

THE  
YOUNG AMERICANS  
FOR LIBERTY



# ACTIVIST HANDBOOK

2009 - 2010

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# EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

We are excited that you have chosen or are thinking about starting a YAL Chapter at your school. YAL National has spent several months preparing this handbook to help members start up, grow, and maintain their chapters.

We hope this handbook will help you consider all aspects of an organization, something that you can treat professionally while becoming one of the most active and recognized clubs on your campus.

We have organized this Handbook by topic. Aside from “Starting Up” a chapter - which obviously should be the first thing to accomplish, none of this is chronological. You should be constantly growing, promoting, maintaining, and publishing your Chapter through Activism, Media, Public Relations, and Development.

This guide does not and cannot address every topic. Each chapter will be unique, and the way each high school and university allows for student organizations will vary.

Because of this, please thoroughly research your school’s policy on student clubs and organizations. And expect to become frustrated by your school’s bureaucratic, arbitrary, and unconstitutional rules.

Officially registering a YAL Chapter with your appropriate school government will not only improve the effectiveness of your work, but you will be eligible for student government funding and school resources. Sure, we’d be better off with no school government at all, but that’s something your chapter can work towards, too.

In any case, please refer to this resource as often as possible, and contact YAL National for additional help at [www.yaliberty.org](http://www.yaliberty.org).

**-Editing Team**



Starting up a YAL Chapter can take some time. But don't feel like you need to complete every step before you can do anything fun. This is an organic process that may even take a year to complete.

There are four steps to becoming an official YAL Chapter: getting official school recognition, having three dues-paying members, finishing a chapter plan, and having a permanent chapter mailing address.

In this first section we have also included a chapter on holding your first informational meeting, which will be your first big publicity stunt on campus.

# STARTING UP

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# OFFICIAL SCHOOL RECOGNITION

## The Inevitable Bureaucracy

Most schools have standard procedures and paperwork that needs to be done in order to bring a new organization onto campus. All of this information should be obtainable through your school's Student Council. The overall process for starting a new organization may vary, but here are some common requirements you should expect to run into.

### Paperwork

It is inevitable that paperwork will need to be completed in order to get your chapter of YAL started. This all can be obtained through your school's website or by going to the respective office on campus responsible for all student organizations.

### Faculty Advisor

In some cases you only need an advisor to sign off on the club's spending, and in other cases they may need to get a bit more involved. If you are required to have an advisor, here are some places to start looking:

**Graduate Students.** If your school considers a graduate student with a research or teaching assistantship to be a suitable advisor, then looking there would be a good start. Seeing that YAL is targeted towards the 18-39 age range, a graduate student would be ideal since they can serve as both an advisor and a member.

**Professors.** If you are unable to obtain a graduate student as an advisor, then a professor is your next best option. Ask a professor who you have a prior relationship with or does research in the area on libertarian

politics, the constitution, or free markets to serve as an advisor. You will be likely to find a professor with interest in the liberty movement in the following departments: Business, Economics, Political Science, or Psychology. If your school has a Wine and Beer Tasting class, they might have some libertarian leanings as well.

The YAL National Office can also provide you help in searching for registered libertarian professors. Our National Field Director can help you find one. Email [contact@yaliberty.org](mailto:contact@yaliberty.org) and receive a list of for your school.

### Council Meetings

It is common that representatives of school clubs need to attend student government council meetings. Make sure you have someone to act as a student government liaison. This meetings can be painful to sit through, with students running their mouths about nothing for hours. But you need to make a good impression with these people, as they will ensure your club gets funding and appropriate access to school resources.

**Don't Fret!** YAL recognizes that this initial stage in registering your chapter can be annoyingly painful, and you might worry about finding a libertarian professor at your school. But YAL National will work with you as much as you need and recognize that it may take a while to get there. Don't let this process make you set your chapter goals aside.

# DUES-PAYING MEMBERS

## Three's a Charm

The chapter founder should already be a dues-paying member. And if you are able to find an advisor early on, he or she could be the second dues paying member.

Finding one or two more dues-paying members should not be difficult. YAL National believes that if you can find three students on campus to form a chapter and are will to pay \$10 each for the entire year, we believe enough interest exists to form a serious chapter at your school.

Remember that a dues-paying member must register through YAL National. We feel \$10 is more of a way to make sure your chapter is serious, but not to burden you or your members financially. YAL National fundraises the majority of its functions through outside donors.

To register as a dues-paying member visit:  
[www.yaliberty.org/join](http://www.yaliberty.org/join)

If you're having trouble finding additional members, here are some ideas:

**Friends.** Talk YAL up to your friends who share similar beliefs with you. Maybe some of your friends at school share similar ideas on politics but have not be vocal about them yet.

**Classmates.** Be very open about your interest in the liberty movement with fellow classmates. If a classmate responds positively and shows interest in YAL, invite them to join and take on a leadership role by

assisting in you in starting YAL on your campus. If someone in the back of your Business Law class mentions something about the Constitution in a question to the teacher, make sure to talk to them after class.

**Social Networking.** Search for students within your school's network, Facebook, similar organizations, social events, and the like.

**Membership Benefit.** While pursuing membership, remember to inform potential members on benefits associated with being a dues-paying membe. These benefits include but are not limited to:

1. *Receiving quaterly publications of the Young American Revolution (YAR)*
2. *Getting access to our list of speakers, including the potential to host Ron Paul on your campus*
3. *Receiving activism grants and funding to help you manifest your activism ideas on campus.*
4. *Participation in YAL's national events*
5. *Networking opportunities with like-minded people and organizations.*
6. *Receiving occasional books, flyers, constitutions, and other materials to help your campus stay prepared.*



# CHAPTER PLAN

## Planning Ahead

A Chapter Plan is required by YAL National to become an official Chapter.

This Chapter Plan is intended to help you focus on your own goals, as well as give YAL an understanding of what you're looking to do and how we can help.

You can download a chapter plan at:

*[www.yaliberty.org/chapters](http://www.yaliberty.org/chapters)*

Assemble a group of leaders and members in your developing chapter to complete a plan that is unique to your campus.

The first semester plan is set up to be used as a blueprint towards the start-up of YAL on your campus. It typically takes a full semester to a year to obtain official University recognition, and having a well structured first semester plan will help with this process.

The Chapter Plan also contains a two year plan, and is used to foresee any efforts your chapter must take to achieve long-term success. Within the first two years your YAL Chapter should be building a strong presence on campus, increasing its visibility in the community, and continuing to develop new leadership within the chapter.

No two chapters will be exactly alike, and the same goes for the chapter plan.

# FIRST INFORMATIONAL MEETING

## Light a Fire

As you start organizing your chapter, you're going to want to have your first Information Meeting to pull new members in and start working.

This informational meeting needs to cover a variety of items, ranging from a Mission Statement to potential Events to host.

In the end, the informational meeting should be informative, interesting, and appealing enough to get attendees to become members and leaders in your YAL Chapter.

## Preparing

Here are some things to consider as you prepare your first meeting:

1. Find and confirm a location. When choosing a location, consider the size of the audience you expect and access to IT equipment you may want to use. Try to hold the meeting on campus.
2. Set a date and time that does not conflict with any major campus-wide event.
3. Create a presentation or a detailed agenda of what you want to cover in the meeting.
4. Compile a checklist of all materials you might need. Here are some materials you may consider:
  - “Young Americans for Liberty” sign to place on the front door
  - Appropriately-arranged seating
  - IT equipment

- Forms to collect attendee names, e-mail addresses, and their major and year in school.
- Pens
- Name tags
- Copies of presentation or agenda
- YAL PR materials, such as fact sheets, pamphlets, and flyers
- Food and drinks

## The Meeting

Arrive to the location early enough to go over the checklist, make sure that all IT equipment is working correctly, and run through the presentation.

Enlist help of others to be at the sign-in table with you. While at the sign in table, be sure to greet all attendees, start conversations between them and answer questions.

There will be attendees who show up to the informational meeting alone in an attempt to find an organization of their interest where they feel welcomed and connected with others. Make a serious effort to meet and get to know every attendee.

When starting the presentation, introduce yourself to the audience and tell them a bit about why you are bringing YAL to campus.

Next, start a brief ice breaker to make attendees feel welcome and apart of the organization already. Your icebreaker will vary with the size of the turnout. For

smaller groups, you can go around the room having each attendee introduce themselves and state why they are at the YAL meeting, what political issues are they most interested in, or past political involvement.

After the presentation is over, be prepared to stick around for a while and finish meeting all attendees. No matter how great the presentation is or how much the attendee agrees with YAL and its mission, if they don't feel welcomed or comfortable it is less likely that they will return as members.

## **After the Meeting**

Follow up with attendees by sending out an e-mail thanking them for showing interest in YAL, encouraging them to join your chapter's facebook group, reminding them to visit [www.yalibery.org](http://www.yalibery.org) in order to become a national member, and inviting them to contact you with any further issues, questions, or comments.

Don't stop outreach efforts by only sending out an email. Make sure to also use the sign-in list to locate the attendees on facebook and invite them to join your chapter's group directly.

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# ADVERTISING

## How Else Will People Know You Exist?

Essentially everything you will do is an advertisement. Talking to friends, putting on an activism event, and blogging about your chapter are all methods of advertising.

