



HUDSON INSTITUTE'S
BRADLEY CENTER
FOR PHILANTHROPY AND CIVIC RENEWAL
presents a book discussion of

Funding Fathers: The Unsung Heroes of the Conservative Movement

Thursday, November 20, 2008 • 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.

Hudson Institute • Betsy and Walter Stern Conference Center • 1015 15th Street, NW • Suite 600

At a moment when conservative philanthropy is in a critically self-reflective mood, **RON ROBINSON** and **NICOLE HOPLIN** of Young America's Foundation have written a new book about the original funders of conservative causes, most of whose names are unfamiliar to the public, often because they sought anonymity. In *Funding Fathers: the Unsung Heroes of the Conservative Movement* (Regnery, Sept. 2008), we have the first account of such funders and activists as William Volker, Antony Fisher, Dean Clarence Manion, and Joseph Coors, Sr. These figures reaped ample rewards from a free society, came to believe that it faced grave threats from collectivist impulses at home and abroad, and determined to direct their fortunes and energies to the defense of liberty. Robinson and Hoplin argue that a new generation of conservative funders should draw inspiration from their examples.

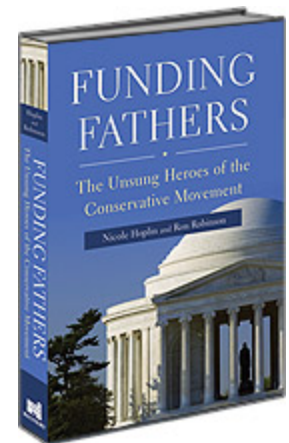
On November 20, Hudson Institute's Bradley Center hosted **ROBINSON** as well as **AARON DORFMAN** of the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy (in his first Bradley Center panel appearance) and National Review's **JOHN J. MILLER** to discuss the new volume. The Bradley Center's own **WILLIAM SCHAMBRA** moderated the discussion.

PROGRAM AND PANEL

- 11:45 a.m. Registration, lunch buffet
12:00 p.m. Welcome by Hudson Institute's **WILLIAM SCHAMBRA**
12:10 Panel discussion
RON ROBINSON, Young America's Foundation
AARON DORFMAN, National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy
JOHN J. MILLER, *National Review*
1:10 Question-and-answer session
2:00 Adjournment

FURTHER INFORMATION

THIS TRANSCRIPT WAS PREPARED FROM AN AUDIO RECORDING and edited by Krista Shaffer. To request further information on this event or the Bradley Center, please contact Hudson Institute at (202) 974-2424 or send an e-mail to Krista Shaffer at Krista@hudson.org.



HUDSON INSTITUTE

1015 15th Street, N.W.
Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005

202.974.2400
202.974.2410 Fax
<http://pcr.hudson.org>

Panel Biographies

Aaron Dorfman is the executive director of the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, the nation's premier philanthropic watchdog organization. Before joining NCRP in 2007, Aaron Dorfman served for fifteen years as a community organizer, including ten years as executive director of People Acting for Community Together (PACT) in Miami, Fla. and five years as head organizer for Minneapolis and Miami chapters of the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN). He led dozens of successful grassroots campaigns to improve education, transportation, housing and other issues affecting low-income communities. Dorfman was a Regional Finalist in 2003 for the Ford Foundation's Leadership for a Changing World award, and is an alumnus of the Miami Fellows Initiative, a prestigious leadership program sponsored by the Dade Community Foundation.

John J. Miller is *National Review* magazine's National Political Reporter, based in Washington, D.C. Miller is the author of three books: *A Gift of Freedom: How the John M. Olin Foundation Changed America*, *Our Oldest Enemy: A History of America's Disastrous Relationship with France* (co-authored by Mark Molesky), and *The Unmaking of Americans: How Multiculturalism Has Undermined the Assimilation Ethic*. In addition to *National Review*, Miller contributes to the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times*, the *New Criterion*, and other publications. He is a contributing editor to [Philanthropy](#) and the author of a Philanthropy Roundtable monograph, [Strategic Investment in Ideas: How Two Foundations Reshaped America](#). *The American Prospect* has called Miller "one of the brightest young thinkers on the right" and the *Washington Monthly* has dubbed him a "rising star" among a "new generation of conservative thinkers and writers." But these are liberal magazines and not necessarily to be trusted. Before joining *National Review* in 1998, Miller was vice president of the Center for Equal Opportunity, which he helped found with Linda Chavez, and a Bradley Fellow at the Heritage Foundation. Prior to that, Miller was a reporter and researcher at *The New Republic*, where he worked with Fred Barnes.

Ron Robinson is the president of Young America's Foundation, which he led through two successful landmark Supreme Court victories for student rights; the inauguration and development of the National Conservative Student Conference and the National High School Leadership Conference held annually in Washington; and the Foundation's effort to save Ronald Reagan's Western White House, Rancho del Cielo. Robinson served as executive director of Young Americans for Freedom (1977-79), president of the United States Youth Council (1983-85), and president of the International Youth Year Commission (1983-84). He was also an advisor to the U.S. Department of Education during the Reagan administration. Robinson is a trustee of The Phillips Foundation, a director of Citizens United, the Citizens United Foundation, and the American Conservative Union, and he is the vice-president of the Free Speech Defense and Education Fund. Robinson is co-author of the book *Funding Fathers: The Unsung Heroes of the Conservative Movement*, and has appeared as a guest on *Firing Line*, C-SPAN's *American Perspectives*, ABC's *Person of the Week*, *FOX and Friends*, MSNBC, CNBC, and FOX News.

William A. Schambra is the director of the Hudson Institute's Bradley Center for Philanthropy and Civic Renewal. Prior to joining the Hudson Institute in January of 2003, Schambra was director of programs at the Bradley Foundation in Milwaukee. Before joining Bradley in 1992, Schambra served as a senior advisor and chief speechwriter for Attorney General Edwin Meese III, Director of the Office of Personnel Management Constance Horner, and Secretary of Health and Human Services Louis Sullivan. He was also director of Social Policy Programs for the American Enterprise Institute, and co-director of AEI's "A Decade of Study of the Constitution." Schambra was appointed by President Reagan to the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, and by President George W. Bush to the board of directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service. Schambra has written extensively on the Constitution, the theory and practice of civic revitalization, and civil society in *The Public Interest*, *Public Opinion*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Times*, *Policy Review*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Nonprofit Quarterly*, *Philanthropy*, *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, and *Crisis*, and is the editor of several volumes, including *As Far as Republican Principles Will Admit: Collected Essays of Martin Diamond*.

Proceedings

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: My name is Bill Schambra, director of the Bradley Center for Philanthropy and Civic Renewal at Hudson Institute. Krista Shaffer and I welcome you to today's discussion of a new book just out from Regnery Publishing entitled *Funding Fathers: The Unsung Heroes of the Conservative Movement*, by Nicole Hoplin and Ron Robinson.

A special welcome to our audience at C-SPAN's Book TV.

As some of you know, Hudson's Bradley Center is funded by the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Today, of course, the Bradley Foundation is a smoothly humming, ruthlessly efficient intellectual fighting machine.

It is described with some admiration as such in the writings of one of our panelists today, John Miller, and with something less than admiration in the publications of the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy (NCRP), now directed by another of our panelists today, Aaron Dorfman.

But it was not always so. In the beginning, during the late 1940s and '50s, there was only Harry Bradley, a manufacturer of electronic control mechanisms, sitting in his office atop his factory on the south side of Milwaukee, contemplating with considerable dread the advance of socialism abroad and collectivism at home.

Although he had no formal liberal arts training, he nonetheless undertook to educate himself about these trends. He began ordering books from then obscure, struggling conservative publishers like Regnery, Arlington House and Devin-Adair; from tiny free market nonprofits like the Foundation for Economic Education; and from pamphleteers like Dean Clarence Manion at Notre Dame.

He also began writing checks to fledgling conservative think tanks like the American Enterprise Association, on whose board he would serve – today the American Enterprise Institute, and conservatism's first magazines, including William F. Buckley's *National Review*.

Indeed, among the hundreds of Harry Bradley's books now proudly preserved by foundation librarian Bill Bergeron is to be found a bound copy of essays from *National Review*'s first year, signed by legendary journal contributors like James Burnham, Brent Bozell, Willmoore Kendall, and even Whittaker Chambers.

This is the era evoked by the book we are to discuss today: a time before the rise of the so-called "mighty Wurlitzer" of the conservative intellectual infrastructure – a time when a small, beleaguered band of entrepreneurial manufacturers and businessmen, typically in America's heartland, looked about themselves at the steady and seemingly inevitable retreat of liberty

before collectivism and resolved to mount a war of ideas – however ill-equipped they seemed to be for such – to try to stem that powerful tide.

Given the results of the November 2008 elections, conservatism may soon be feeling that way once again, and so perhaps this earlier wilderness period might have some valuable lessons for that movement today.

We're pleased to have one of the authors of *Funding Fathers* with us today to talk about it. Ron Robinson is president of the Young America's Foundation and an adviser to many other nonprofits and foundations on the right.

To comment on the book, we have two experts on philanthropic activism, one from each side of the political spectrum: Aaron Dorfman is currently executive director of the watchdog group National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy. Aaron was a community organizer – before community organizing was cool – for fifteen years in the Miami-Dade region of Florida; he led numerous grassroots efforts to improve education, housing, and transportation in low-income communities.

We also welcome back John Miller, *National Review* magazine's national political reporter, author of *A Gift of Freedom: How the John M. Olin Foundation Changed America*, and a consultant for the Searle Freedom Trust.

Ron, why don't you start us off with an account of what the book is about?

RON ROBINSON: Thank you very much, Bill, and I appreciate Hudson hosting this event and also the Bradley Center and the work you do on philanthropy. I think it's a very important question. My co-author, Nicole Hoplin, who was involved in every aspect of this book, I'm sure would love to be here today and correct any of the errors that I make along the way. I appreciate everything Nicole Hoplin has done to make this the book that it is.

I begin, really, with another book that came out subsequently. It is a book by Harvey McKinnon entitled *The 11 Questions Every Donor Asks and the Answers All Donors Crave*. The pivotal question in this book that advises individual donors is, will my gift make a difference? This is a core question to virtually all donors. A closely related one is, will my gift make a greater difference here, or should I give to another cause?

As a person of modest means who loves to give, I constantly struggle with this, and I know my wealthy friends feel it acutely. It's that question – will my gift make a difference? – that we try to focus on in *Funding Fathers* because we found that in particularly the early stages of the modern-day conservative movement, those individual gifts were absolutely critical, and we want to give assurance to conservative donors across the country that there are these case studies out there that they ought to take a look at, that profoundly affected our country for the better. And we also are concerned that through a series of actions, whether they be by conservatives or those on the left or the government itself, there's an effort to discourage conservative gifts, to keep these stories from being fully appreciated by a broader audience.

