sixth chapter in the *Ethics* is itself revealing of Weaver’s ethical program: “Milton’s Heroic Prose.” Milton is the hero, the archetypal champion to be emulated: “...Milton’s very arduousness of spirit calls for elevation on the part of the reader. Milton assumes an heroic stance, and he demands a similar stance of those who would meet him.”⁹⁶ Weaver himself adopted a similar posture in his approach to Milton making analysis an heroic undertaking.

Weaver identified “three or four sources”⁹⁷ of Milton’s style. First, he claimed, there is “the primacy of concept,” or the extent to which Milton “wrote primarily as a thinker and not as an artificer,” and thus his “units of composition are built upon concepts and not upon conventional expository patters.”⁹⁸ This refusal to accommodate expository patterns at the expense of his ideas was manifest in sentences of extraordinary length and complexity which demanded “more than ordinary effort of attention and memory”⁹⁹ on the part of his reader.

He readily admitted that this style evidenced an “aristocratic tendency”¹⁰⁰ in Milton’s writing which, Weaver argued, was necessary given the pressures of Milton’s age. Milton, who lived in a “tough-minded period of Western culture,” when “every thinking man virtually had to be either a revolutionary or a counter-revolutionary,” wrote for “a sternly educated

minority, which had been taught to recognize an argument when it saw one, and even to analyze its source.”¹⁰¹

While Weaver’s contemporaries were defining rhetoric as the art of “adjusting ideas to people and people to ideas,”¹⁰² and insisting that the “prime quality of prose style is *clarity*,”¹⁰³ Weaver’s ideal orator had no intention of forcing his ideas into easily digestible categories nor of sacrificing meaning for the sake of a more widely available manner of understanding. It is the hallmark of the neutered speaker and the non-lover that his language should be available to all. Here, too, it would do well to note the point of departure with the style of Lincoln, for whom it was crucial “that everyone understand precisely what he was saying.”¹⁰⁴

The second significant aspect of Milton’s style was the “restless energy that permeates his substance” and that refused to permit “the reader to remain inert.”¹⁰⁵ Milton’s style made indifference to his ideas impossible and to that end, Weaver argued, Milton wrote in a “superlative mode...reaching out toward the two extremes of a gauge of value” and couching his expressions “in terms raised to their highest degree.”¹⁰⁶ Throughout his writings, Milton spoke of the best and the worst, whether it be depth or darkness or dejectedness or downtroddenness. Never would the reader be allowed the passive comfort of the middle ground but was offered only the extremes from which to choose:

He wrote in this superlative vein because his principal aim was the divorcement of good and evil. To show these wide apart, he had to talk in terms of best and worst, and being a rhetorician of vast resources, he found ways of making the superlative even more eminent than our regular grammatical forms make it, which naturally marks him as a great creative user of language.¹⁰⁵

The second element of Milton’s style which Weaver associated with vigor and

energy was Milton's "systematic collection" or his "frequent use of pairs of words similar in meaning to express a single object or idea," giving Milton's writing "the impression of thickness, which is in turn the impression of strength."¹⁰⁸ In addition, in making reading Milton an heroic undertaking, this "thickness" gives his prose "a dimensional quality, because this one [term] will show one aspect of the thing named and that one another."¹⁰⁹

Underlying Weaver's praise of Milton is a deeper structure revealed in his particular use of language and in the repetition of particular themes. Milton "requires an *enforcement* of attention" and "an *active* sensibility incompatible with a state of relaxation." His "*arduousness* of spirit" requires a similar stance to be taken by the reader; his "*arduous* style" defies convention and "feels no compulsion" to adhere to "some established norm." Weaver repeatedly praises Milton's "complexity," which is more than to be expected of the ordinary writer, along with his "passion" and "confidence." Milton displayed "boldness," "vigor," "restless energy," "zeal," "vitality," and "energy." Weaver emphasized Milton's "strength of purpose" and his "genuine passion" and described him as "the most defiant and brash kind of rebel."