To get started, however, your chapter will need to put some materials together in preparation. And here are some initial ways to get that going:

### Flyers

You'll need a designer, a design program, printers, and distributors. Guidance for designing a flyer can be in the "Media" section of this handbook. Try the following methods for distribution:

#### On Campus

- Enlist the help of others to visit all buildings on campus - academic, social, and residential - putting up multiple fliers at each one.
- Think about strategic placement when putting up fliers, by placing more in high trafficking areas where there is more activity. Certain college departments like Business, Economics, Political Science, and Psychology are a good place to start. But don't ignore Arts and Sciences - as anyone can believe in Liberty.
- Also try student dorms. Residential halls are filled with younger students who are looking for ways to get involved on campus, and underclassmen can serve as future leaders. In residential halls, place a flyer on an announcement board, front doors, slide them underneath doors, and leave a few extras at the front desk.

#### Off Campus

- Don't ignore the off campus opportunities for promoting. Visit local eateries, coffee shops, and stores to place flyers on the front door, in the window, or on an announcement board. Just make sure you have the management's approval first. Also, visit student apartment complexes to put up flyers in the main office, game room, gym, or mail room.

### Student Government Resources

Contact the offices of your school's media outlet to seek information on how they may be of an assistance to you. Connect with your school's paper and try to either get a small column written about the start up of YAL and the time and place of your first informational meeting. Take it a step further and keep YAL in the front of student's minds by writing in and commenting on news stories. If your office of student affairs has a weekly e-mail of announcements, make sure information regarding YAL and the upcoming informational meeting is included. If your school has a marquee at the main road entrances to your school, figure out a way to submit a graphic to that.

### Display Table

First, be sure to obtain a permit through your school that will allow you to set up a display table in a student center or outdoors in a high-traffic area of campus.

Create an aesthetically pleasing display board that

will bring passerbys towards the table. You can use a standard 3-panel cardboard display, have the side panels filled with thought-provoking questions, comments, and facts that relate to YAL's mission, while the middle panel has information about YAL and the meeting.

Provide small loose flyers, and recruit several other members to help promote YAL alongside you. Have a sign up sheet at the table to collect names and email addresses from interested students, and then use that sheet to email and inform these students about meetings and events.

## Student Activities Fair

The purpose of a Student Activity Fair is to showcase student organizations on campus to the student body.

Your school may vary, but the student activities fair is typically held twice a year at the start of fall and spring semester. Go to your school's Student Activities office to obtain all information on the fair, and sign your organization up to attend.

Do this early, since some schools have limited space and fill up on a first-come, first-served basis. Check that your registration is complete by contacting the office directly to confirm your approval for space.

Here are some steps to successfully prepare for a Student Activities Fair:

- Complete all necessary registration work.
- Meet with members from your chapter to plan and prepare for your table at the activities fair. You will need to have several members signed up to be at the table at all times. Make sure to email a reminder to those who volunteer to work the table with the times they signed up for.

- Meet with other members to brainstorm and create a display that will appeal to those interested in YAL and the mission.

- Plan ahead for when your first informational meeting or other meetings will be. Students interested in getting involved with YAL will want details on what to do next.

- Have several handouts at your table. This can include a fact sheet on YAL from a national standpoint, topics of activism, and planned schedule of events. Make sure each handout has at least one method of contact for students, such as a name with an email address, or your chapter's facebook group web address.

- Arrive early to check in and set up your display.

- Have several sign up sheets and loose pens to collect students' name, email, class year, and major.

- Be proactive with the attendees by going out of your way to approach students. Introduce yourself, talk one-on-one, and create conversations.

- Follow up by sending an email to all students who signed up thanking them for stopping by, informing them about the upcoming informational meeting, and inviting them to join your chapter's facebook group in order to stay informed. Also, take the list of names and find the students on facebook to directly invite them to join your chapter's facebook group.

## Online Social Networks

Social networks can be a great, easy, and quick way of promoting the informational meeting to a large number of people. Also, when using social networks to promote the meeting your possibilities are endless.

- Facebook. After creating an event on Facebook, invite everybody you know, and everybody whose name

you have obtained through speaking with students and the sign up at the display table. Make your advisor and other YAL members event administrators too, and have them do the same.

- Twitter. This social media has transformed the internet, and just one way we stay up to date with information. A YAL twitter account for your university will not only keep followers up to date on meetings and YAL campus events, but is also a way to stay in touch with YAL members at other campuses.

- YAL Blog. An easy resource that can integrate features such as relevant YouTube videos, and provides access to event a calendar of events, or community service projects in which YAL is involved.

## **Freshman Move in**

Freshman move in is an opportune time to recruit potential members to YAL because the freshmen currently have no prior involvement obligations. Check with your campus first to learn their policy about organization recruitment during move-in.

Help students carry their items to their rooms, or invite them to a social event for the evening. As you know, the first days of college are the most exciting, and when students are most likely to get out and see new things. It's a perfect chance to make friends and find members.



# TABLING

## Getting in Front of People

Having a strategically-planned, aesthetically appealing, and well-staffed table on campus is one of the most standard ways of recruiting new members or arguing an important issue.

In tabling, members get the opportunity to explain the political philosophy behind YAL and logically respond to criticism. When tabling, here are some things to consider:

**Strategic time and placement.** Find a central, high-traffic area on campus. These locations will seem pretty obvious to you. You may consider which school departments are likely to have a student body most interested in YAL and the mission.

**Contact information.** Besides promoting and recruiting for your chapter, tabling is also where you collect contacts. Have a sign-up sheet for interested students to gather the following information: name, email address, class year, and major.

**Tabling Materials.** Provide a banner or sign, a display, loose pamphlets about your organization, loose flyers with information of upcoming meetings or events, and a sign in sheet.

**Tabling Schedule.** Set up a schedule with hourly shifts for the table. Make sure to staff the tables more during meal times and class changes. Before tabling begins, send out an email reminding volunteers of their assigned times.

**Face to face conversation.** Whoever is working at the table needs to be sure to stand in front of the table instead of behind it so they can easily interact with others. Do not have a chair to sit on, and remind members not to congregate in a central group blocking table. And especially, do not sit reading a book or doing homework while tabling.

**Stand out.** Design your display to draw in students. Whether this is done with colorful pictures, politically incorrect statements, or an outgoing group of talkative members, you want your display to bring passerbys in.

**Follow up.** Make sure to follow up with every student who shows interest in YAL. This can be done with an informative email, a phone call, or Facebook group invite. By following up with interested students, not only do they stay informed about YAL on campus, but they also feel welcomed to get involved.



# ATTENDING EVENTS

## Networking with Other Organizations

Sometimes members and supporters can be found beyond tabling. By attending other organizations' events, you open your chapter up to a whole new field of recruitment opportunities.

There are a number of different approaches you can take in this regard.

First, keep abreast of the on-goings of other liberty-minded groups in your area. Attend their meetings and represent your chapter at their events.

On your own campus you should also try to form alliances with other student organizations. If you find groups that you can agree with on a few issues, network with them, attend their events, and promote YAL through casual discussion. Their members and those who attend their events may view your organization as a great way to find like-minded individuals that can best promote their cause. You may disagree with each other on 80% of the issues, but focusing on the 20% can advance the movement and increase the numbers in your chapter.

Most importantly, make sure to attend the events and speakers your school hosts. If your school is like most in the America, the speakers tend to have a left-leaning bias. While frustrating, their presence provides a prime opportunity for your chapter to get some attention.

Spread members of your group throughout the audience to avoid appearing like a disgruntled unit and capitalize on the Q&A session at the end. Whether it

is a Keynesian economist visiting the Economics Department or a socialist visiting Political Science, there are always hard-hitting questions to be asked that can reveal the flaws in their logic.

Not only do you get to put the speaker on the spot but other students will also get a taste of the liberty movement through your action. Controversy sparks interest, so make sure to have club fliers or business cards handy if students approach you or other chapter members afterwards.

Don't forget to do your research about the topic of the event. You are likely to be met with hostility or challenged back by speaker. The more you know, and the more calm and collected you behave in adversity, the more credible you and your chapter become.

Depending on school rules, you can also nonchalantly pass fliers critiquing the issues and speaker with information about your chapter. You could pass them down rows, pretending as though it is a paper accompanying the speaker's lecture.

Never miss an event if you think your chapter could benefit from attending. Momentum is everything, so make your presence known!

# HOSTING EVENTS

## Rejuvenating, Educating, and Having Fun

Big events will draw in large crowds, and they're a great way to appeal to new people.

There several events you may want to hold throughout the year, some formal and others more social.

Event planning takes weeks to prepare. If you have a member from the chapter that has a knack for event planning, put them in charge.

You'll also want to keep your events to a minimum. While attending school you'll be pressed for time. Maybe one or two big events per semester is reasonable. Here are a couple things to consider for planning an event.

### Theme & Intent

The theme of the event will vary greatly on what you're trying to accomplish with it. Is the event intended to be a social gig or is it meant as an educational tool?

Perhaps hosting Ron Paul at your school is one of the main goals of you chapter, but more realistically you can invite local organizations and professors to speak on pressing regional and local issues. You may also wish to hold debates, lectures, panel discussions, or group discussions.

### Considerations

- What type of event will be held? It may include a speaker, protest, debate, panel, rally, demonstration, memorials, or tabling.
- What sort of issue will this event challenge or address?
- How will this event improve your chapter?
- How will this event improve your campus?
- What is the proposed Date, Time, and Location?
- Are other campus activities competing for a targeted audience, such as concerts, football games, midterms, or finals?
- What is the expected weather condition if the event is to be held outdoors?
- Are there any national or religious holidays around the time of your planned event?
- What materials are needed and where will they come from?
- Make a list of every single item you need, from permits to transportation. Every item and need should be documented.