I think that, to some extent, conservative organizations, when they solicit gifts, tend to be narrowly focused on their own organization. We try in the book to minimize the stories related to Young America's Foundation, although I was blessed to know many of these key donors in my capacity as president of the foundation. In meeting with these individuals, I heard about other great gifts that they had made that I just was not previously aware of or didn't know the full implications of those gifts. So, much is done by the Nicole and myself, I hope, to underscore the importance of these gifts and also, at least in the introduction, how to some extent philanthropy among conservative donors is suppressed.

We see the left, the liberals, or the progressives, as Aaron I'm sure would call them, oftentimes attack conservative gifts, vilify conservative donors. We know, oftentimes, the mainline press ignores very significant gifts, or the philanthropy part of an individual's life. And we also know that the left has spent a lot of effort in the past thirty years to restrict the giving among conservative donors and donors at the grassroots.

But we're also somewhat critical of conservatives. Conservative institutions oftentimes do not highlight the gifts because they fear – ironically, as free-marketeers – competition from other organizations. To some extent, the donors are humble, and they do not want their name widely accredited with the gift, or they don't want to be attacked by progressive and left-wing organizations for giving these gifts. And so that also suppresses some of the gifts.

What the universities have sometimes done with gifts by conservatives and conservative institutions, highlighting the misuse of those funds, also discourages conservative philanthropy, and we're concerned about that.

You can get an idea of what the left thinks of these gifts: When the Crock family, for example, gave a major gift, a bequest, to National Public Radio, *The New York Times* headlined the article as "Funding Changes Everything," and we've witnessed this across the left as a whole. We've gone through a season where much attention was placed on ACORN, and much effort was made by the left even in the bailout bill to help ACORN and help left-wing institutions. We saw President-Elect Obama have an advantage of hundreds of millions of dollars in gifts in this particular campaign – something notwithstanding the fact that he had previously endorsed campaign restrictions and said that he was going to take public funds. Instead he blew past that cap and took hundreds of millions of dollars in additional gifts in the fall campaign, giving the left significant advantages in all the battleground states.

We see it in books like Terry McCullough's book on his days at the White House and at the DNC. He describes flat-out how he wrote the memo that led to the Clinton administration selling out the Lincoln Bedroom on a regular basis to special interest groups. Or McCullough bragging that the left wing will never be underfunded again. And he seems to have lived up to that boast.

And we see the constant encouragement the mainline news media gives to gifts that have a leftist tinge. A good example of this is one we highlight in the early portion of the book, a gift by Oseola McCarty. Miss McCarty was a cleaning lady in southern Mississippi. She was not a wealthy woman, but she announced that she was going to leave \$150,000 to the University of Southern Mississippi for a race-based scholarship, for a black-only scholarship. Now, this was a

great gift, a tremendous gift from this woman, but you get an idea the type of affirmation someone will get in the progressive movement with such a gift. *The New York Times* covered this story on the front page twice in a group of twenty-six articles from 1995 to her death in 1999. She dined at the Clinton White House. She dropped the ball at Times Square on New Years Eve of 1996 going into 1997. Harvard awarded her an honorary degree. Barbara Walters found her to be one of the most ten intriguing individuals in 1995. When she died in 1999, the *Los Angeles Times* ran a front-page story on her; President Clinton issued a statement from the White House; and 612 newspapers nationwide covered her story.

We see the contrast with George Soros, who has funded so many of the left-wing and progressive groups; he is called by the mainline news media a “mover of markets,” a “guru,” a “philosopher,” a “missionary,” and “the man who would mend the world.” In contrast, Richard Scaife, who has funded more conservative causes, gets headlines like these: “Scaife Has Good Reason to Hide,” “The Implausible Dick Scaife,” “Sugar Daddy of the New Right,” “The Right’s Daddy Warbucks,” “Extremist,” “Reclusive Heir.” Even after our book went to press, *The Washington Post* had a three-page story in their “Style” section attacking his private life because he purportedly was critical of what President Clinton did in his “private life” in the White House with a government employee. My colleague Nicole Hoplin, I think, wrote it best when she wrote these lines: “Gifts given by conservatives often remain in secrecy, and this deprives the giver of feedback, either positive or negative. It encourages future gifts to be given only without the benefit of hindsight, reflection, or full appraisal.”

Now, it is appropriate to mention the fall campaign. Campaign gifts oftentimes are threshold gifts to wider involvement and wider philanthropy. If a person gives a gift in the campaign, they’re more likely to follow closely what the candidate has to say; they’re more likely to ask other people to vote for that candidate; they’re more likely to put a bumper sticker on their car, more likely to put a yard sign at their home. They’re more likely to vote, and they’re more likely to feel invested in that candidate afterwards. Gifts in campaigns are threshold gifts; they’re entry gifts to broader philanthropy for many people because, unlike many of the other gifts, if your candidate wins you get immediate feedback in a positive sense, at least if your candidate does roughly what you anticipated he or she would do.

It’s interesting that the left has invested so much to discourage the broadest possible participation in gifts by restricting them. Bruce Springsteen can hold concerts all across the country, but a business executive who wants to give \$2,400 to a candidate in a main campaign would be violating the same set of laws. The IRS has new sets of regulations. Newspapers oftentimes vilify conservative gifts. We saw the left in the Congress attack those who were involved with the Swiftboat effort four years ago, and they attempted to hold up their Senate confirmation because they contributed to those. So the left knows what they’re doing in this respect.

Now, in the book *Funding Fathers*, we particularly concentrate over a couple of chapters on two very significant sets of gifts that had a dramatic impact in campaigns. The first was done by Dean Clarence Manion. In the 1958 elections, fifty years ago, the landscape looked very similar to what it does today. Republicans had a president that had been considered tired by most of the American people. The left had emerging younger leaders like JFK and Hubert Humphrey, and Dean Clarence Manion thought that we needed a conservative manifesto. And he got Barry

Goldwater to agree to put one out. He thought Goldwater, who was re-elected in the 1958 elections, held hope for the future. Well that book was funded by the Manion family; basically, the work was done largely on a volunteer basis, but he had also used his radio network with the Manion form and his pamphlets, as Bill mentioned, to have a network out there. He charged \$3 for the book. One dollar went to Barry Goldwater; one went to printing – and it was a local printing company called Victor Publishing; and one dollar went to spread the Goldwater movement. Well, that had a profound impact. It became a bestseller, a very popular book to this day in conservative circles.

Ronald Reagan, an actor in California at the time, read that book and was very much influenced by it, according to his own biography, *An American Life*. And he started giving speeches for Barry Goldwater which were heard by three businessmen, Holmes Tuttle, Cy Rubel, and Henry Salvatori. They put up \$100,000 so Ronald Reagan could give that speech on national television on October 27, 1964. But they also suggested he put a “begger” at the end of it asking for additional funds, which led to more than \$8 million in gifts, a record at the time. And that gave Ronald Reagan the confidence to get further involved in the political process, and to eventually run for governor of California two years later.

So what we say, in the examples that we give like these and the others in the book, is indeed that ideas do have consequences. The conservative movement knows and understands that. But gifts also have consequences. And we seek to encourage those gifts. We urge the readers to familiarize themselves with the stories in this book so that when you’re asked, “Will my gift make a difference?” they can cite case studies where those gifts indeed made profound differences to the future of our country and to the future of the world. I often close my remarks by quoting Ronald Reagan. I’ll quote Ronald Reagan but I won’t end with it. Ronald Reagan said many times, especially to young audiences, “Freedom isn’t won at any one moment in time. We must struggle to preserve freedom everyday. And freedom is never more than one generation from extinction.” It’s a very powerful message that Reagan repeated over and over again.

But I’ll go to a higher authority today. I’ll close with St. Paul’s letter to the Corinthians. He said, “The point is this. He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly and he who sows bountifully will reap bountifully. Each one must do as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for the Lord loves a cheerful giver.” What we seek to do in this book is give conservatives a reason to be more cheerful givers.

Thank you very much.

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: Aaron, sounds like you guys have done a pretty good job of suppressing conservative giving!

AARON DORFMAN: Evidently – I wasn’t aware of that! Well, good afternoon, everyone. I want to start by thanking you, Bill, and the Bradley Center for hosting the event today and for inviting me to be a panelist. It’s a great pleasure to be back here. And Mr. Robinson, I want to congratulate you on a fine book. I enjoyed reading it in preparation for this.

I want to focus my remarks on three things today. First, I want to examine the smart practices employed by conservative funders over the years that contributed to the successes of the conservative movement. Next, I'm going to challenge some of the hypotheses put forth in the book. And finally, I'll explore to what extent liberal or progressive philanthropists have adopted some of the strategies used so effectively by conservatives and what impact that may have had on the recent elections.

So, our first question: How did conservative funders shape the conservative movement? *Funding Fathers* provides some really good stories about how conservative activists and donors helped build the conservative movement. And the stories are basically consistent with the findings of NCRP's research over the past twelve years on conservative foundations. And just to give the audience a flavor of what NCRP produced on this topic over the past dozen years, I brought along the entire compendium of reports that we produced¹ – but I promise not to read to you from each of these reports. (Laughter.)

The precursor to our series of reports was our 1995 publication *Foundations in the Newt Era*. This report examined how all foundations – conservative, mainstream, and liberal – were responding to the changing policy environment brought about by Newt Gingrich in the 1994 Republican takeover of Congress. But there was a section in the middle of that report called “Conservative Foundations and Their Activist Grantees,” which was followed by a section called “The Mindset of Mainstream Foundations: Sameness Amidst Diversity.” And this juxtaposition of conservative funders with mainstream and liberal funders really set the stage for NCRP's series of reports examining the funding practices of conservative foundations.

Our first true publication in this series was *Moving a Public Policy Agenda: The Strategic Philanthropy of Conservative Foundations*. We released that one in 1997, and followed it up two years later with *\$1 Billion Dollars for Ideas: Conservative Think Tanks in the 1990s*. That was followed by our most popular publication of all time, *Axis of Ideology: Conservative Foundations and Public Policy*, which we released in March 2004.² Next was *Funding the Culture Wars: Philanthropy, Church and State*, published in January 2005 and followed later that same year by *The Waltons and Wal-Mart: Self-Interested Philanthropy*. And finally, to close out this series of reports, we published *Strategic Grantmaking: Foundations and the School Privatization Movement* in December 2007, which was discussed here at a Bradley Center panel about a year ago.³ We have no plans for any future reports in this series.