The image which emerges from the pertinences and the resonances of Weaver's language is a manly image and it is apparent that, for Weaver, this quality of manliness is the virtue of the noble rhetor. Boldness and vigor, as well as strength and passion, drive the individual not bounded or constrained by social convention, but by principle alone. For Weaver, this ideal would have been the contemporary equivalent of the noble warrior, not unlike the chivalric knights who inspired the Southern aristocracy. The ethical speaker embodied not just strength of conviction but nobility of purpose, a rhetorical Percival.

The possession of this virtue did not in

and of itself make a rhetor noble. Weaver was clear that in addition to being an heroic figure, the ethical speaker must bring out that same heroism in his audience. Here, too, Weaver's language is revealing. The ignoble rhetor's aim is "exploitation" and repeatedly Weaver refers to the auditors of base rhetoric as "objects." This audience is "emasculated in understanding in order that the lover may have his way."¹¹⁰ "[He] seeks to keep the understanding in a *passive* state" and does everything to "prevent a masculine exercise of imagination."¹¹¹

Weaver cited modern "journalism and political pleading"¹¹² as emblematic of unethical rhetoric. Ignoble rhetoric keeps the audience "in a state of pupillage so that they will be most docile" by refusing to permit "an honest examination of alternatives...discussing only one side of an issue, by mentioning cause without consequence or consequence without cause, acts without agents or agents without agency..."¹¹³ In this way the base rhetor keeps his audience in a state of intellectual infancy, rendering them dependent and weak.

The noble rhetor is not just manly but attempts to make a man out of his listener.

A Program for Conservatives

Although death came to Weaver when he was still young, it was more than ten years after the publication of *The Ethics of Rhetoric*. It seems only reasonable to wonder why, over the course of that decade, Weaver never corrected the misinterpretation of his work. For that matter, it gives one cause to wonder why Weaver was so circumspect at all. If he never intended that Lincoln, but Milton, should be his ideal orator, why be so circumspect and why allow the misinterpretation to continue?

It is important to keep in mind that Weaver's overriding concern was the proper definition of conservatism in the

face of an increasingly Burkean direction the movement was taking. He was keenly aware of this turn and alarmed by its direction. At a University of Chicago roundtable in 1955 (with Stuart Gerry Brown and Aaron Director), Weaver, true to his preferred method of argument, distinguished between “temperamental conservatives and reflective conservatives,” the latter grouping based upon conviction “with reference to certain concepts of the good, with reference to certain means that should be taken toward realizing those concepts of the good;” at the center of their position was “the conception of society as a structural thing.”¹¹⁴ Furthermore, Weaver was deeply concerned as to the dangers of a split between the two types of conservative, as he stated in a 1955 address to The Conservative Society of Yale Law School:

...we would not want to see developing a group of mere traditionalists on one side and a group of “radical” conservatives on the other—radical in the sense of following a theory to some extreme and getting out of touch with life. They might find it increasingly difficult to work together and even to communicate.¹¹⁵

Weaver wrote the *Ethics* within the context of the “new conservative” movement increasingly influenced by a Burkean conservatism,¹¹⁶ of which Weaver was distrustful on account of Burke’s assumption “that tradition throws a veil over the origin of many of our institutions.” Such an approach to politics, Weaver believed, was a “weakness we cannot afford”¹¹⁷ for it deprived conservatives of a foundation from which to argue. Weaver asserted at length that the middle-of-the-road position favored by Burkean liberalism would lead contemporary conservatives to the same end as the Whig party: political irrelevancy and inevitable extinction.

Nevertheless, it would not have been Weaver’s intention to initiate a broad-based conversion of conservatives. Inter-

nal dissension between traditionalists and radical conservatives, he felt, would risk a dangerous split in the movement and would only aid the radical left. Clearly, any widespread appeal was contrary to Weaver’s rhetorical vision. Like Milton, he spoke not to the general audience but to the aristocratic intellect, to the rigorously educated minority rather than to the plebeian mass, even within his own party.