## Leadership

Hosting an event gives you the opportunity to delegate duties to other members, and work to develop their leadership.

Assign members to each task associated with your event. List the number of people you will need next to each position. If your club is small, see if members will devote extra time to more than one responsibility. Make sure you have enough active members to reasonably plan and prepare the kind of event you want to host.

### **Location Coordinator.**

The Location Coordinator searches for and reserves the space for an event, along with reserving any Audio/Video equipment needed. They will also be the first to arrive at the event ahead of time in order to set up the space for the event, such as seating, AV equipment, an informational table, and the like. The location coordinator position is best suited for someone who is detail-oriented and knows campus well. They could easily serve as a Food Coordinator at the same time.

### **Speaker Coordinator.**

The Speaker Coordinator secures the speaker for an event. They negotiate costs associated with the speaker, as well as transportation, lodging, food, and payment following the event. This position is best suited for someone who is reliable, professional, and outgoing enough to carry on a conversation with the speaker.

A second position can be created to delegate all arranged transportation for the speaker, including to and from the airport, hotel, and event.

### **Promotion Coordinator.**

The Promotion Coordinator ensures that the event is well-attended by implementing a variety of promotion, advertising, and outreach techniques, such as sending out personal invites, contacting media outlets, posting flyers, or getting faculty to encourage

their students to attend.

This position is best suited for someone who has the time, creativity, and dedication to promote the event. They should also be a social person with a strong campus network.

Since attendance at the event is largely related to the job of the promotion coordinator, they should create a support committee to help.

### **Recruitment Coordinator.**

The Recruitment Coordinator recruits new members during the actual event. They will set up an attractive and informative greeting table, staff the table, register new members, and then personally contact those members after the event. This position is best suited for someone who is sociable, good at talking to people, and can elegantly explain YAL's mission.

### **Food and Drinks Coordinator.**

The Food and Drink Coordinator orders appropriate food, ensures that it is delivered, and sets the food up at the event.

### **Public Relations Coordinator.**

Prior to the event, your public relations coordinator should send out press releases, give interviews, and work to generate media coverage to increase event attendance and your chapter's exposure.

During the event, the PR coordinator will accommodate any press who attends, while also taking pictures to document the event's success.

After the event, this person should send thank you notes to speakers and any organizations, businesses, or professors who helped with the event. This person should also send a press release and letters to the editor to your campus newspaper and local media following the event. Qualities to look for in a great PR

coordinator are excellent writing skills and strong attention to detail.

### **Treasurer.**

A treasurer should already be appointed within the chapter, and - of course - should keep track of all expenses with the event.

### **Other Positions.**

There will be members of your chapter who may not have much time to devote to one of the leadership positions, but still want to be actively involved are still needed. Assign these members to either work under a coordinator, or to fill in for assistance at the event.

## **Event Budget**

It is extremely important to budget expenses before planning your event. As you begin planning, you may want to re-budget and see what new expenses have come up, and what you'll need to scale down on. Here is a list of things to consider within estimating expenses, with example numbers.

### **Item**

Food & Drinks	\$1000
Advertising	\$800
Venue Costs	\$2,000

### **Speaker Expenses**

Airfare	\$500
Rental Car	\$150
Hotel	\$300
Meals	\$150
Speaker fees	\$3,000
Markers, Board, etc	\$100

### **Total Costs**

Total	\$8,000
Club currently has	- \$3,000
Need to Raise	\$5,000

## **Event Fundraising**

Seek out a variety of resources and aids for your event. This can be done through the following ways:

- Cosponsorship. If there are other like-minded organizations, invite them to sponsor the event too, and split any and all costs.
- Obtain resources already available to clubs from the student government, such as rooms, advertising space, AV equipment, seats, and tables.
- Use resources available to club by local and national organizations such as grants and scholarships.
- Visit local businesses that may be willing to support or sponsor the event.

# GUERRILLA MARKETING

## Creative and Provocative Culture Shock

Guerilla marketing can be controversial and annoying to most people. Still, a college campus can be one of the best places to use it.

The act of guerilla marketing is using any unconventional means of getting an issue to be heard, or to market some sort of service or product. They are usually unique, unexpected, and attention-getting.

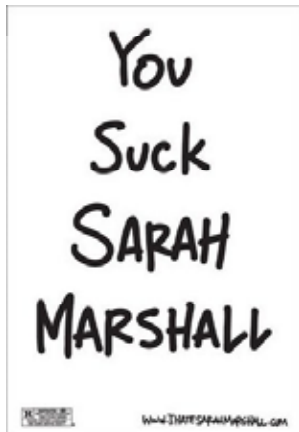
Before planning your first guerilla tactic, consider other organizations that have used lewd, graphic, or obnoxious methods to get attention.

There are the crazy Christian ranting men that hold signs yelling that everyone will go to hell, or pro-life advocates displaying pictures of dead fetuses, or Middle Easterners displaying walls of genocide in Palestine.

While each of these groups are trying to bring up some serious issues, they are usually seen as disturbing and over-the-top, and it is difficult to gage just how effective they are or how many people they are pissing off as opposed to enlightening.

But if done correctly and (somewhat) politely, your audience will begin turning their heads and wonder what the heck they just saw. A few stunts now and then will be worth trying. Here are some suggestions to begin planning and acting out your extreme publicity stunt designed to advertise your YAL Chapter.





Here are a few examples of guerilla marketing that have been used recently, but don't use any of these examples. Most of them have included defacing property, created a false security threat, or just severely confused and embarrassed people.

### **OBEY**

This strange image appeared all over the country in order to build curiosity over what it was. After about a year of non-stop advertising, Obey released its clothing line. Unfortunately, this campaign of taping signs and spray painting them on public and private fixtures was disrespectful to property rights. This is not an example we recommend copying.

### **AQUA TEEN HUNGER FORCE**

This Light-Brite fixture was posted up at airports across America to advertise the Comedy Central show Aqua Teen Hunger Force. It got a lot of media attention, but mostly because people didn't know what it was. Airports called in bomb squads, thinking they might explode. Again, not something we recommend.

### **I HATE SARAH MARSHALL**

This was a simple, and perfectly legal marketing strategy for the movie. For people who didn't know about the movie, it left them wondering why the advertisement was so minimal, and what it was referring to. For people who already knew, it made enough of a connection.

### **BORAT (AND BRUNO)**

Here is a commendable example of guerilla marketing. Not only were the advertisements everywhere, but the character continued his act even after filming of the movie had ended. Sasha Baron Cohen appeared randomly in public events, performed interviews in his character, and created extreme controversies that got attention.

## RON PAUL BLIMP

And finally, an example of guerilla marketing directly from the Liberty movement. More than \$250,000 was spent on flying the Ron Paul Revolution blimp to various cities. It was unique and got some good media attention, but we are led to ask: How effective was this? It will be impossible to gauge, but it's worth trying to know, before and after attempting it, whether or not such a marketing tool is effective, no matter how unique or outrageous.



## Steps to Bringing Out Your Ideas

### 1 THINK IT THROUGH

Find out what kind of awareness or attention you want. Will you be promoting the liberty movement in general, or a specific part of it? If your audience is going to be mostly college students, think of what students will react to in a positive way.

### 2 SCOPE IT OUT

Find the exact place or places you will enact your marketing idea. Check the patterns of foot traffic or car traffic. Obviously, your key locations will be places with lots of traffic, but not somewhere that's going to cause a car accident. Be considerate of public safety. Think of all the props, materials, and people you will need; how you will enter and exit the scene; the order and locations of what you'll be doing. Anything you think can go wrong, expect it to happen, and prepare a back-up plan.

### 3 PRACTICE

Once you know your plan and you've researched the logistics, test out your ideas in a private environment or try a simplified and safe version of your plans in public. Think of all the possible things that can go wrong. What if a school authority or police comes to break up your gig? What if students ridicule or attack you? How will you present your tactic in a professional or convincing manner?

### 4 PERFORM

Take all your preparation to the street and expect for the worst. Remember, your right to free speech and to peacefully assemble should be protected under the First Amendment, but your right to damage property or use private property is obviously restricted.

## Some Do's and Dont's

### DON'T

Deface property; touch or harm people; become a nuisance; cause accidents; steal property; threaten people; embarrass, offend, or ridicule people.

### DO

Be creative; be polite; think radically; use props; use sounds; be interactive; invite people; be insightful and inspiring; be funny; be intelligent; be surprising; be unique.

## Just a Few Ideas

Hopefully you have a decent idea of what it takes to put together an unconventional marketing campaign for your chapter. Since the routes you can take in guerilla marketing are endless, don't limit yourself to ideas other people have come up with.

### COSTUMES

Outrageous costumes will get attention, and sometimes make people feel awkward. You could make clothing out of monopoly money (Federal Reserve Notes are still worth something) and hand out literature on inflation and fiat money. Or wear a pig head and inform people of swine flu and government-mandated immunization programs.

### SKITS

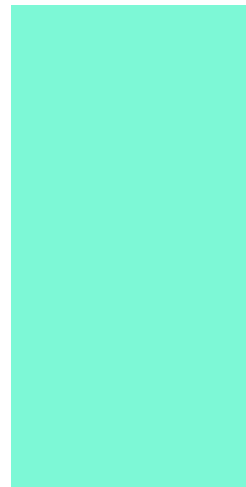
Skits are an easy way to invite people over to your circle without feeling like they're being forced to watch. Think of people eating fire and throwing knives – except this time about government intervention. Maybe create our own story or take on current events.