Now I wish I could take credit for this great series of publications, but in the interest of full disclosure I do need you to know that all these reports were conceived of and funded before I

¹ The NCRP reports to which Dorfman refers can be ordered from NCRP, online at <http://www.ncrp.org/publications>.

² The Bradley Center held a panel discussion on this publication on March 24, 2004, entitled “‘Axis of Ideology,’ or Excess of Mythology?” A completed, edited transcript of the discussion can be found on Hudson Institute's web site at http://pcr.hudson.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=publication_details&id=3260&pubType=PCR_Speeches.

³ The Bradley Center held a panel discussion on this publication on December 14, 2007, entitled “Choice Grants: Foundations and the School Choice Movement.” A completed, edited transcript of that event can be found on Hudson Institute's web site at http://pcr.hudson.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=publication_details&id=5368&pubType=PCR_Speeches.

arrived at NCRP, and my predecessors Bob Bothwell and Rick Cohen really deserve the credit along with, of course, the authors of each report. Only the final one in this series came out under my watch, and as I said, it was already in the works when I arrived at NCRP.

But nevertheless, I want to share some of our key observations about conservative foundations that I think are relative today and are reflected, to some extent, in *Funding Fathers*. One of our key findings was that conservative foundations bring a real clarity of vision and a strong political intention to their grantmaking programs. I think this is clear throughout Mr. Robinson's book, as he shows us how these unsung heroes of the conservative movement used their funding to advance a clear conservative agenda. They didn't fund conservative causes by accident; there was a clear vision of building a conservative political future. NCRP also found that conservative foundations invest in the marketing of conservative policy ideas. And this was evidenced in Robinson's book in many places, but especially in the chapters on Henry Regnery and William Buckley, Jr. NCRP also found that conservative foundations support the development of public intellectuals and policy leaders, and I thought the chapter describing the support of Ronald Reagan's speaking tour across California before he became governor mirrored this finding really quite well.

Another one of our key findings was that conservative foundations realize they need to fund policy and advocacy work at all levels of government, not just focusing on the federal level – and also that they need to fund a wide range of institutions, recognizing that a variety of strategies strengthens a movement. Now I really didn't see as much evidence of this as I expected to in Mr. Robinson's book, but I think that's primarily because the book is focused on the early roots of the conservative movement, and that this emphasis on funding a diversity of strategies developed later in the conservative movement's evolution.

Finally – and most importantly, one of our consistent findings over the years is that conservative funders have been successful because they tend to focus on building strong institutions by providing their grantees with long-term, unrestricted general operating support. This allows the grantees to have flexibility to pursue policy opportunities as they arise, and it gives the organizations the freedom to spend the funding as they best see fit. The profile in Chapter 8 of Joseph Coors, Sr. makes this point quite clearly. Coors was a founding donor of the Heritage Foundation and continued to provide significant funding for decades. He didn't cut them off after three years and expect them to become self-sufficient, as far too many foundations do these days with their grantees.

So, Mr. Robinson, I am in strong agreement with several points you raise in the book, and let me point those out, and then I'll get to the areas of disagreement. *Funding Fathers* is fundamentally a celebration of conservative donors, and while I certainly don't share your political leanings or those of the donors and the activists featured in your book – I was mentored by the late Senator Paul Wellstone, after all – but I do agree that one of the best uses of philanthropic dollars is for advocacy to shape public policy. Foundation dollars are extremely limited in relationship to both government spending and to contributions by individuals. And because of this, foundations must be strategic in their giving if they hope to have any impact at all. And focusing on shaping public policy is good strategic philanthropy.

Additionally, you suggest on page 10 that conservative donors shouldn't give to universities because there's little guarantee that the funds will be used as intended. And you suggest that instead donors should fund research or activist organizations and therefore get more "bang for their buck." And I couldn't agree more. Any major donor, liberal or conservative, who's looking to have real impact in the war of ideas will get better results by funding policy advocacy, community organizing, or other more activist approaches, rather than by funding universities.

In Chapter 1, you celebrate William Volker's decision to spend down the endowment of his foundation within thirty years of his death. I, too, am a fan of spend-down foundations. While NCRP acknowledges that perpetual foundations have much to offer society, we really have begun to celebrate spend-down foundations. There is no compelling reason to warehouse tax-exempt dollars forever. These partially public dollars held by foundations should be put to use serving a public purpose through higher payouts or through investment strategies that are supportive of achieving the foundation's mission. And many spend-down foundations have a great sense of urgency about their work, which I think contributes to better philanthropy, and I think we're already seeing some real momentum in this direction especially among newer donors.

Our final point of agreement is on the problem of anonymous giving. Ron (Robinson), you think that it's a problem that more people don't know about these wonderful philanthropists or "funding fathers," and that anonymous giving makes it difficult to attract new donors. And it's no secret where I come down on anonymous giving as well. Openness and transparency is desperately needed in philanthropy; NCRP has pushed for decades for foundations to be more transparent. We started the movement that led to the now-common practice of publishing annual reports, and we think there's an obligation for significant disclosure because foundation dollars are partially public dollars, as I argued a couple of weeks ago at the Philanthropy Roundtable annual meeting. Now I know that your reasons for discouraging anonymous giving are different from mine, but it is good to know that we have some common ground on this point.

But I do want to challenge a few of the assertions that you make in the book. And forgive me if I get a little worked up here. On page 2 you write the "the Left" – with a capital *L* – is attempting to suppress conservative funding and philanthropy. You made that argument again in your remarks today. I really haven't heard, other than the media angle, any convincing evidence that you've indicated about how the left is attempting to suppress conservative philanthropy. If you've got some other evidence of the left suppressing those gifts that you didn't put in the book, I'd love to hear it today.

Second point, about the media: You assert that the media covers favorably liberal philanthropy, but ignores or disparages conservative giving. And you then pick and choose particular stories that support your claim. Using that methodology, anyone could make just about any point that he or she wanted to make. Media bias *is* rampant, I'll grant you that. But it's rampant in all directions, depending on which media outlet you're referring to. There are credible studies that show the media is biased, generally speaking, in a pro-conservative fashion, and so I don't think it's credible to assert that the media, as an institution, is favoring liberal philanthropy over conservative philanthropy. Look at how FOX News and others went absolutely ballistic this year over the credible and excellent philanthropy practiced by the Woods Fund of Chicago, where

Barack Obama formerly served on the board. The Woods Fund is one of the nation's best small grantmakers, and they got absolutely battered this year by the media. So I don't want to hear about the media favoring liberal philanthropy. And even the Clinton Global Initiative and Clinton Foundation have been taking a beating in recent days. More of the criticism there is warranted, but the liberal media you pretend exists in your book certainly hasn't been giving former President Clinton a pass.

Third point: If this book is about the big funders of the conservative movement, I do think you missed the boat by not including a little more about some of the largest and most influential conservative donors that were identified in NCRP's reports. The book would have been stronger with some chapters or something about Scaife, Bradley, Olin, Hume, and the Walton family. I recognize you were focusing on the roots of the movement, but there's a gap in the history there, and I think it would have been stronger if you'd included that.

But here's the \$64,000 question: If these conservative "funding fathers" were so effective, why did the conservative movement fail to produce a different outcome a couple of weeks ago, on November 4? Some are saying, after all, that this election was the death knell for the conservative movement. Whether or not that's true, it certainly wasn't a good election cycle for conservatives. You suggest on page 11 and elsewhere that conservative donors and foundations have been more strategic and effective in their giving than have their liberal or mainstream counterparts. And as recently as a few years ago, NCRP certainly agreed with you. Quoting from *Axis of Ideology*, which we released in 2004, we wrote, "While it is true that there are more mainstream foundations with greater assets than conservative foundations, conservative foundations have been so successful because they have acted strategically with their limited funds." And we also argued that, "undoubtedly, conservative values, goals, ideas, and ideals have become the norm in the United States' politics. It would be difficult to argue that the political right is not winning in this country, as it dominates at all levels and branches of government."

What a difference four years makes. The political climate has obviously shifted 180 degrees. Democrats control both houses of Congress with sizable majorities, and a liberal Democrat – a former community organizer – is the president-elect. Now, I don't think any reasonable person would argue that philanthropy was *the* driving force behind this shift. But did foundations and wealthy individual donors have some influence, some impact, on this shift? I would argue that they did. And, in fact, you suggest on page 12 of the book that liberal groups have studied conservative foundations and tried to emulate their strategies. This election, I think, provides some evidence that perhaps it's working.

Back when NCRP first published *Moving a Public Policy Agenda*, we found that right-wing public policy institutions like the Heritage Foundation and the American Enterprise Institute had about four times as much revenue collectively as the left-wing public policy institutions like the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and the Center for Community Change. Now, we haven't run a new set of numbers on this, but my sense is that the left-leaning institutions are catching up. The Center for American Progress was founded in 2003 and now has a budget of well over \$20 million, most of which was contributed by foundations and wealthy individual donors. Media Matters for America was founded in 2004 and had a budget of \$9 million in 2007. The

Center for Community Change had a budget of more than \$12 million in 2007. So, perhaps it's true that liberal donors who studied and tried to emulate conservative strategies made a real difference that contributed to this profound leftward shift that just occurred at the polls. I don't have any hard evidence of this, as I said, but it seems to me that the playing field is getting more level in terms of resources.

That said, the real truth is that factors beyond philanthropy were probably much more significant and influential in causing this leftward shift that we just experienced. The war, the economy, and other factors surely had more to do with the results than the funding provided for policy advocacy on either side. That doesn't mean philanthropy isn't a relevant part of the equation; it's just probably not the most important factor.

As strategic as some donors have been, many glaring problems remain. Foundations of all political stripes don't do nearly enough to benefit economically disadvantaged populations, communities of color, or other marginalized groups. Overall, foundations funding for social justice remains a *ridiculously* small percentage of all grants given, and foundations on the left and the right often burden their grantees with ridiculous application and reporting requirements, and provide short-term, project-specific grants. And both conservatives and liberals sometimes abuse their foundations for personal gain. So there's more than enough praise and blame to go around, and I look forward to further discussion on these issues.

(Applause.)

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: While John (Miller) is making his way to the podium, I'd like to plug a previous panel we at the Bradley Center had on the last issue Aaron (Dorfman) addressed, the replication of the conservative apparatus on the left in the past few years. The panel was a discussion of Byron York's book *The Vast Left Wing Conspiracy*, which was one of the first conservative studies of this effort to replicate the conservative apparatus, and we've had York back on a couple of occasions since then. So if you're interested in some background material, it's available on our web site.⁴

John?