Milton is not simply the ideal orator, the image of ethical rhetoric, but also the ideal conservative. Weaver would not have distinguished between the two and instead sought to define the terms of conservatism and to demonstrate them as well.

His chapter in the *Ethics* on “Milton’s Heroic Prose” is one of the most complex and difficult sections of the work, and it is apparent that, in addition to extolling Milton’s style, Weaver did his best to emulate it. His sentences are long and complex and developed in relation to extended quotations from Milton. Weaver adopted many of the same characteristics he praises in Milton: “Just as his [Milton’s] figures were seen to have a prolonged correspondence, beyond what the casual or unthinking writer would bring to view, so his substantives and predicates are assembled upon a principle of penetration or depth of description.”¹¹⁸ Not only is the sentence of heroic length and complexity, the thickness of his style—*casual* or *unthinking*, where another writer would have been satisfied with one or the other and daring to go further with the doubly alliterative *principle of penetration or depth of description*—demands the same degree of energy on the part of Weaver’s reader as Milton would have demanded of his.

In a rereading of Weaver’s work there are serious implications for conservatives, the most immediate being the rejection of the conservative-liberal dichotomy. This bi-polarity obscures im-

portant distinctions, and specifically the invisible middle ground. Because the very existence of this middle way remains unarticulated, it escapes critique. The middle way, moreover, is not harmless or impotent but, as Weaver warned: "To recur here to the original situation in the dialogue, we recall that the eloquent Lysias, posing as a non-lover, had concealed designs upon Phaedrus, so that his fine speech was really a sheep's clothing. Socrates discerned in him a 'peculiar craftiness.' One must suspect the same today of many who ask us to place our faith in the neutrality of their discourse."¹¹⁹ In the public arena there are powerful voices for whom any inclination, whether right or left, is a distraction from prudential business.

The seduction of the middle ground is that it promises success. It is utile. The politician who takes a radical position will not be elected. The student who advocates a radical theory risks alienation and failure. The individual who insists on adhering to a radical posture is ostracized. This phenomenon has long been noted by the extreme left. Noam Chomsky, Howard Zinn, and others on the radical left have derided the nation and the media for their right-wing conservatism while the voices of the right decry the advance of liberalism. The vast middle ground has become ascendant. Within the popular dialogue, the range of opinion is so narrow as to be negligible. The recent presidential contest between John Kerry and George Bush demonstrated the distance "conservatism" has traveled toward the middle, with both candidates in favor of a massive consolidation of police power (Homeland Security and the Patriot Act); federal management of the economy; military adventurism (that would have

alarmed the fathers of limited and constitutional federalism); and legislation to federalize education ("No Child Left Behind"), with the only difference between the two candidates being the degree and level to which each one was willing to commit.

The true conservative, Weaver's conservative, has been pushed to the distant fringes of the party, his voice silenced in the political dialogue lest he make the party seem "extremist." It is now more important to win legislative seats and to hold office than to advocate positions and to defend principles. Weaver, it would seem, was mistaken on one count: he believed that one could not stick to the middle ground and remain successful in politics, and that eventually the people would cry out for an heroic rhetoric. With prophetic insight, Weaver chose to conclude his chapter on Milton by noting:

...people like to feel they are hearing of the solid fact and substance of the world, and those epithets which give us glimpses of its concreteness and contingency are the best guarantors of that. The regular balancing of abstract and concrete modifiers, which we meet regularly in Shakespeare, mirrors, indeed, the situation all of us face in daily living, where general principles are clear in theory but are conditioned in their application to the concrete world. The man of eloquence must be a lover of 'the world's body' to the extent of being able to give it a fond description.

With these conditions practically realized, we might again have orators of the heroic mold. But the change would have to include the public also, for, on a second thought suggested by Whitman, to have great orators there must be great audiences too.¹²⁰

The heroic speaker will not—cannot—be heard until one is man enough to listen.

71. Richard M. Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric* (Davis, California, 1985), 86. 72. Richard L. Johannesen, Rennard Strickland, and Ralph T.