### MUSIC

Music attracts all sorts of people, but there's nothing like singing about a pertinent national issue. This was done a bunch during the Vietnam war, but we've lacked a decent amount of liberty music lately. Write some music and take it to the campus lawn. Plus, you'll have a captive audience to get your message across.

### PROPAGANDA

Nothing is more fun than propaganda. That is, of course, when it's promoting a cause you believe in. Propaganda is simply an in-your-face graphic technique that reduces an argument to an absolute minimum. Not the best for a complex philosophy on limited government, but it's the beginning of bringing up the issue.





# ACTIVISM IDEAS

## The Sky is the Limit?

There are endless ways you can market and get your ideas out there. Everything is an advertisement. And borrowing these marketing ideas is easy and a good place to start. As you perfect your trade, you'll start coming up with new ideas and realize what works and what doesn't.

We have provided you here with some activism ideas, which are designed to help you address hot topics of the day and also advertise your chapter. This activism activities are made to get your chapter out in the open and vulnerable to the public, so you can educate students and rally support.

Though we have provided you some ideas, your chapter should always continue to work on new ones.

### Tax Revolt Day

Tax Day is a great time to address the problem of taxation. This activity is most appropriate for the national tax day on April 15th, to mark the anniversary of the Boston Tea Party on December 16th, or anytime politicians propose more tax hikes. A few tax day organization websites include: [www.teapartyday.com](http://www.teapartyday.com), [www.taxdayteaparty.com](http://www.taxdayteaparty.com), and [www.reteaparty.com](http://www.reteaparty.com)

### Inflation Awareness

Teach your campus about inflation and why the government's actions to "save the economy" are making us much worse off. Educating students about the Federal Reserve System, fractional reserve banking, fiat money, and inflation can be difficult but is the monster

that fuels havoc. Research how the Fed works, how exactly it "prints money" and use Monopoly Money or your own fake fiat money to address this issue. Pass out notes to students along with literature regarding what Federal Reserve Notes really are.

#### Materials to Use

- Fake Money. You could design money that resembles "monopoly money" with either Obama's face in the middle or an IOU. Make fake \$1 trillion Federal Reserve Notes.
- Poster board and signs.
- Informational Flyers with a few key facts about government spending, the national debt, value of the dollar, inflation, and perhaps how the Federal Reserve works.
- Table and general tabling materials such as sign up lists for those interested in joining YAL or learning more about this topic.
- Reserved space on campus and a permit if required.

### The Price Is Wrong

Make a street theater set with several games similar to those on the classic show, "The Price is Right." Ask passersby to participate, guessing the cost of government spending program, and how much each taxpayer owes on this debt.

Have one of your group members be an enthusiastic host for the game show, and award prizes to those who

guess correctly. You could also have several group members dress up as the models displaying potential prizes and set up a loudspeaker and microphone to allow an announcer to attract additional crowds.

Hand out informational flyers even to those who do not play the games. Make sure your flyers explain why the spending you mention is wasteful rather than simply making unsupported accusations.

Just a note, using the phrase “The Price is Right” could be a violation of a copyright law, so it would be best to avoid the phrase.

### **Materials**

- Plywood or other sturdy material to make the games
- Costume for host
- Models
- Announcer
- Loudspeaker set up
- Poster board and other materials for signs
- Table and general tabling materials
- Prizes
- Informational flyers
- Reserved space on campus and a permit if required.

## **Anti-UN Day**

Set up a plywood board made into a bean bag toss with the faces of dictators from around the world which the UN has failed to influence significantly. You might also set up a balloon and dart board which allows participants to pop balloons to see new “UN slogans” highlighting the UN’s ineffectiveness and corruption.

Put up signs and posters explaining problems with the UN, and hand out information to passersby which explains the same topics in greater depth and draws attention to your group’s position on the UN.

This is an excellent event to point out the UN’s hy-

pocrisy, ineffectiveness, and negative effects on the United States. It can be held at any time, but most appropriate on UN Day, October 24th.

### **Materials**

- Plywood or other material sturdy enough for bean bag toss and dart game
- Pictures of recognizable dictators
- Balloons, darts, bean bags
- Poster board and other material for signs

## **Pro-American Day**

Leftist professors love to bash America. Why not hold an event to show what the student body thinks of our country? This event is always popular and draws wide support from the community.

This rally can be held anytime, but you may want to consider an anniversary of a patriotic event such as President’s Day or Memorial Day depending on your school’s calendar and holiday schedule.

Regardless of when you hold the rally, have an identifiable theme. Your event will be uninteresting to many students if it lacks a clear purpose. You could honor veterans by hosting them on campus, for example, or celebrate important characters in American history. Be sure to decide on an eye-catching theme in advance and buy supplies accordingly.

### **Materials**

- Flags, such the American flag, your state’s flag, or Gadsden flags
- Poster board or signs
- Informational flyers
- Megaphone

## Obama Youth Corps

The “Serve America Act” is set out to expand Ameri-Corps, with a heavy focus on mandatory government service for all young people. This Act is comparable to similar tactics Hitler used in Nazi Germany to develop his own army.

There aren't many people as hated as Hitler, that is why this demonstration is meant to show the people the link between Obama's and Hitler's ideas when it comes to mandatory service for young people.

### Materials

- Nazi-like uniforms with dark khaki pants, and long sleeve matching color top.
- Obama red arm cuff. Meant to resemble the swastika worn on the Nazi uniforms.
- Informational flyers

## Flyer Blitz

A flyer blitz can be used by any group to promote any issue. First, make flyers which support or explain a particular issue and advertise your group. Have each group member post around campus or distribute a certain number of flyers at a given time – 100 or 200 each, for instance, depending on the number of people in your group.

Make sure flyers are approved for posting beforehand – all your effort won't do any good if the housekeeping staff takes every flyer down the next day. Do this regularly –once a week, for example– for different issues. Your flyer blitzes could also be timed to double as an advertisement for your meetings. Regardless of how often you blitz your campus, make sure to clean up after yourselves, taking down old flyers in a timely manner

### Materials

- Significant number of well-designed flyers



## Minutemen

Minutemen find publicity opportunities by responding to public incidents. For example, a local city council proposes an ordinance holding roommates responsible for underage alcohol consumption. If your 20 year old roommate was drinking beer in your residence even if you were not there, the ordinance could charged you with contributing to an underage age drinker.

If this or any similar ordinance were to pass, take forty members of the local YAL chapter and file into a City Council meeting in silence. Have everyone remain standing in front of their seats until every one is inside. On cue, every YAL member seat themselves at the same time. A spokesperson for should sign up ahead of time to publicly respond to the city ordinance proposal when it is their turn to speak. At the end of the meeting all of the members rise simultaneously and file out in silence. Once outside the group lingers to answer questions from a local newspaper

reporter. Make sure to send out a Press Release before attempting this to make sure the press actually shows up.

**Rules of Engagement.**

Do not participate in the destruction of public or private property. Do no harm anyone. Cooperate with local law enforcement within reason. Identify your group via signs or clothing. Stay together. Hand out pamphlets to by passers. Keep in mind your reason for being there.

**Preparation.**

1. Acquire e-mail addresses and cell phone numbers from each member.
2. Designate key communicators.
3. Assign contacts to each key communicator.
4. Create signs, logos, clothing, and pamphlets.
5. Practice a gathering such as a picnic.

# MEDIA DESIGN &

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# DESIGNING YOUR IMAGE

## How You Get Recognized

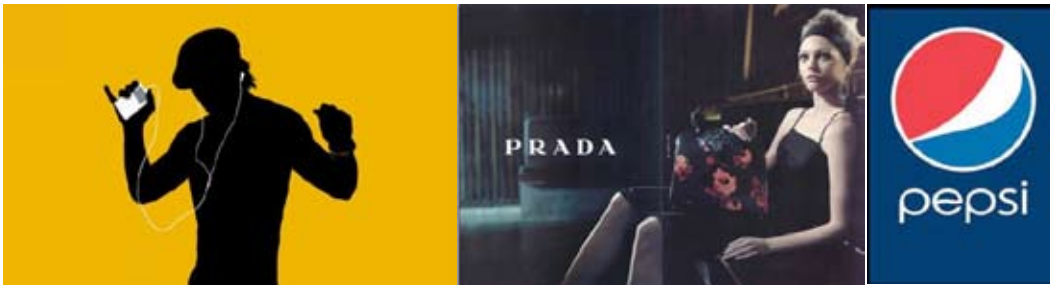
The first thing people will see about your chapter is an image. And if you don't come off as visually appealing, people are more likely to be turned off or, worse, ignore you.

Think of the most famous companies out there. All of them have a strong graphics department. They leave an impression, and hit you over and over again with it.

Whether you like it or not, images make placeholders in the public eye. An inconsistent image will confuse people, a strong one will draw people to it.

Of course, the Liberty Moment isn't designed to con people into interest with over-simplistic advertising and cheap phrases like "Your World. Delivered" or "Change."