JOHN J. MILLER: Thank you, Bill (Schambra) and Krista (Shaffer) and Hudson Institute for putting this on, and thank you all (to audience) for coming. It's good to see some friends in the audience, (names names).

I read in some newspapers online last night and this morning that our President-Elect apparently intends to nominate Tom Daschle for secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services; Janet Napolitano for the Department of Homeland Security; I guess Greg Craig for White House counsel; and maybe Hillary Clinton for secretary of state. I realize that my patience with the Obama administration has already run its course and is now officially exhausted.

⁴ The Bradley Center's discussion, entitled "How Vast the Left Wing Conspiracy?" was held on November 30, 2006. Panelists included Byron York, Rob Stein, and Gara LaMarche. A completed, edited transcript can be found online at http://pcr.hudson.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=publication_details&id=4331&pubType=PCR_Speeches.

(Laughter.)

JOHN J. MILLER: But I had to remind myself also that really this is also a moment for conservatives to step away from politics. We need to remain engaged, of course, but also step away from politics to a certain extent and think about first principles. And with that in mind, and in that spirit, I'd like to tell a joke about politicians, if you'd like to hear one. And it's this:

Three surgeons were debating with each other what type of people they like to perform surgery on the best. The first one said that he preferred architects because before he makes his first incision, he can look at the blueprints. Everything is laid out clearly, and he can see where all the parts are going to be. He can look at the plans and literally map his strategy before he goes in and does the surgery.

The second surgeon told the others that he preferred electricians, because one he's inside actually doing the surgery, everything is color coded. He knows where all the parts go, and he doesn't have to do any prior planning. It's really very easy.

The third surgeon said that he preferred politicians. As the others rushed to question him, he offered in his defense that politicians are simple to operate on because they have no heart, no guts, and no spine, and the head and the butt are interchangeable. (Laughter.)

So I guess we're down on politicians on the right at the moment!

Last week I was on the *National Review* cruise. This is a fundraiser we do occasionally for the magazine. It was the largest one ever that the magazine has done; there were over seven hundred people on it. And some of us on the staff were concerned that it was going to be a really depressed group of people – you know, like we were going to leave Fort Lauderdale with seven hundred people and return with four hundred. (Laughter.)

Thankfully, the mood was quite upbeat – I think partly because a lot of conservatives had internalized what was about to happen, but also because they welcomed the opportunity that was before us, to a certain extent. I mean, they did not relish what happened on election day, but they welcomed the opportunity to get back to first principles and a reconsideration of them. And we're at a good moment for that because of the rout that took place! It was at the latest 1992 when conservatives – and Republicans, by extension – last found themselves in this position. Probably, though, it was more like 1976 or even 1964.

I should say this: It's not right to talk about a death knell, although Aaron mentioning that he has no further plans to issue reports on conservative philanthropy is a bit worrisome –

(Laughter.)

JOHN J. MILLER: – and when he looked at Ron (Robinson) just now and said that he wants evidence of suppression of conservative philanthropy, I was worried he wasn't looking for evidence as much as *ideas*. (Laughter.) And for the last couple of weeks conservatives have been in phase of political recriminations and tactical reconsiderations. That will go on a little bit

longer. But conservatives are fully entering a moment of a reappraisal. Just yesterday the National Review Institute had a day-long conference that considered some of these themes. This is why I think *Funding Fathers* is so welcome right now. I have kidded Ron about the subtitle of his book, *The Unsung Heroes of the Conservative Movement* – and yet its third chapter is on William F. Buckley, Jr., who is not exactly “unsung.” But there are some great stories in here that we haven’t heard before. We’ve heard the stories of Henry Regnery and Joe Coors, but not the extent that they’re told in this book. Some of the other figures in this book are going to be completely new to people who haven’t studied – really studied – conservative philanthropy. I love the anecdote about Antony Fisher getting his start as a chicken egg smuggler. There are great stories in this book.

We need to think about what conservatives and conservative philanthropists should do now, given the predicament in which we find ourselves. One of the things we can do is, we can look at what liberals did when they found themselves routed just a few years ago in an election. One of the things they did is, they began to study conservative institutions, the policy infrastructure. The studies Aaron (Dorfman) was showing are just a part of that. I want to read just a couple of paragraphs from an article that was on Bloomberg.com on Monday or Tuesday. I’m just going to read the first few paragraphs of it: “Three blocks from the White House, on the 10th floor of a sleek glass building, young workers pound at computers, with giant flat-screen TVs overhead.” It sounds like a Bond villain complex! (Laughter.)

It has the look and feel of a high-tech startup. In many ways it is. The product is ideas.

Thanks in part to funding from benefactors such as billionaire George Soros, the Center for American Progress has become in just five years an intellectual wellspring for Democratic policy proposals, including many that are shaping the agenda of the new Obama administration.

Much as the Heritage Foundation provided intellectual heft for the Republican Party in the 1980s, CAP has been an incubator for liberal thought and helped build the platform that triumphed in the 2008 campaign.

And then you scroll down a few paragraphs and it says this:

Just eight days after the Nov. 4 election, CAP released a 300,000-word volume called *Change for America: A Progressive Blueprint for the 44th President* that offers advice on issues such as economic revival and fixing the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Work on the book began almost a year ago.⁵

And it goes on to say some more. Well, this volume, *Change for America*, is modeled explicitly on what the Heritage Foundation did in 1980 when it put out a huge book – it wasn’t a book, actually, it was a twenty- or thirty-volume series of books called *Mandate for Leadership*. This was sort of the playbook of the Reagan administration – or that’s what it was advertised as when it was published. It was a magnum opus of public policy wonkery when it came out in 1980. And it influenced a lot of things the Reagan administration did. They found people to staff positions

⁵ Edwin Chen, “Soros-Funded Democratic Idea Factory Becomes Obama Policy Font,” *Bloomberg.com*, November 18, 2008.

based on who had written for it. In any case, that series has gone down in think-tank lore on both the left and right as one of the most influential publications a think tank has ever put out. And since it came out, every other think tank has tried to replicate it to a certain extent. It was a massive project – these are phone-book size volumes. And Heritage has put out several more. Now we see the Center for American Progress doing the exact same kind of thing, which I think is revealing.

The other point I'll make is that when my third book – on the John M. Olin Foundation – came out, I knew that it would have the least commercial potential of the three, and that it was going to be of enormous interest to a very small number of people. It's the history of a foundation, for crying out loud! But one of the groups most interested in it were the *liberals*. The book came out about three years ago, and it was reviewed in all of the places that I thought it would be reviewed in,⁶ but I started getting calls from reporters at *The Nation* who wanted to learn a little bit about the internal workings of the John M. Olin Foundation. George Lakoff, the Berkeley professor who advises the Democratic Party, invited me to a conference he was giving. These people wanted to study this book I'd written, and more importantly they wanted to learn how the Olin Foundation worked; what did it do right, and how can liberals emulate it? What about the Olin Foundation can serve as a model for liberal philanthropy and perhaps turn the tables on the political environment in this country.

In the book, I just tried to tell a narrative history of the conservative movement through the lens of a particular foundation that was providing funding for a lot of the intellectual activity on the right. I could have written the book to be like a really, really long annual report, but I didn't want to do that. So it's actually a narrative history of conservatism, but told through the lens of this foundation – what it was it funding, and why it was making certain decisions, strategically and so forth.

I liken the conservative movement vis-à-vis the Olin Foundation to a NASCAR race where you have different vehicles zipping around the race track, and just about every one of them has an Olin sponsorship bumper sticker on, and several of the real grand champions of racing are actually Olin vehicles almost completely. When you look at the movement, you see the Olin Foundation all over the place.

At the end of the book, at the end of this narrative history, I try and draw out some of the narrative lessons from the foundation. Conservatives and liberals both say that this is a foundation that operated very well. So what did the foundation do right that made it work so well? I outlined several things – about board size, for example, as well as how to hire staff, the sunset provision and the idea that a foundation can expire. I listed a number of things like this that thought contributed to the good management of these funds while it was still in existence. These were lessons that really any philanthropy could benefit from reading; they're not right-wing or left-wing, but just basic best practices and sound policy for running a foundation.

⁶ The Bradley Center hosted a panel discussion of the book on December 8, 2005. Panelists included Natalie Ambrose, Jeff Krehely, Hillel Fradkin, and John Miller. A complete, edited transcript of the event can be found online at http://www.hudson.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=HUDSON_upcoming_events&id=223.

But at the very end I said, this is not what made the Olin Foundation great. It did these things right, and if it hadn't done a number of these things right, it probably wouldn't have been very effective. But really what mattered most, the reason why the Olin Foundation worked so well, was because of the particular ideas it was supporting. It offered good solutions to the public policy problems of its time – sensible ones that mattered, connected, and made a difference. So it wasn't a matter of just getting the mechanics of it right. It was a matter of having the right ideas. And of course, as we know, not all ideas are equal.

For conservatives, this is a moment to return to first principles – basic ideas. It's an opportunity we haven't had for quite some time; certainly for the last eight years it has been difficult. Politics has been more on the minds of many in the conservative movement. And this probably goes back even more than eight years, to the Gingrich Congress. It has been a long time since conservatives were fully the opposition party the way they are now. The good news is that conservatives are often quite good at being in the opposition. The movement was born out of a reaction to the New Deal and its expansion in the 1950s and the 1960s, and I suspect that it can thrive again today.

Ideas, though, will always need venture capital, and that's where philanthropists come in. This type of philanthropy, public policy philanthropy, is a peculiar kind of philanthropy. Most philanthropists like to give money to causes that aren't nearly as political or controversial – hospitals, medical research, museums, orchestras, and that sort of thing. This is a particular kind of philanthropy, but it does need a lot of support in order for conservatives to make the most of the moment we find ourselves in.

There are several different types of ideas we can pursue. There are very mainstream ones that we've been talking about for quite some time. Conservatives still have a lot of good ideas. They haven't always sold in the political marketplace, however. An example, I think, would be school choice. When you talk about lousy public education in this country and why we decided to let the people who run the post office also educate our children, the question of what do we do about it comes up. School choice is a great conservative answer to this problem. It has not really ever been fully tested anywhere, partly because Americans have been resistant to the idea. And we can discuss why that is. But it remains a good market-based solution these challenges, and it is an area of what ought to be continuing activity for philanthropists, I think, to learn about what is actually going on and to find new angles and new opportunities, and hopefully come to a time when Americans are fed up enough with the quality of public education that they want to do something a little more drastic about it.