Eubanks, "Richard M. Weaver on the Nature of Rhetoric: An Interpretation," in *The Vision of Richard Weaver*, ed. Joseph Scotchie (New

Brunswick, New Jersey, 1995), 101. **73.** *Ibid.*, 102. **74.** Ted J. Smith III, ed., *In Defense of Tradition: The Collected Shorter Writings of Richard M. Weaver 1929-1963* (Indianapolis, 2000), xxix. Both Smith and Charles Follette ("A Weaverian Interpretation of Richard Weaver," [Unpublished Dissertation, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, 1981]) note that commentaries on Weaver's life are often "oddly careless of detail" (Follette, 53) and "inaccuracies of fact and emphasis" (Smith, xiii). Follette says only that Weaver stayed at Vanderbilt University "as a teaching fellow and doctoral student until 1936" (68). **75.** Richard M. Weaver, "The Southern Phoenix," in *Southern Writings*, 28. **76.** "Albert Taylor Bledsoe," 149. **77.** Richard M. Weaver, "Science and Sentimentalism," in *In Defense of Tradition*, 146. **78.** Smith, n. 273. **79.** Richard M. Weaver, "'Parson' Weems: A Study in Early American Rhetoric," in *In Defense of Tradition*, 282, 282, 284, and 285. **80.** "The Middle Way: A Political Mediation," in *In Defense of Tradition*, 545. **81.** *Ibid.*, 542. **82.** Kirk, 491. **83.** *Ethics*, 3. **84.** *Visions of Order* (Wilmington, Delaware, 1995), 9. **85.** *Ibid.* **86.** *Ethics*, 213. **87.** Weaver's treatment of style receives its fullest and most detailed treatment in Charles Follette's "A Weaverian Interpretation of Richard Weaver" (Unpublished Dissertation, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, 1981). **88.** *Ethics*, 119. **89.** "Language is Sermonic," in *In Defense of Tradition*, 359. **90.** *Ethics*, 115. **91.** "Language is Sermonic," 360. **92.** *Ethics*, 27-28. **93.** *Ibid.*, 54. **94.** *Ibid.*, 17. **95.** *Ibid.*, 25. **96.** *Ibid.*, 143. **97.** *Ibid.*, 144. **98.** *Ibid.* **99.** *Ibid.*, 149. **100.** *Ibid.*, 144. **101.** *Ibid.*, 149-150. **102.** Donald C. Bryant, "Rhetoric: Its Functions and Scope," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 39 (December 1953). **103.** Edward P. J. Corbett, *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* (New York, 1965), 393. **104.** James M. McPherson, *Abraham Lincoln and the Second American Revolution* (New York, 1991), 97. **105.** *Ethics*, 152. **106.** *Ibid.*, 155. **107.** *Ibid.*, 158. **108.** *Ibid.* **109.** *Ibid.* **110.** *Ibid.*, 11. **111.** *Ibid.*, 12. **112.** *Ibid.*, 11. **113.** *Ibid.*, 11-12. **114.** Stuart Gerry Brown, Aaron Director, and Richard M. Weaver, "Who Are Today's Conservatives?" *The University of Chicago Round Table*, #881 in *In Defense of Tradition*, 458. **115.** Richard M. Weaver, "The Prospects of Conservatism," in *In Defense of Tradition*, 474. **116.** See, for example, Gerry Brown, "Democracy, the New Conservatism, and the Liberal Tradition in America," *Ethics* 66 (1955); Russell Kirk, "Ethical Labor" and *The Conservative Mind, from Burke to Santayana* (Chicago, 1953); Willmoore Kendall and George W. Carey, "Towards a Definition of 'Conservatism,'" *The Journal of Politics* 26 (1964); and Peter Viereck, *Conservatism and Conservatism Revisited: The Revolt Against Revolt* (New York, 1949). **117.** Richard M. Weaver, "How to Argue the Conservative Cause," in *In Defense of Tradition*, 510. **118.** *Ibid.*, 161. **119.** *Ibid.*, 22. **120.** *Ibid.*, 162-163.