Behind any strong image should be a much more sophisticated message, which is why Young Americans for Liberty uses "Winning on Principle" as its slogan. Your goal should be to create a strong image and then back it up with philosophy,





Cringe at it, but Obama's advertising blew away the other candidates during the 2008 Presidential Election Campaign. And this is something that the Ron Paul Campaign, and the entire Republican Party, totally lacked.

People fell in love with the image and soon after that they fell in love with the simple rhetoric. That's all it really took for people to make a decision.

So face it:

## Good Image Gets Attention

Here's what you'll need:

### 1 Get a Designer

Find a graphic design student, one that already agrees with the philosophy if possible, and give them full creative capacity to come up with any crazy design ideas they want. Freedom to design – just as in the freedom to live as we choose – yields awesome creative potential. So encourage an independent design mind.

Designers like to work independently of over-the-shoulder criticism. It's an art. So let him or her design as much as they please with as many ideas they're willing to try, and then let the chapter body decide what image styles they like best. If you have more than one designer involved in the chapter, give all of them the opportunity. The more people and the more ideas the better.

### 2 Use the Right Method

You're going to need graphics for all kinds of media. You'll need a logo, website, flyers, literature, small handouts, and a ton else. And each one is going to require a slightly different design and configuration. Be prepared to apply your image to everything. Repetition will yield memory, and the more people are

exposed to an idea the more likely they're willing to investigate it. So drive it home.

Get used to all the methods available for communication out there. Decide which media are appropriate to your goals, and then let the chapter's image pervade that media. Don't just design a logo, design a look which is unique in the text, the layout, the photography, and the entire feeling.

### **3 What if You Can't Find Someone?**

It's possible that you won't find someone that likes or wants to do graphic design or photography. Don't give up. Someone will show.

In the mean time, find someone that's willing to try. Look at material you think is effective and copy some of their ideas. There are tons of examples to reference on the internet. But to start, here are some things to consider:

#### **0 Choose a Design Program.**

Adobe Photoshop is a standard design program, but it costs money to buy. Microsoft Word works well enough if you can stand using it. And there's always the loved Microsoft Paint. Try to get a hold of some sort of design tool that gives you flexibility.

#### **1 Create a Concept.**

Most design projects have a concept. They think of the audience they are targeting, the kind of image they want to present, and figure how the two will meet. Your chapter should get together and come up with a concept. Don't feel you have to connect yourself with the YAL National image. This is, after all, a grassroots movement and shouldn't be centralized. Create a unique image for your own chapter that will appeal to your school.

#### **2 Use Strong Colors.**

Colors catch the eye, especially bright ones like Or-



ange, Blue, and Red. But don't use so many colors that it overwhelms the eye. Less is more. Use one or two strong colors. Black and white don't really count as color.

#### **3 Rule of Three.**

An easy way to moderate your design is to group things into threes. Three is a crowd. And anything more than three is crowded. Three images, three lines of text – the number three is a good rule of



thumb.

#### 4 Use Hierarchy.

Let the eye follow the flow. Use an overly-large dramatic title, followed with short and small pieces of information. Use one gigantic picture, and perhaps three smaller complimentary ones.

#### 5 Keep it Simple.

Use only information that is important to whatever you are trying to convey. Get rid of anything remotely superfluous. Keep text to an absolute minimum.

#### 6 Use Large Blank Spaces.

The eye can only take in so much. Blank space really helps a page to read well. Look at advertisements and see how much space they don't use. But it's not arbitrarily placed. The blank spaces add to the composition.

#### 7 Photography.

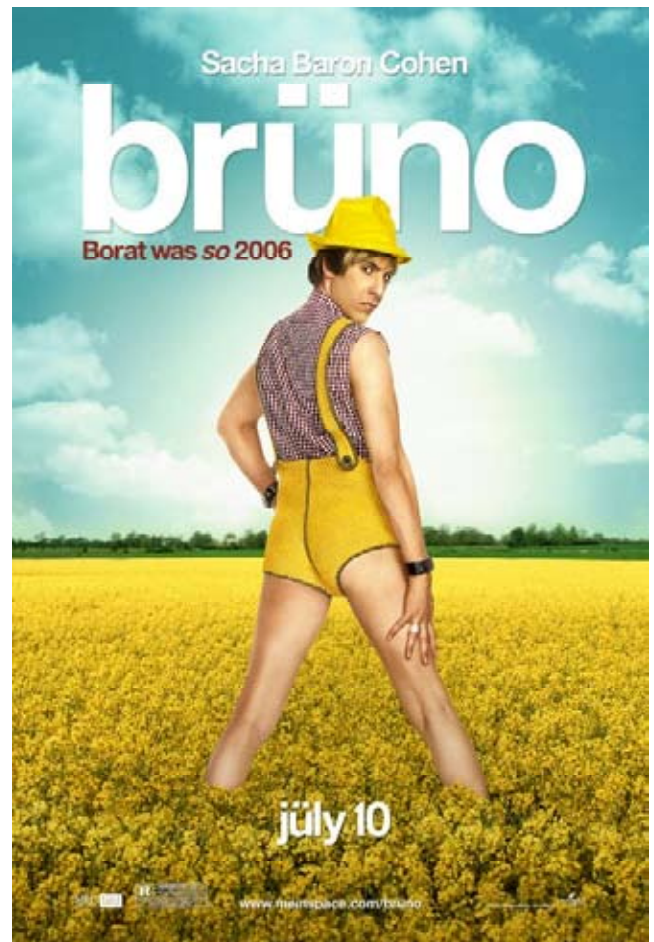
Strong photography is essential to your designs. A graphic without some sort of photo is boring. You can use the same techniques described above in your photography: hierarchy, rule of three, blank space, simplicity, and color. Look at photographs you think are beautiful and try to imitate their techniques. Or pick up a book on photography. There are lots of techniques out there.

#### 8 Line Things Up.

Create strong lines and simple shapes, usually rectangles and squares. Notice how this paragraph forms a strong rectangle by justifying the paragraph on both the left and the right, and completes a rectangle with the paragraphs above and below. Sometimes this rule doesn't apply when you have very few elements, or you may center objects rather than align to the left or right.

#### 9 Criticism.

Let your work be critiqued. No one improves without asking others to look over your work and give some honest feedback. If your image is dull you need



*This design for the Bruno movie follows many strong design guidelines. Simple colors: mostly vivid yellow and blue. It uses the rule of three for text at the top of the page. There is a lot of open space, very little clutter. It's an extremely simply designed graphic. And, of course, it has some cultural relevance.*



*Here's another design example. Mostly black and white with highlights of yellow and blue. There is one focus, it represents a cultural perspective. It uses a simple graphic logo with a simple picture. This graphic sort-of empitomizes the retail clothing industry.*

to know. It's polite to be nice and charming, but it doesn't help expand the movement. So let people critique your work.

### 10 Apply the Results to Everything.

Once you have an image unique to your chapter and people are satisfied with, apply it to everything you do. Keep in mind the theory of repetition by trying to create a memorable issue.

## What You Should Have in the End

Make sure you have a set-in-stone design of the following. Refer to the Banana Republic and Target advertisements below to see how these elements are used.

1. A Logo
2. Designed Name for your Chapter which goes with the logo (in this case, Banana Republic's name is used as both the text and the logo)
3. Two or three standard Font
4. Some Standard Photos you can use all the time to explain your chapter
5. A finished graphic with all four elements which you

1 — 

2 — TARGET

1 — BANANA REPUBLIC

2 — CITY INSIDER

3 — \$30 OFF WHEN YOU SPEND \$100 OR MORE AT ANY BANANA REPUBLIC STORE AUGUST 28 – SEPTEMBER 7

4 — 

5 — Please print and present this coupon at any Banana Republic store to redeem offer.

# PHOTOGRAPHY, RADIO & VIDEO

## Capturing the Revolution

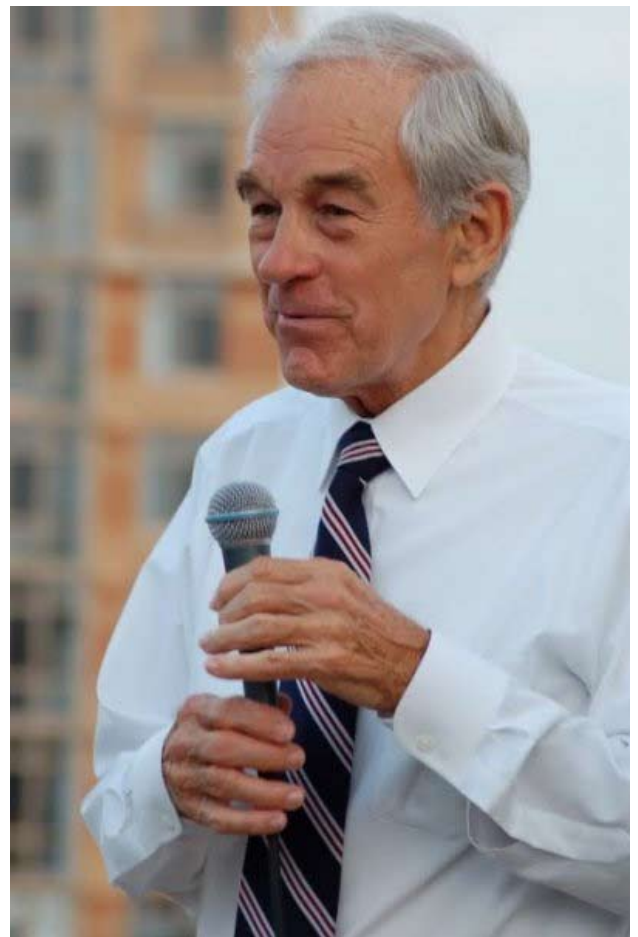
Capturing your chapters activity in audio and video is perhaps one of the most exciting parts of the organization. Essentially, it is a complicated diary of events. Sure, you can report the news in an article or write a letter about what happened. But sound and visuals capture the human spirit, and the real sense of a place. To bad we don't have a recorded video of the Constitutional Convention!