The same could be said for the upcoming crisis of public pensions. We find ourselves in a financial crisis right now. We will be in one again when the bills for our public pensions come due. So, again, there are free-market ideas for Social Security privatization or personalization. There are market-based ideas for delivering health care and improving Medicare and Medicaid, and so on and so forth. These are good ideas that conservatives and policy gnomes in the basement of the Heritage Foundation and the American Enterprise Institute have been working on for years, and they will continue to need the support of philanthropists in order to refine, innovate, and grapple with these problems as they continue to unfold.

Because this is such a good opportunity to focus on ideas, I think we're also going to need to

think of really crazy ones that conservatives have not thought of before to address new problems that we haven't encountered previously. It's difficult for conservatives to think like radicals, but to a certain extent that's going to have to happen now. And it will take philanthropists with a kind of entrepreneurial vision to engage in these types of ideas. And I don't know what these ideas will be. I've got a few nutty ones of my own – for example, I think parents should be able to vote on behalf of their minor-aged children – (laughter) – which we can have a long discussion about later. But the fact is, completely unexpected ideas will need support in order to think through and study and discuss and refine and get ready for a moment when they can catch on politically and actually do some good.

This will take an entrepreneurial streak from philanthropists, and it will take exactly the kinds of philanthropists that Ron (Robinson) and Nicole (Hoplin) write about in *Funding Fathers* – people who are willing to take enormous risks, who are not scared of failure, and who understand that if you aren't having failures you aren't taking enough risks. The late Sir John Templeton, who passed away in July, is considered probably the greatest investor of the twentieth century; he used to say that if two thirds of his investments worked out, he was very, very happy – which of course meant that one third of his investments failed. The greatest investor of the twentieth century expected one third of his investments to fail. So I think philanthropists should be willing to take some similar types of risks, and to accept a certain amount of failure, knowing that by risking failure you will have great achievements.

And as a final point, I'd like to share with you a quote from Bob Novak, the popular newspaper columnist. He wrote of “the long descent of the Republican Party into irrelevance, defeat, and perhaps eventual disappearance.” Bob Novak – he's on the team, right? “The long descent of the Republican Party into irrelevance, defeat, and perhaps eventual disappearance.” The bad news, now, is that a guy like Bob Novak would be so utterly pessimistic about the GOP. The good news is that he wrote those words after the election of Jimmy Carter.

(Laughter.)

We know that things can change quickly, and they can change consequentially. We should not be too depressed about the situation in which we now find ourselves. As conservatives we should look at it as an opportunity.

And I'll make a very, very final point: In my book about the Olin Foundation, one of the lessons that all philanthropies should learn is that successful philanthropy especially in the area of public policy requires patience and serendipity. You need to make investments for the long term. You need to understand that an investment in welfare reform in about 1983 or 1984 didn't pay off for twelve years, but when it did, it paid off in spades. And serendipity means that some of your greatest successes are going to be complete surprises to you, so that when you gave Allen Bloom a \$10,000 grant in 1982, not knowing what he is going to produce, you ended up five years later with a game-changing book about higher education in America. You don't know where successes are going to come from. They will surprise you, and you need to be patient.

Thank you.

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: I'll let Ron respond in a second, but first, I think it's clear and very interesting – to pick up on comments that both John (Miller) and Aaron (Dorfman) made – that in the early days of conservative philanthropy, in stark contrast to today's philanthropists, conservative philanthropists weren't worried so much about concrete, immediate, measurable results. If you look at the literature on philanthropy today – if you read any issue of *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* or if you go to the web site of any foundation – you will hear the constant refrain about measurable outcomes, effectiveness, and concrete results.

Of course, the early conservative funders wanted to spend their money wisely, but they wanted to fight for what they regarded as the cause of righteousness – and it looked like it was the losing cause. This is what we tend to forget, looking at it in retrospect. These guys really did think, along with Whittaker Chambers, that they were on the losing side of history but they were willing to fight the good fight. And I think that that might have been what fueled a lot of the entrepreneurialism and venturesomeness of those early philanthropists. They really did just say, look, we're going to fight this fight, and we really don't care, necessarily, about outcomes. It's too much to hope for victory. In many cases, they simply hoped to slow down the bad guys a little bit; it was too much to think that someday there might be, let's say, a Ronald Reagan.

But Ron (Robinson), why don't you go ahead and respond. Do you have any evidence at all of the left's denigration of conservative philanthropy?

RON ROBINSON: Suppressing conservative philanthropy?

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: Yes –

RON ROBINSON: Well, first, I appreciate the areas where Aaron (Dorfman) agreed with the book. I don't take those lightly. He enumerated more of those than where he disagreed, and I appreciate that and understand the progress the left – the progressives, if you want to call them progressives – have made in those areas.

Look, the reason I went right to the campaign contributions and how much of an advantage the left had – a huge advantage, hundreds of millions of dollars – this year is because the left has spent the last thirty-four years regulating campaigns, beginning with the so-called (inaudible) campaign reforms in 1974. It was conservatives who fought those; it was Bill Buckley's brother Senator Jim Buckley (R-NY) who along with ACU brought the case *Buckley v. Valeo*, which struck down some of those provisions that the left had.

And by the way, there is just no question why John McCain, in his later years, in one of his famous reaches across the aisle, joined the left in this. The left has been for these campaign restrictions across the board. Conservatives have fought them. The most recent Supreme Court case was *Wisconsin Right to Life*. I'm on the board of *Citizens United*, from which the Supreme Court just took another case challenging McCain-Feingold. The left has been for all of these campaign restrictions at every step along the way.

That's why I said that these are threshold gifts. These are the gifts that people oftentimes first give and many donors cite as their first involvement in wider philanthropy. If their candidate

wins, they feel reinforced and get positive feedback for precisely the reasons John Miller cited in terms of some of the investments – you don't know whether you are going to succeed. With a campaign gift, you do get pretty instantaneous feedback. And I premise a lot of what I had to say because I think that is a major part of the left's suppression. Just to make sure that the point is clearly understood. The effort that Dean Manion made to publish *The Conscience of a Conservative* is be illegal today; the left made it illegal today. Henry Salvatori, Holmes Tuttle, and Cy Rubel putting up \$100,000 for Ronald Reagan's speech, which transformed his life and our country – I think for the better – is illegal today. This is because the left has made those contributions illegal. They have suppressed involvement on the conservative side.

There are many examples that could extend to this. Aaron (Dorfman) mentioned his publication on foundations in the Newt (Gingrich) era. Lest we forget, a major effort the left had in attacking Newt Gingrich was because he was running an educational program as a former history professor at Kennesaw State and Reinhardt College. This was the one charge that the Democrats in the House would not relinquish against him. It was a scandal, all right. It was a scandal that those colleges had to rely upon the Speaker to convey conservative ideas. What were their faculties doing? How remiss were they? They were suppressing conservative ideas in the first instance.

But the left, of course, wanted to prevent Newt from teaching because he was the speaker of the House. Of course, he was eventually cleared in that. But the left offered no apology. They offered no indication that they had tried to suppress Newt Gingrich from teaching to those particular two colleges and the other forty-eight colleges that received that by satellite.

As an attorney, I take continuing education courses in Virginia largely deal with IRS law in this particular area. Earlier this year the IRS liberalized what 501(c)(3)-oriented universities could do in political campaigns. They know full well that that's where the left has the advantage. At the same time, the IRS sent out repeated warnings, prodded on by left-wing special interest groups, to prevent any involvement of people of faith in our churches. So I don't believe that Aaron (Dorfman) sincerely believes the left has not suppressed conservative thought. I think that was the first criticism he waged, and it is, I think, the furthest off base.

I do take his point that we didn't include Scaife, Bradley, Olin, Hume, and the Walton family. I would say that our emphasis, with the possible exception of the Volker Fund, was primarily on individual gifts. Those are the gifts that ultimately are the biggest and most influential in terms of volume on the conservative side – and this is ground that has been covered by John Miller and others. So it's a fair point; we did exclude those.

The book is not a declaration of triumphalism of the conservative movement. That is not the case. I would suggest that if you looked at the whole political landscape like a globe, and it just shifted right to left, of course you would say that the left has gained tremendously – and for some of the reasons I cited, namely the huge financial advantages they had in all of the battleground states this year because of the restrictions that were imposed and accepted by McCain. So Senator McCain certainly bears some responsibility for that. But it's not like one globe just totally shifting.

I would say that the public policy process is more like a Rubik's cube, where you can have some

moving to the left at the same time as you have some – on the free market or other ideas – moving to the right. It's not a zero-sum game where the left wins everything and the conservatives lose everything or vice versa. The left won this campaign by 52 percent of the vote. This is not the type of mandate the Ronald Reagan received in his two presidential victories – and it was a campaign that talked about “change” and “hope,” not the most ideologically driven terms that I've heard in the American public policy process! So I wouldn't overread into the left's victories or conservatives' defeats, notwithstanding that I'm not unrealistic about the election results.

If I may say one thing about John Miller's comment, I also appreciate all of the work that John has done. I appreciate the work that both of these gentlemen (John Miller and Aaron Dorfman) have done. John has made fun of the fact that we allude to the unsung heroes of the conservative movement yet we include Bill Buckley. I dare say that the families of all of these twelve individuals that were summarized in nine chapters would not view themselves as totally unsung. But Buckley is the most glaring example of that.

I think that what's really interesting about Buckley – I worked with him; he was really the founder of the modern Young America's Foundation and a tremendous help to myself and our organization through the years – is a side of him that a lot of people did not know, the side of his giving. He was always willing to speak to young audiences. He was always willing to help. He funded *National Review* at the outset, as we point out in the book. He gave his lecture fees and other fees throughout his entire career to help sustain *National Review*. It is probably relatively unsung that *National Review* operated at a \$25 million deficit. It is probably unsung that after three years of the Buckley family and people close to him funding *National Review*, they tried a very unique – at that time – tactic, which was to write the paid subscribers of *National Review*, which they did in 1958, and ask them to send in a gift to sustain the publication in addition to paying for their subscriptions.

So, yes, Bill Buckley is not an unsung hero of the conservative movement, but I do think his personal philanthropy – his gifts, his own efforts in that regard, his support of Young America's Foundation, which was something that we took great pride in and it was a great morale booster for our organization to get support from a colleague like the late Bill Buckley – is a part of his life that is I think somewhat unsung. I guess I would defend it in that respect.