Equipment for photographs, radio, and video can be expensive. But with cell phones and iPhones, photos and YouTube videos can be manageable.

Do not underestimate the power of Photographs and Video. Even historians say Hitler was effective because he used radio to its fullest potential. And Richard Nixon lost to JFK because Kennedy's television presence was astounding compared to Dick's awkward TV personality. And what would Ron Paul be without You Tube?

Get your hands on as much recording devices as possible, handheld portable sound recorders, digital cameras, high definition video, iPhones. Everything. Every event you have, take that equipment with you. And make sure you know how to upload the footage to your computer.

Not only are the recording devices expensive, but the software and cables are too. Adobe makes the best computer software for design editing, if you can afford it. There is Photoshop for photography, InDesign for books, Illustrator for board layouts, Premiere Pro for video editing, and Soundbooth for sound



editing. Your school bookstore may give remarkable student discounts for these programs. And if you can find a graphic design student, photography student, film student, or communications major, keep in touch with them. Learning these programs can take weeks before you even understand what you're doing.

Here are some introductions to Photography, Radio, and Video.

## Photography

People want to see who you are, what you're doing, and whether or not your chapter seems credible. Photographs tell a lot about people and their organizations. Here is what you need.

### 1 Cameras

These range from basic cell phones, to point-and-shoot, to SLR high-definition multi-lens cameras. You can spend anywhere from \$50 to \$10,000 on a camera. These days, \$200 can get you a decent, high mega-pixel camera. A decent SLR manual focus camera can be bought for about \$500. Check out products like Sony, Casio, Nikon, or Canon. These days, cell phones and iPhones are increasingly coming with excellent photograph capabilities.

### 2 Connections

You're going to want to input your digital information into your computer. Some cameras come with small ScanDisc, MS, MMC, or XD cards holding from 1 to 8 Gigabytes that can plug directly into your laptop. Some cameras work with Firewire or USB ports. Make sure your camera can plug into your laptop or desktop and is compatible with your computer.

### 3 Computers

Most computers will recognize your camera. Sometimes the camera will come with CD software to help your computer recognize it. Once you plug in the camera, upload your photos to a folder.



#### 4 Editing Software

Unless you've taken a beautiful and perfect photo straight from your camera, you may wish to edit the photo by cropping a portion of the photos, changing its dimensions, color, hue, contrast, or brightness. Adobe Photoshop is an industry standard. There are other programs like Corel Paint Shop and Serif PhotoPlus. These programs can take several weeks to learn their functions, but play around with them and you'll start learning a lot.

#### 5 Saving and Exporting

You'll probably use a lot of photos for internet use rather than print. As you save your documents, you'll want to keep them as either JPEGs or GIFs - which are standards for internet use. Save them as 72 dpi - dots per inch. If you're printing high quality photos, you may want to save them as Bitmaps. Printing is usually best at 150 or 300 dpi for excellent quality.

## Photography Techniques

Once you get used to all of the technology, you're going to want to improve your skills as a photographer. It's very similar to the chapter on "Designing your Image" and there is a lot of overlap with the "Film" section later in this chapter. Here are some basic things to consider.

#### 1 Simple Colors.

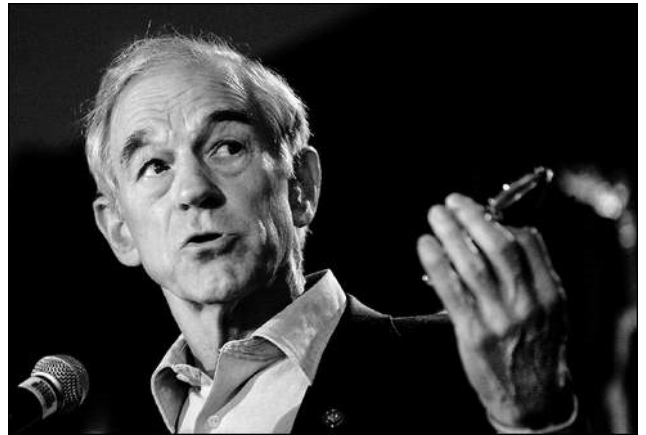
A photograph with too many colors will lose its focus and effect. If you can minimize the colors that you capture to one or two dominate colors, then you've found a good shot.

#### 2 Simplicity.

Photos with too much going on have no focus. Zoom in on someone's face or onto a single object. Get close to them. Capture their detail.

#### 3 Rule of Thirds.

The rule of three is a law in design. Imagine a photograph evenly divided into nine sections, like the one shown on above. The focus of a picture should fall



*This photo captures Ron's face, his expression, his form. It has great contrast, has excellent form, and extreme simplicity. It also uses the rule of thirds.*



*Rule of Thirds Grid.*

where those lines cross. This gives visual appeal to photos, because the eye likes to follow activity, and asymmetry usually activates the eye more than symmetry does.

#### 4 Use Hierarchy.

Let the eye follow the flow. If there is more than one object in a photo, let the eye go from the main focus to a sub-focus, and maybe one more focus after that. But a photo with more than three focuses is probably to complex.

## 6 Use Large Blank Spaces.

As in with the rule of thirds, and the rule of simplicity, there is nothing wrong with a photo that has space in which nothing exists. Like the Ron Paul photo used on the previous page, there is a lot of black space. And that helps balance the photo.

## 7 Narrow the field.

If you have two or three people talking with each other in a photo, angle yourself so that it looks like everyone is standing close to each other. If you are standing perpendicular to two people, you probably have a boring photography. See the photo to the right for an example. The individuals are standing in a straight line, but the photographer stands in line with them and makes them appear closer to each other.

## 7 Don't just take photos, be a photographer.

Get in people's faces, get down low or up high. Try to get into the action, don't hide from it. You might make people upset, but now you have great photos!

## Radio

Radio can be a little tricky. Most likely you do not have access to FM or AM radio, or equipment to make a captivating live radio show. But with internet radio, you have a good chance at making it happen.

If you want to do radio, you may wish to try pre-recorded shows. This can be done with a couple of microphones plugged into a central hub. If you're doing a simple monologue, such as reporting the week's news or reporting a chapter update, it can be pretty simple. But if you want to interview several people, run radio ads, and sound effects, you have a lot of work ahead of you.

Since running radio can be difficult, here is just a simple introduction that is realistic for your chapter.



*The photographer is standing in line with this group, narrowing the field and adding depth.*



## 1 Microphones

Microphones can range from cheap \$20 computer microphones to expensive high-quality ribbons and condensers around \$10,000 each, displayed on the previous page. There are also handheld recorders you can get that are battery powered which you can take on the field to do live interviews with ease. These can record sound and save that information onto a small computer drive imbedded inside the device. These handheld devices can range from \$50 to \$500. You'll want a digital recorder so you can easily download that info onto a computer. Expect to pay about \$200 for something decent. Otherwise, stick to computer microphones.

## 2 Connections

Again, you're going to want to input your digital information into your computer with a USB cable or small SD disc.

## 3 Computer

You'll probably need to use software for your computer to recognize the audio recording driver. Most computers have programs which can easily read .wav or .mp3. If you need to edit the content you could use video editing software like Adobe Premiere Pro or use music-editing software like Cakewalk Sonar 7 or ProTools, which are industry standards for editing music. But it will work just fine for interviews and radio shows.

# Radio Techniques

## 1 Using a Microphone.

Don't get too close to a microphone, as you'll produce noises like "plosives," scratching sounds, and deep sounds that muffle the audio output. Make sure the microphone's pick up is directed towards the object producing the sound, but not necessarily right on top of it. Each microphone is different. There are omnidirectional, cardioid, supercardioid, and figure-8 microphones. Each pick up sounds differently. So you

may wish to do some research on what microphone you have and how it can be positioned best.

## 2 Get to the Point.

When doing a radio show or interview, don't ramble. Answers to questions should usually be about 7 to 12 seconds long, introductions should only be one or two sentences long. Explain exactly what you're doing and get to the point. Listen to established radio stations for guidance. Once they're back on the air from commercial breaks, the radio announcer gets to the point: "Welcome back, this is KWRZ on the Jerry Mandering Show. It is Tuesday, May 25th, at the top of the hour. I'm here with Mr. James Smith, President of American Psychological Services discussing Psychotropic Drugs. So, Jerry..."

## 3 Practice Your Speech.

Many Americans love to listen to Barack Obama because he speaks eloquently. But this is no accident. He's been taught well. Most radio voices are clean, deep, and well paced. Radio tends to speak a little faster than normal. Certain microphones can help you get that bassy sound, like a supercardioid or bi-directional (figure-8) microphone. Practice reading news stories and record them, then actually listen to your voice and see what you can improve. Have others listen to your practices and critique you as well.

## 4 Prepare your Talking Points.

Radio interviews are quick paced. If there is even a couple seconds of awkward pausing it is totally noticeable by the audience. Prepare what you will say, in the order you will say it. Move from one point to the next quickly.