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: Great! Just a quick footnote to that remark about Bill Buckley's personal philanthropy: I was struck by the fact that at the conference John Miller was talking about a second ago – yesterday at the National Review Institute – Dr. Burt Folsom, an historian who teaches at Hillsdale College and gave the luncheon speech yesterday based on his book *New Deal or Raw Deal?* – so you get some sense of where he might be going with his argument, began by telling the audience that Bill Buckley wrote a personal check to support that work about ten years ago. I thought that was quite interesting not only as a reflection on Bill Buckley's personal commitment to some of this work, but also because none of these mega conservative foundations that John Miller describes probably would have written that check – because “New Deal or raw deal?” is a topic that probably we would have taken a pass on at the Bradley Foundation and I dare say probably at the John M. Olin Foundation as well, for a variety of reasons which might be interesting to speculate about.

RON ROBINSON: I'm glad you mentioned that, because Burt Folsom is a classic case study himself. He was a professor at a relatively obscure campus in Kentucky, and wrote a piece for the *Wall Street Journal*. In response, his liberal colleagues on the faculty criticized him as being unprofessional for publishing something in the *Wall Street Journal* as compared to history publications. He wandered in the wilderness for years without a position on a faculty around the country. But I don't think anyone has criticized Burt Folsom's scholarship. This new book has just been released and it's too early to say, but his earlier books such as *The Myth of the Robber Barons* were largely welcomed and met with critical acclaim – acclaim certainly by free-market Nobel laureates and well known historians like Forrest McDonald. And yet it was only two or three years ago that Burt was able to find a place back in the college faculties of the country, when he went to Hillsdale College.

So these are some of the challenges that we in the conservative movement know full well, and I dare say that when the Obama administration ends four years from now (laughter), universities will be welcoming its future members as college presidents and faculty members. I would bet any amount of money that very few Bush administration officials will be going to such institutions in the days ahead. But we can watch that, Aaron (Dorfman)! (Laughter.) You and I can monitor that together.

(Laughter.)

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: Aaron, do you want to jump in here, or John (Miller)?

AARON DORFMAN: Well, I do want to make some distinctions between direct political giving and philanthropic giving. Ron (Robinson), I think you're mixing the two a bit – perhaps intentionally, and perhaps you believe that direct political giving ought to be treated the same way as charitable giving is. But most of the suppression examples you just gave are about direct political contributions, and I think that's different than saying that people are trying to suppress conservative philanthropy.

I agree that there's the benefit of which you spoke – political giving as an entry level gift leading to greater participation, greater ownership. But why does limiting the size of someone's gift inhibit anyone's participation? The Obama campaign succeeded because they got a whole lot of people to make that entry-level gift, get engaged in the campaign, put the bumper sticker on their car, talk to their neighbors, and follow it. But as long as everyone is entitled to make that entry-level gift, why should they be entitled to give every dime that they've got? The country has, at least, decided that there ought to be some limits on that so that people who are wealthy can't dominate and control the political process unnecessarily – or any more than they do already.

RON ROBINSON: Well, I answered that; I think the answer was in the Founding Fathers and the First Amendment, which allowed the free exercise of public opinion, and political speech should have been – and I believe that ultimately the courts will find will be – the most protected form of free speech. Why should it be illegal for a conservative businessman to give more than \$2,400 to the campaign when Bruce Springsteen can give multi-million dollar concerts for the Obama ticket? Why should the editors of the *Washington Post* be able to scream out every day

and influence the election so tremendously, but the person who is going about earning a different livelihood is so restricted? Our book includes great examples that Nicole Hoplin thoroughly researched, such as the Manion gift and Henry Salvatori's underwriting Ronald Reagan's speech. Such gifts have been made illegal by the left, under what it seeks to do. Those weren't corrupting in any way in the American populace. And then there are the other corrosive affects of regulations.

Look: The left loves public policy, day in and day out. They live and die by who controls government because they worship government. Conservatives by their very nature have other lives. They want to raise their own families. They want to save their own souls, if I can use that formulation. They may want to build their own businesses. To them, government is always a secondary thing. If it is illegal, if they're going to be vilified by left-wing attacks for being involved in a campaign, then they're less likely to be involved. The left knows this. Let's not be naïve about that.

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: John, do you want to get in on this?

JOHN MILLER: Well, I just think what Ron is trying to say is that Tony Rezko ought to be able to support Barack Obama as openly and as fully as he would like to.

(Laughter.)

RON ROBINSON: Apparently he has! (Laughter.)

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: Why don't we go to our audience, now, for questions and other reflections?

MARTIN MORSE WOOSTER: My question is for Mr. Robinson. When you're talking about the media not covering conservative gifts, there are two issues that come up. One, I certainly agree with you that the press has done a hatchet job on major conservative donors, particularly Richard Mellon Scaife. But I also think that one reason why gifts to liberal organizations might get more coverage than gifts to conservative ones is because they're bigger. Joan Kroc gave \$225 million to National Public Radio. I think if somebody gave \$225 million to the Heritage Foundation, that would certainly be news. But because conservative groups are smaller and less organized than the big liberal foundations are, they aren't covered as much. Isn't that more of a reason than what you're arguing?

RON ROBINSON: Well, I think if you go back to what Aaron said, the conservative foundations purportedly were better organized, and the left is catching up. So, using the logic that you used, we should have been ahead of them in gifts.

Look: In my opening remarks I gave a very small example – not small for Ms. McCarty, of course – of an individual's \$150,000 gift. Young America's Foundation is blessed to have a series of donors who have given gifts in that range. I know many conservative donors who have given scholarship funds and other gifts that are sacrificial for them even at that level. They will never get the type of attention – 613 articles – upon their death. They will never get two front-

page stories in the *New York Times*.

Henry Salvatori, if I can come back to him, is a great example. Henry Salvatori gave one of the most consequential gifts in the modern-day conservative movement and, I would dare say, for this country and for the world. The \$100,000 gift he and his colleagues Holmes Tuttle and Cy Rubel gave enabled Ronald Reagan to deliver his “Time for Choosing” speech. Ronald Reagan, in his autobiography *An American Life*, said that that speech had consequences for his life that he never anticipated. It led ultimately to him becoming governor of California, president of the United States, winning the Cold War, reducing the tax rates from 70 percent to 28 percent, and all of the consequences of those achievements. None of that would have happened had it not been for Henry Salvatori’s role at that critical moment – by Ronald Reagan’s writing, by what we write in the book, and by, I think, general admission on the left and right.

When Henry Salvatori passed away, the *Los Angeles Times* – he lived in the LA area – wrote a story, his obituary, recounting that when he was seventy-five years old, some thugs broke into his house. When he tried to get a gun to protect his wife, and they took the gun away from him. The *LA Times* made him look foolish – like, here was this old man, seventy-five years old, trying to protect his wife and home. That was the heart of his obituary.⁷ There was no mention whatsoever of this historic gift. There was no mention of his gifts to other public policy groups. Our first lecture series at Young America’s Foundation was funded by Henry Salvatori. A Salvatori gift sent Bill Bennett out on the road in advance of his *Book of Virtues*. A Salvatori gift sent Ed Meese out to talk about the Founding Fathers’ visions. These gifts were very consequential gifts.

I don’t fault the *LA Times* for not writing about Young America’s Foundation. They were out there, and they could have written that. But I do suggest that this type of media reporting, which leaves out these great, consequential gifts, deprives the conservative movement of the positive feedback that’s so important. Our effort with *Funding Fathers* is at least to begin the process – or further the process, if you will, because John Miller contributed greatly to it before us – of creating greater understanding of the impact of these gifts within the conservative community. And I don’t rely on the mainline news media to tell these stories. I’m not down across the street knocking on the door of the *Washington Post*, saying, why don’t you report this? We published our own book to get the story out.

So it’s not pointing the finger at someone else; it’s just trying to correct the imbalance in the way this has been handled in the past.

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: Ron, your comments bring to mind one particular instance of this recently – about two years ago Diane Knippers, who had been the director of the Institute for Religion and Democracy (IRD), died, as you know. IRD is a small but very influential think tank in the area of religion, cultural matters, and popular issues. The *Washington Post* saw fit, in Knippers’ obituary, to list the controversial conservative donors who supported her organization. *In her obituary*. They couldn’t resist citing Bradley, Olin, et cetera, as these dark figures lurking in the background of this terrific person. John?

⁷ Kenneth Reich, “Henry Salvatori, GOP Kingmaker, Dies,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 8, 1997. Online at <http://articles.latimes.com/1997/jul/08/local/me-10735> (last accessed December 10, 2008).

JOHN MILLER: I basically agree with Ron (Robinson) on the point about disparity. But if I had my choice, I'd almost rather *not* have more coverage of conservative philanthropy. I'd rather have more coverage of left-wing philanthropy than we see right now.

Two years ago you probably all heard about the biggest philanthropic gift of the year, which was Warren Buffett basically sending billions and billions of dollars to the Gates Foundation. It was a huge gift – if it wasn't the largest gift ever, it was certainly the largest of that year by a lot. It was big news. The second largest gift of 2006 – which you probably haven't heard about – was made by a couple called Herb and Marion Sandler, who had just sold a savings and loan they founded, called Golden West. They sold it to Wachovia. They pocketed \$2.4 or \$2.5 billion in the deal, and they gave the bulk of it to something called the Sandler Foundation. Well, Golden West happened to be making a bunch of bad loans in the residential housing market in California and Florida especially. Wachovia bought it, and we all know what happened to Wachovia. And if you read the obituaries that business writers have written for Wachovia, they all point to the acquisition of Golden West as the moment when the time bomb starting ticking. It detonated, of course, about two months ago.

Herb and Marion Sandler still have their money, and their foundation still has about \$1 billion in its bank account. Right now it is funding a bunch of extreme left-wing causes. It is bankrolling left-wing groups. And it intends, I believe, to spend out – which means that to spend this kind of money over the next I-don't-know-how-many years, it's going to be giving away north of \$100 million or \$200 million a year pretty soon. Some of this is going to asthma research and medical causes, but a big chunk of it is going to left-wing advocacy. And you didn't hear about that – unless you read my article about it in *National Review*! (Laughter.)

AARON DORFMAN: If I could just say a quick word on this. I think that the media in general doesn't understand or report on philanthropy very comprehensively or well. It's almost random which ridiculous story will capture the attention of a reporter. They switch them out. It is very low on the priority list, and the people who get assigned are expecting to have the “philanthropy beat” – if there even is one – for only a year or so while they work their way up to more important stories to cover. I don't know about you guys, but I'm constantly explaining how things work to green reporters. And often what gets covered by the media is your basic human-interest charity story; there is very little coverage of more thoughtful or strategic giving.

BROOKE GREEN, Clare Boothe Luce Policy Institute: This year we saw a real lack of conservative leadership on the election field, and I think conservative voters recognize this as a big problem that needs to be addressed in the future. A couple of times it was mentioned that it takes time for philanthropic investments to come to fruition – decades, you know. And I am just wondering, are conservative donors ready to make that investment right now after the election results that we saw? If so, how can we inspire such sacrificial gifts and help supporters see that it really does take money to build up the next generation of conservative leaders?

RON ROBINSON: Brooke, it's a good question. I think that, first, you will not hear anything or read anything in Nicole Hoplin's and my book that criticizes the level of gifts. I don't think we would start with that premise. Actually, there is an outstanding book, Arthur Brooks' book *Who*

*Really Cares: The Surprising Truth About Compassionate Conservatism.*⁸ He was a professor at Syracuse University at the time, and he pretty much expected to find different results – I don't know why – but he found that conservatives across the board more generous than their progressive counterparts – that is, conservatives in *all* economic groups, giving everything from financial gifts to blood and other gifts.

So the question is not so much about the amount conservatives are giving, but to which institutions they're directing those funds. This was alluded to in our introduction: A lot of conservatives have given gifts to major universities, which have not applied those gifts as the donors thought they would. There are many case studies on this, and it has received a lot of attention. It may suppress further gifts among conservatives, but it is a topic that bears some looking into. And early on in this discussion I think we agreed that if your gift is aimed at helping conservatives or help progressives, it is probably better given to a conservative or progressive advocacy group than to a university, which may filter it out in some other ways that probably will dilute the donor's intent.

Our public policy officials also need to understand – I hope that no leader on the conservative side will ever again make the same mistake that John McCain made not only in not competing for funds in a general election, but in falling into the trap of thinking that the left really believes in these restrictions in campaigns. The left believed this only to the extent that they were behind conservatives, in the past. As soon as they had an opportunity, with McCain at the head of the ticket, to break ahead and get a tremendous advantage, they seized it. I hope that conservatives will never make that mistake again.

I dare say, though, that the references to the balance of those institutions – it's not just what the McCain campaign or the Obama campaign spent in the general election. When these laws were enacted, huge amounts of left-wing money was totally excluded from the formulas – what the labor unions have done. When you compare left-wing institutions to conservative institutions, sometimes it's laughable. If you take a group like the National Right to Work Committee and compare it to some left-wing think tank, you might say that they are comparable institutions – but the left wing has the political operation of the AFL-CIO, and they have the political operation of the NEA when it comes to educational institutions. So you may have somewhere in the public policy process a conservative think tank with \$10 million or \$20 million and a left-wing think tank with \$10 million or \$20 million, but you miss the imbalance when you ignore the NEA, the AFL-CIO, and all of these lavishly funded special interest groups that are allowed basically to participate in a campaign with a whole different set of rules than businesses are. Conservatives need to address that as well.

JOHN MILLER: Brooke (Green), you ask a great question. First of all, there are some positive signs that a number of philanthropists are thinking in these terms. It's hard to know where some of these foundations are going or how much of an impact they'll have, ultimately, but there is some new money coming online. While the Olin Foundation has spent out, and so that's a pot of money that isn't there anymore, there are some organizations coming in to fill that gap.

⁸ On January 26, 2007, Arthur Brooks was featured on a Bradley Center panel about *Who Really Cares* called "Why Giving Matters." A complete transcript can be found online at http://www.hudson.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=publication_details&id=4441&pubType=HI_Speeches.

But you ask a great question: How do you educate these donors to do the right thing, to understand what the opportunities are, and to make the most of their money? The first thing they should do, obviously, is read my book –

(Laughter.)

JOHN MILLER: – *The Gift of Freedom*, which explains a lot of that. But one of the things that I’ve learned in studying philanthropy – and I’m sure that Aaron (Dorfman), Ron (Robinson), and Bill (Schambra) would agree with this – is that it’s really, really easy to give money away poorly. There’s no one who will say, “I’m not going to take your money!” So it’s just very easy to make a bad grant.

Now, it’s also easy, as we’ve learned with foundations, to set them up poorly, to create them in ways so that the intent of the donor is not honored over many years. If you think of some of the big left-wing foundations – the Ford Foundation, the John T. MacArthur Foundation – the people who supplied the money for those foundations would not recognize what their foundations are doing in their name today. They would be outraged by what is happening to them. But to a certain extent, it’s their own fault because they did not set up their foundations in such a way to guarantee that such a thing would not happen. We have in the room here Martin Wooster, who has written a whole book entitled *Great Philanthropic Mistakes*.⁹ These donors are often captains of industry who devoted every waking hour of their lives to amassing fortunes. They really understood the business they were in, and they took an enormous amount of interest in making the most of it. And then when it came time at the end of their lives, they created foundations and they gave the money away and didn’t care what happened to it. This is a serious problem especially on the right, because they left does have a habit of capturing these institutions.

Fortunately, I think that conservatives are doing a much better job of donor education – telling donors, for example, that the worst thing you can possibly do is write a check to your alma mater to create a chair in capitalism in the economics department, because they will put a Marxist in that position and it will be there forever with the endowment that you just gave them. I think a lot of donors are beginning to understand this because there have been so many bad examples out there for them to learn from. But it is a process of continual education – because these people are doing it for the first time every time, and they need to learn from the mistakes that others have made before them.

RON ROBINSON: They need to read John (Miller)’s book, but they also need to read *Funding Fathers*!

(Laughter.)

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: And in defense of Aaron (Dorfman), they should also read the NCRP reports with the possible exception of the first one, the Covington report, which was a bit shrill, I

⁹ *Great Philanthropic Mistakes* by Martin Wooster was published by Hudson Institute’s Bradley Center in 2006 and is out of print as of December 2008. An updated and revised edition will be released in early 2009. Please contact Krista Shaffer at Krista@hudson.org to pre-order your copy, or for information on obtaining the current edition.

thought. The rest of them have been very fair and very thorough, and NCRP is to be commended for that. In fact, after the publication of the one with the most inflammatory title, *Axis of Ideology*, we invited Rick Cohen, who was then head of NCRP, to come to the Bradley Center and have a conversation about it. His fellow panelists included Mike Grebe, president of the Bradley Foundation, and Adam Meyerson, who runs the Philanthropy Roundtable, a membership organization of conservative foundations.¹⁰ And it was really sort of a love fest – they more or less agreed that the report was a very fair and thorough account. And of course, the famous slide show that then went on to inspire the emulation of the conservative infrastructure – the famous slide show that the gentleman took around to various liberal donors five or six years ago – was sort of ripped off from NCRP research, more or less, without acknowledging it.

Going to John (Miller)'s point, and going back to the Harry Bradley library, it's interesting – this guy was a Midwestern manufacturer. He didn't go to Harvard. He didn't take theory courses. And yet in his library you will find probably twenty copies of works of Lenin, and three or four works of Stalin explaining Lenin. He was so determined to do the right thing with his money that he was basically reeducating himself in this war of ideas. And that's the sort of focus on ideas that we don't see in people who say, "Okay, I made the money; now someone else should give it away."

Joseph Pew is, of course, among the conservative donors whose foundation may have drifted off course a bit – and indeed, Pew was foremost among the funders of those campaign finance restrictions that we just discussed.¹¹

JOHN MILLER: Bill (Schambra), that reminds me of I think it was the Ronald Reagan line, "Nobody understands Marxism like an ex-communist."

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: Exactly!

ERNIE PREEG, Manufacturers Alliance: My question comes from Mr. Schambra's opening comment that to attract money you have to be able to show that it's likely to have an impact. And from that, you (Bill Schambra) went on to say, the way to do conservative philanthropy is to go to policy advocacy groups – and certainly not universities. Well, having been in the think tank business in recent years, I'm personally comfortable with that. But I'm very disturbed, otherwise, because over the course of my lifetime there has been this transformation of the university system. It was somewhat balanced, with American history and Western culture front and center in the liberal arts curriculum, in a positive light. Now we have this transformation to a really quite radical liberal, *madrasah* approach for our brightest people – people who are going to be future leaders in four plus years. It's very disturbing. The longer term implications are enormous.

¹⁰ A complete transcript of this March 2004 Bradley Center panel discussion, entitled "'Axis of Ideology,' or Excess of Mythology?" can be found on Hudson Institute's web site at:

http://pcr.hudson.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=publication_details&id=3260&pubType=PCR_Speeches. The NCRP reports to which William Schambra refers (and to which Aaron Dorfman referred by name on page 8 of this transcript) can be ordered from NCRP online at http://www.ncrp.org/index.php?option=com_ixxocart&Itemid=164&p=catalog&parent=3&pg=1.

¹¹ On November 23, 2004, the Bradley Center hosted a panel discussion on campaign finance reform entitled "Following the Money: Philanthropy and Campaign Finance Reform." A complete transcript can be found online at: http://pcr.hudson.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=publication_details&id=3650&pubType=PCR_Speeches

So my question is, aren't there ways – not through an endowed chair in capitalism, but aren't there ways – that conservative philanthropy can be used to target universities or colleges where there is likely to be some impact, where we can move significantly back in the direction of a more balanced and open university system?

RON ROBINSON: We cited, in the book – and I know it influenced Nicole Hoplin in the writing of it – the advice we got from Milton Friedman, because we asked him for advice in this area when he was still alive. He was emphatic about not trusting universities based upon his experience. Unfortunately, while there are a small number of institutions I think free-market oriented people can feel would be a good investment at the college or university level, I think that Milton Friedman's advice, as usual, is correct. I think it's discouraging for a lot of people who at least have some fond memories of their alma maters.

It is not included in this book, but a leader in one prominent family came to me a number of years ago, and in fact it was what led us to ask Milton Friedman and some of his colleagues to weigh in on this question. The family member was considering setting up a free enterprise chair. He also was considering some other significant gifts to the college his family had largely gone through, and in fact his grandfather had funded a civil rights related grant there. His grandfather had required that it be awarded exclusively based upon individual merit and not according to a race-based, civil rights rationale. The college had not followed his grandfather's wishes, which led me to question – and it was one of the reasons I tried to engage Milton Friedman and more established people than myself to answer this question. The head of this prominent family went on to give that gift, and I suspect that he wasn't completely happy with the result, because I noticed that he, in fact, was the funder just recently of Hillsdale expanding into this city.

There are colleges, like Hillsdale College in Michigan, that I think have a track record of fulfilling donor intent on the conservative side. There are a handful – well, I would say, there are twelve or fifteen colleges – that have a proven track record of doing what they say they're going to do to conservative supporters. But I dare say that they are few and far between.

One of the most respected individuals in this field is Bill Sturtevant, who heads up the University of Illinois Foundation. He is seeking to establish a program there that is somewhat more receptive to a balance of ideas, including conservative ideas. I know he brought out Bob Novak, a graduate of that institution, to speak there. But I also know that the faculty was up in arms, criticizing even that minor attempt to balance the university.