## Video

Put together photography and radio and you almost have video, or television. The only last step to make is to turn photography into motion.

In one way or another, this is the most powerful medium. People can't keep their eyes off the moving screen. Either by television, movies, or YouTube clips, both our sight and sound are dominated by the media of film.

If you're going to spend the effort making a film – do it right the first time. Film takes a tremendous amount of effort, and if it's not effective you've wasted a bunch of time. Film editing, good film editing, takes hours of work and can have little payback if it doesn't captivate.

And most of the Liberty videos out there pound on Armageddon and Chaos. They are tedious and lengthy and will only turn off people that aren't already tuned in to the message. So keep your audience in mind. Are you inspiring and educating the established crowd or trying to draw in new people?

Here are some of the tools you'll need to start filming:



## 1 Camcorders

This can range from personal cell phones to expensive high-quality equipment. Your \$200 point-and-shoot camera will be able to hold only a couple minutes of okay footage. And you can go up into the thousands of dollars for HD cameras. A decent Sony or Canon High Definition camera will cost somewhere between \$800 and \$2000, which is much too expensive for a student. So, most schools will allow you to rent equipment for a couple days if you register with your school ID, either through the media department or student government. You're also going to have to familiarize yourself with how the camera functions.

## 2 Microphones

Again, you'll need to know about microphones. Many cameras have microphones imbedded on the device, but they are not the highest quality. You may wish to separately record audio and sync the two later, or direct input a separate microphone into the camera. Make sure you have the right cables for this.

## 3 Connections

Most HD cameras will require a Firewire camera connection, usually labeled as IEEE 1394 4-pin and 6-pin connectors. Each camera and computer will have different inputs. Some computers won't even have a Firewire connection. And your computer also needs up-to-date hardware with Firewire drivers to correctly read the information from your camera. Make sure to read the camera's instruction manual. Syncing the camera to the computer can be a huge pain if you don't have the right equipment.

## 4 Computer

Your computer will, again, need updated hardware and drivers. Newer versions of Windows Vista and iMacs should be compatible with HD cameras these days, but you never know. You may need to download driver software to help your computer read the



camera connection which should only cost between \$20 and \$100. If you borrow equipment from your school, make sure to see if they have laptops to rent that have the appropriate Firewire inputs that will recognize the camera. A new desktop computer will be superior for editing over a laptop, simply because of a desktop's power.

## 5 Software

Lastly, you'll need a computer program to "capture" your video footage onto your computer. Once the camera is plugged into your computer via Firewire, your video editing software should recognize the device. Some of the most popular and professional programs to use are Adobe Premiere Pro and Final Cut Pro. There are also basic editing programs like Windows Movie Maker and Apple's iMovie. Some of these programs will take a lot of time to learn, so spend some time and browse around with the features.

## 6 Conversions and Exporting

You may also need to convert different video files in order to make them compatible with software or for uploading onto YouTube. These include exporting to .mp4, .avi, .mpeg, .mov, or .wmv. Make sure you know what kind of movie you are creating, and where you are publishing the video to. The most common export for internet and HD output is .mpeg-2 at 1280 x 720 pixels (16x9 ratio High Definition) and 640 x 480 pixels (4:3 ratio Standard Definition).

Here are some tips for tackling film, if you so choose:

### 1 Establish a Goal

Figure out what are you trying to accomplish with a video. You may want to document a rally, make an argument for liberty, or create a catchy video. Whatever goal you're trying to achieve will decide the style of the video.

### 2 Make a Plan

Movies tell stories. Most movies use a simple story board to explain the various scenes of a film. Plan out



*Vivid image from Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless mind. The movie used low-budget film techniques.*



*Vibrant colors from Tim Burton's Big Fish. Simple, yet elegant.*

the locations, people, props, and story line before you start any filming. Write it all down, and talk with people about the logistics. You may have a great idea in mind, but you'll have to work with what's available. Some of the greatest movies have been done on a low budget, because they used what they had in creative and unusual ways. Finalize the story or script as best you can, but remember that the story and scenes will change as you start filming, so don't cling to the original idea. Be flexible as you continue along the process.

### 3 Filming

Refer to your story board and match it as close as you can. Learn some filming, lighting, and sound techniques, and apply them. If you're doing a story, you'll have some time to set the stage and try different angles and methods. If you're filming an event or speaker, you only have one shot at filming, so make sure you're prepared well in advance.

### 4 Editing

Editing is probably the most time consuming part of the process, if you want your film to turn out well. Most movies cut scenes from different angles, sometimes dub over sounds, alter the contrast, boost color, add in credits, and input digital animation. Assume that for every day you spend filming, you will spend about 5 days editing that content. Also remember that about 1 hour of shooting will probably yield you about 30 seconds to 1 minute of decent footage that you can work with. That is, unless you are simply recording a staged event, like filming a speaker or a protest at your school.

### 5 Producing

Finally, export your video to completed and compressed files. You're going to need to encode your file to standard outputs like .mp4 and .mpeg. As stated before, a High Definition movie will have a pixel ratio of 16:9 – with pixel ranges of 1280×720 pixels (720p) or 1920×1080 pixels – and can possibly take several days to render with a decent desktop computer.

### 6 Promoting

The moment you've prepared for is showing off your video to the public. Hopefully the response is positive or at least attention-getting, and getting dialogue and feedback is tremendously helpful and encouraging – especially if you get to see new people discussing a topic that they hadn't heard of before. Post your video to YouTube, on your chapter website, on Facebook, make copies onto CDs to give out, hold a film series and show it to the public. You've put all this time into creating a film, now get people to see it.

## Film Techniques

Depending on the style you're going for, there are various ways of capturing your story. The best way to begin is by looking at styles you already like and mimic them. Here are some basic techniques:

### 1 Place-making backgrounds.

If you're interviewing a student, don't do an interview in front of a boring bookshelf. Take them to the front of a unique campus building. Give the film a sense of place. Make the scenery simple. Try to punch the color of a blue sky or frame the architecture of your school's library.

### 2 Lighting.

Don't stand in a washed-out room with fluorescent lighting. Go somewhere with dramatic lighting, with some deep shades and shadows.

### 3 Sound.

You may need to attach a microphone to the camera, or record the sound through a separate device. Sound can really ruin a good video if it is too quiet, or muffled, or wind is interfering with the recording. Make sure to use a wind screen to filter out any noise if you're recording outdoors.

### 4 Angles, Placement, and Movement

- **Placement.** There are extreme long shots for place-making like for showing the skyscrapers of a city to show New York; long shots explaining the life of a place; medium shots to explain what a group of people are doing; and close-ups to show a person talking or to show their expression.
- **Angles.** There are birds-eye views and high angles to give an ominous or staring-down effect; eye levels are neutral and explain the human scale; low angles make the viewer feel distant or helpless; and tilted angles give a documentary-like feeling – as if someone is holding a camcorder.
- **Movement.** Pans move the camera horizontally;

tilts move the camera vertically; dolly shots move with the object in focus as if following a car; hand-held shots give the feeling of a first-person view; crane shots tilt upward and horizontally into the sky (an expensive effect); zooming in and out (difficult to pull off without looking cheesy).

### 5 Quick Images.

When editing, you'll want to look at commercials or other films to see how quickly frames change. Commercials have a 3-second rule, where no one shot is longer than three seconds. This keeps the eye moving and the activity going. If you keep just one clip in the same location for several minutes people will get bored. Even look at simple interviews. The camera has at least three different angles that continue to change.

### 6 Transitions.

Transitions can be difficult to pull off. Look at other films and commercials to see how they work with transitions. Sometimes they cut right to a new clip with no transition. Sometimes they fade, or go to a black frame for just a millisecond. Star Wars was one of the first movies to work with unusual transitions, but this can come off as being corny. Less is more.

### 7 Text + Credits

Get to the point. Use text to a minimum and incorporate into the visual aspect of the video. Don't type up paragraphs of text, or read text while it's right in front of you like a student reading off a PowerPoint for a class presentation. Use designed, unique, yet simple text, not Times New Roman or Arial. And do not use hard-to-read texts like Caligraphy or Old English.



*Excellent photographs of Liberty figures.*

# JOURNALS & PUBLICATIONS

Publishing Intellectual Ideas

At some point your organization will need to do creative writing, either for your school newspaper or creating your own chapter publication.

School campuses are perfect for this. You already have a captive audience and students are usually interested in reading about school events.

Your chapter should keep events and projects to a manageable amount. Trying to tackle huge projects will wear you out and many of them may turn out to be mediocre in the end.

If publishing a creative Journal is in your interest, and your goals are reasonable, a creative writing project is exciting and definitely worth a try.

## 1 Start with an Idea.

What kind of creative writing will you do? Most likely, it will be a small publication. But you've got to decide the approach. Are you going to take an intellectual point of view? What about satire? Or perhaps simply reporting on local news.

Remember that you're mostly dealing with young people. So what do you, your friends, and peers pay attention to the most – then cater to your findings. From my experience, college students love comedy and you can start tackling tough issues by approaching it as a joke, then diverting to a serious note. Sort of like how The Onion runs its online video broadcasting. The Daily Show and Colbert Report also take this approach. While their humor can be distasteful



and awkward, they are bringing news to an audience that otherwise is apathetic. Why not bring this technique to the libertarian movement? People will get offended by your provocative styles, but you've opened up more eyes that way. It's your choice.