I noticed that the faculty of the University of Chicago, which was given such credibility and of course started with such a great gift from the Rockefeller family, were vilifying Milton Friedman, a Nobel laureate, because someone on the faculty or in the administration at the university would make a gift in honor of Milton Friedman. Not only did Milton Friedman win the Nobel Prize, but he helped recruit and had understudies at the University of Chicago who had also won the Nobel Prize in subsequent years. And yet the faculty there today don't even want to acknowledge that; they don't want to be associated with his good name.

So conservatives need to be extraordinarily cautious when they consider giving gifts to any college or university.

JOHN MILLER: That's exactly right. The point about university giving is not that it can't be done. It's that it's easy to do poorly. There are ways to do it well. The worst thing you can do is just write a blank check to an administration. The second worst thing you can do is try and target your gift, and trust the administration to carry it out. The Olin Foundation was quite successful in sponsoring law and economics programs in law schools. They would create little beachheads in some of the best schools in the country – Ivy League schools and so forth – where law and economics scholars could bring a measure of economic rationality to the law. They didn't endow these programs. They supported them generously, but they would renew the grants every couple of years. They did not create permanent endowments that would live beyond the lifespan of the foundation.

Donors who of course love giving to their alma maters don't need to give directly to the schools. You can give to student groups on campus. Some of the conservative and libertarian college newspapers on campus are 502(c)(3) organizations. The Federalist Society is in a fundamental way a campus-based organization, a student movement in a lot of ways. They have clubs at law schools. They sponsor debates. You can contribute to the intellectual life of a university by working with groups like this. Young America's Foundation brings speakers to campuses. There are lots of ways to give back to your alma mater without having to write the name of the administration on the check itself.

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: And there are occasionally conservative scholars at universities who are particularly entrepreneurial about building centers that are connected to the universities and yet retain a kind of conservative or traditional focus. I cite Robert George's work at Princeton – but in the name of full disclosure, I must say that he is a member of the board of the Bradley Foundation, my supporter, so take what I say with a grain of salt. But it is in fact a terrific center.

Aaron (Dorfman), it's interesting that you hear – and I know you've heard this a million times – conservatives lamenting the fact that progressivism owns the American universities, that basically all of the universities are on the left and we poor conservatives have to create these little islands. What's your view of that argument – how do you respond to it? Do you feel as though you have the entire American university system on your team – are you writing off to these various Ivy League universities for the blueprints for the new progressive administration?

AARON DORFMAN: Most progressives, I think, feel that universities are really quite centrist – certainly to the right of where progressives are.

RON ROBINSON: You're far out, then, huh?

(Laughter.)

AARON DORFMAN: There are notable exceptions, but they are – as most large institutions are – a little slow to move and shift, and more interested in preserving their institution than pushing the agenda that progressives try to push.

RON ROBINSON: But these institutions were not so slow this year; they held over one hundred

rallies that Senator Obama appeared at, not to mention his surrogates. So these are not institutions that are really that slow in picking up the liberal agenda – particularly when you compare it to the number of times they invite prominent conservatives, which they do very, very rarely.

We at Young America’s Foundation are proud that we’ve sponsored between six hundred and seven hundred lectures on college campuses a year. That’s a drop in the bucket compared to the leftist lectures that are funded by the universities themselves.

AARON DORFMAN: Is this a conspiracy in the administrations of the universities, or is this a –

RON ROBINSON: Absolutely.

(Laughter.)

AARON DORFMAN: – or is this a supply-and-demand sort of issue, Ron? Young people are more interested in hearing the progressive speakers.

RON ROBINSON: No – it’s not supply and demand! I will compare the attendance at our events to the average attendance at a university event any day of the week. And I would bet the amount of our lecture program that the conservatives draw consistently larger crowds than the average campus lecture program.

JOHN MILLER: One of the complaints conservatives have on these campuses is that they don’t even get a hearing. One of the reasons the Federalist Society has done well with its organizational meetings is that when it has a speaker on campus, rarely is this person just giving a lecture. It is usually a debate. And this is something conservatives often have to do just to get at the podium at a university – you need to debate somebody on the other side. That’s actually good for attendance because students like this better, and it exposes ideas – it’s actually a better environment for learning no matter what your politics. But conservatives often need to create debates just to get on campus. Liberal speakers don’t need to do the same thing.

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: To develop Aaron (Dorfman)’s point a bit, if you were to ask universities, foundations, and most nonprofits today, they would say – as Aaron suggested – that they’re not ideological one way or the other. This is because from the turn of the twentieth century on such institutions were established as professional training grounds of sorts; foundations and universities were very much interested in developing the new professions, at the core of which is this idea that professionals know better than everyday people how to solve the problems of society. So you go to college to learn how to solve problems, to be an expert in some field. I think there is a kind of undemocratic implication in there, which to conservatives looks like liberalism. But I think to progressives of Aaron’s stripe, that looks like centrism – and I think we have to take that seriously. Conservatives spend a lot of time trying to persuade centrists that they’re really liberals. And incidentally, I think both Aaron and I have had this experience of being the two folks at the opposite ends of the debate, with most of the big foundations in the center claiming that there’s “nobody here but us non-partisan types.” But in fact, there is a certain partisan implication to what they’re doing. Aaron and I might disagree

about what, exactly, that is. But I do think that the self-understanding of the universities – with the exception of the professors of critical race theory and similar strands of thought – is that they’re just teaching kids to be part of an American society that has these certain aspects, which they then describe, and it looks to a lot of us like liberalism.

More questions?

SAM BAIN, George Washington University student: With the left about to take ahold of all three branches of government, how exactly do we combat that – with their hypocrisy as far as the 501(c)(3)s on their side and even Obama’s overseas and foreign contributions? How exactly do we combat that aside from waiting another two years for an election?

RON ROBINSON: That it’s a good question, Sam. I think if you go back – one of the reasons we write so much about the early days of the conservative movement in *Funding Fathers* is so you get to see the impact of what these individuals did over their lifetime. Most of these gifts, most of these efforts began in the 1950s, when there was little likelihood in the foreseeable future that conservatives would be running government. Government’s role in society has increased so much and it has encroached on so many other areas that it is hard to separate a discussion of government from any major discussion today. Education, philanthropy, whatever it might be. Government today is so large – at the state, federal, and local levels – that it encroaches on these areas. That probably was not seen by some of these early funders. But they weren’t just focused on the 1960 election. I dare say that Bill Buckley, in founding *National Review*, didn’t think about the 1960 election. There’s the famous line from when he ran for mayor in 1965, in response to the question of what his first act would be upon learning that he was elected. He said that he would “demand a recount.” Now, of course, that’s the left’s first demand when they *lose* an election. (Laughter.)

AARON DORFMAN: Or when we have an election stolen from us!

RON ROBINSON: Look: Conservatives have opportunities to influence the state level. They have opportunities to influence the jurisprudence of this country. There’s no question that the left controls Congress and the White House in the years ahead, but the Supreme Court is more balanced, and a lot of the appeals courts and other courts leave it open to defend individual liberty and the rights of the taxpayers and the American people. I think that there are areas in our culture that we can still significantly defend. I think there are areas that, theoretically, if President-Elect Obama intends to follow through with what he promised during the campaign, I would be among the first to support him. When he tells us that he supports the rights of students to participate in ROTC, I support the President-Elect. If the President-Elect really is going to give a tax cut to 95 percent of the American taxpayers, I am supportive of him to that extent. So there are areas that I don’t expect this administration to take the lead in, but if they are consistent with what they said in the campaign, we as conservatives can get behind them. You have to make your own judgment about how realistic those claims were. I know the last two Democratic candidates for governor in my home state both either promised to lower taxes or not to raise taxes, and both of them did that as soon as they got into office. So I have a degree of skepticism. But to the extent that there are areas of common ground, we would certainly want to work with them. There are areas to influence higher education and some of the examples that were given by

supporting the institutions that do bring out the kinds of speakers you want speaking on college campuses and passing on these ideas.

So I do think that there's a lot that can be done. When you read *Funding Fathers*, you will not get the sense that when these key individuals started giving their gifts, they anticipated taking over government in two or four years. That just wasn't the case, and it's not the case in most of our efforts.

RICK HENDRIX: I'm a direct-mail fundraising consultant, so I actually benefit from the emphasis on smaller gifts – but as far as campaign finance law goes, what would be the problem with adopting a system like Virginia, where pretty much anybody can give a candidate any amount of money, but it is disclosed almost immediately, so with that transparency the voters can see who is funding which candidate and they can take that into account when they decide how they're going to vote.

RON ROBINSON: One of the points that was perhaps too subtly made in our book was that there was no corrupting influence, to use the Supreme Court's term, upon the democratic process in our country by the types of gifts that Dean Clarence Manion or Henry Salvatori made. I have no problem with those individuals making those gifts public if they so choose. But you would be hard pressed to make a case to me that they corrupted the political process in any way whatsoever. They were the reform movement.

The problem we have in society today is the left's – it's what Senator Obama said in the campaign: "Get in the face of your opposition." People who cared enough to have more of the story come out on Senator Kerry's involvement in Vietnam or Cambodia were greatly discouraged by attacks on people who funded his fellow veterans from telling what happened four years ago. The Democratic Senate has deferred to Senator Kerry, to blackball anyone who supported that. These are activities that should be allowed in the democratic process. The disclosure of it has been used by the left to intimidate people who disagree with them.

Personally, I don't care if my individual gifts are made public, but I notice that so much of the left's involvement is kept out of all of these disclosure laws. I'd like to see what the AFL-CIO did. I'd like to see what all of the ACORN representatives around the country did in the campaign. I'd like to see what all of the NEA-oriented teacher unions around the country were doing. You can't set up a set of laws that only applies to part of this political process. And that's the problem with all government regulation – once you start accepting the core premise of the left on government regulation, there's always a reason for more. They are never satisfied. There is never enough.

I think the Founding Fathers had the right idea: the God-given right of free speech, a right that was further protected by the First Amendment, should be the guiding principle for Americans – and not some bureaucrat at the Federal Election Commission.

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: Last reflections, John (Miller) or Aaron (Dorfman)?

AARON DORFMAN: Well, as I said, I think there's some admirable conservative giving, and I

think it makes our country a better place when we have a lot of donors really mixing it up and pushing their ideas – it's good for democracy. And it's good for institutional grantmakers to support policy advocacy and this kind of engagement and debate. I think that's really healthy and I wish we could see more of it.

WILLIAM SCHAMBRA: Very good! I want first to thank C-SPAN for showing up today – Book TV – and let's give our panel a round of applause. Thank you!

(Applause.)