## 2 Get People Excited.

You'll have a tough time running this journal if you can't get people involved. Let people know they will have the ability to run wild with their creativity (with a few touch-ups from the editor, of course).

If you can get enough people to write consistently – say, five (5) people to write one article each month, then you can start considering this project. Don't let the whole publication be run by only one or two people. You will be worn out in just a couple weeks. Get a feel for the reception, and try to give everyone something to be excited about.

## 3 Assign some Roles.

Typical in the journalism field are photographers, writers, editors, designers, advertisers, distributors,

and the like. If people want to volunteer for a certain role, give them the opportunity. Give them creative freedom but aim for a high standard, something that is worth striving for.

## 4 Develop Details.

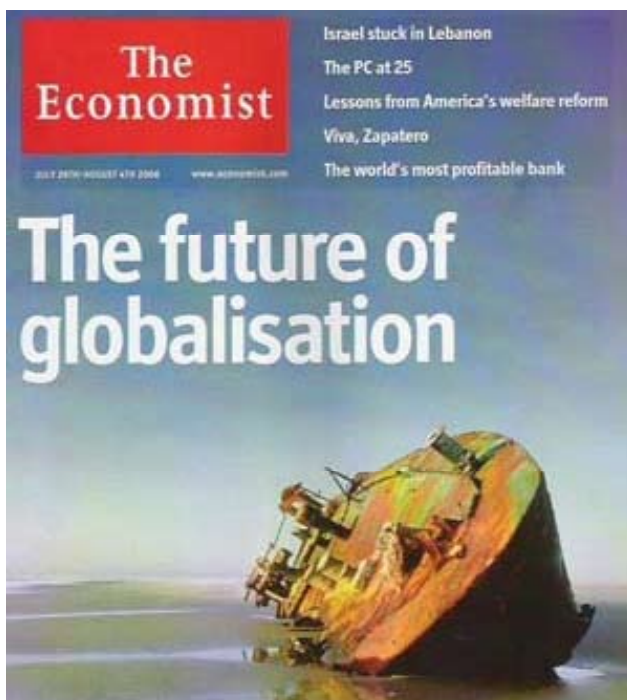
Decide how often you're going to publish. Daily? Probably not. Weekly? Anytime more than a month is probably not regular enough to establish a presence. Regular schools run about 9 months, so less than 9 publications a year probably won't gain recognition on your campus. And consider avoiding work during finals week and midterm schedules when absolutely everyone is busy.

Most journals, newspapers, and publications have various sections and types of writing. There are standard news articles, opinions, photography, interviews, letters-to-the-editor, a comic section, calls for writers, advertising, polls, and a host of others. Based on what roles people are interested in, develop sections that will become standards for your journal. Overtime you will develop these, but it's a good idea to have a plan to start with.

## 5 Create a Layout.

Create a standardized design for your creative journal, something that will be recognizable time and again (See the chapter on "Designing Your Image"). Divide it into the sections, chapters, or topics you have already established into some orderly fashion, and use existing publications as references.

Once you have a layout you can easily drop in articles within a day's amount of work. You can use Microsoft Word or Apple Pages for starters, or, if you have access to a graphic designer or your own design programs, try Quark or Adobe InDesign. There are a few other tools out there as well.



## 6 Start Your First Issue.

Usually a publication will start with a theme. There is always some deviation. Depending on what's going on in the world you'll want to decide what's most relevant to your audience. It could be local school issues, regional, or national issues. But make sure your first issue starts with strong material that will get people to take a look. You want name recognition, so don't let people forget your journal's name right off the bat.

Set a deadline for your publication. Say your release date is Tuesday, March 3rd. You'll want to tell your writers, photographers, and editors in early February that an issue is going to be released. Give them a couple weeks to prepare. Since they aren't writing for a daily column, and you don't have people to edit their work full time, students will require a bit of time to prepare. Two to three weeks in advance is enough time to get some quality in, but not so much time that they'll procrastinate. Tuesdays are usually the best day to release a weekly publication.

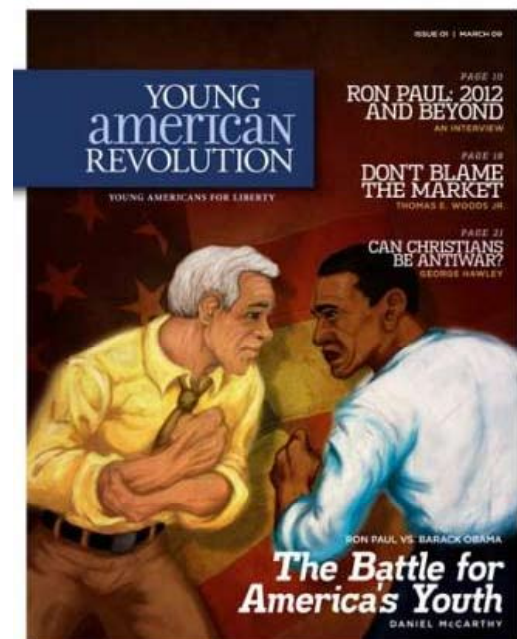
## 7 Publish and Promote.

You've got all your material in, edited, and placed onto the layout. Now publish, print, release, and promote. You'll want release various forms of the publication, including PDFs, a website for people to access the file, create a Facebook page, friend people on Myspace, pass them out on campus, and hand them out during class. Try to get hold of the official school newspaper and get some attention. Write a letter-to-the-editor expressing that your new journal will exceed their school newspaper's popularity. Send out press releases.

Make sure you have some recordable information to know how much people are paying attention. Track statistics on the internet, see how much feedback you're getting on the internet. Create some hype!

## Some Quick Tips

- 1. Don't follow conventions.** Your English teacher taught you the proper, and boring, way to write an essay. Write in a way that is interesting to you and that is easy to follow.
- 2. Know your Audience.** Just like dressing up for an important date, you should know what style and content of writing is appropriate for what situation.
- 3. Customize everything.** Don't use clip art, don't use boring text like Arial and Times New Roman – but don't use Calligraphy font that you can't even read. Your journal's name, image, text, and photography, should all be unique and captivating.
- 4. Get a Grant.** The Collegiate Network is an independent organization which funds independent school newspapers. Visit <http://www.collegiatenetwork.org/> to learn more and apply for funding for your chapter publication.



# WEBSITES & BLOGS

## Your Hub for Information

If your Chapter is established enough, you may wish to purchase your own domain name and hold your own chapter website or blog to act as the central hub of information.

### Websites

Owning and hosting a domain shouldn't cost more than \$70 per year. If your chapter thinks its worth hosting, you can find a graphic designer or website designer on campus to put it together. Contracting a web designer for pay can be pretty expensive, so you're better off having a member of the chapter volunteer to put this together.

Also, maintaining a website can be time consuming, and the customization of the website can take a lot of effort.

Therefore, it may be better to go with a simple Word Press or Blog Spot page for your chapter, linked to Facebook or Twitter.

You'll also be able to set up a Chapter interface on the YAL National website. The abilities of the interface will continually improve over the months, and eventually will be a valuable tool in communicating with your own members and other chapters.

Organize a website with a simple link bar with titles such as "Home", "About," "Events," and "Contact." Above that, place your chapter's logo and name.

Your home page should have news and blog updates.

On the very first page you want to inform people that your chapter is active each and every day. So it's recommended to use a blog on your website.

### Blogs

Blogs can serve as a mini or trial run of a publication. They can serve as updates, announcements, sharing ideas, sharing photos, announcing events, publishing news, and a gateway into entering the network of world-wide blogging and public relations.

Find several members to act as key bloggers that are willing to put in a few minutes every day into researching important news of the day. For a YAL Chapter, it should announce both regional and local news.

Appoint a member to be the Blog's Editor-in-Chief. They will edit content and spend more time moderating and publishing posts. This person would be valuable to use as head of Public Relations as well.

You'll want to create a network of bloggers, like referring to other YAL Chapter Blogs or local news sources, campus blogs, or other student blogs. The more you connect with those websites and personally communicate with them, the more traffic and attention you will generate.

Beginning to blog without experience is somewhat daunting, but much less difficult than it may look. As with most new skills, the more often you practice in

the beginning, the more quickly you'll get the hang of it. No matter the purpose of your post, keep these five things in mind:

- **Frequency.** Typically you should post as often as possible. New content will keep readers returning to your blog and engaging in constructive conversation. If possible, however, remember to pace yourself. Three good blog posts spread out over the course of the day will be easier for your readers to thoroughly read and enjoy than five mediocre pieces posted at the same time.
- **Links.** Include as many links in your posts as you can without making it look awkward. Your readers should never have to Google something they read about in your posts. The link should already be provided. Any post which is not a standalone comic, does not include a video clip, or is not a group or campus announcement should always have at least one link to a respectable news or opinion article. Respectability will usually require you to have a mainstream source. Fortunately, unlike in term papers, Wikipedia can occasionally be acceptable here.
- **Graphics.** Visual elements always help when writing for a younger audience. We're used to getting our news from graphic and video sources, so include as many pictures, videos, and comics as you can. As a general rule, pictures are better than text, and videos are better than pictures. While you won't want to post nothing but graphic elements, this will quickly become monotonous, especially if they are all videos.
- **Wit.** Especially in your commentary, try to be witty. A funny post may be the best way to make your point, and wit can convey your message in a disarming and effective manner.
- **Brevity.** Perhaps most important, try to keep your posts within a range of 250 words. Assume

that your readers' attention span is twice as short as usual when reading something online. An 800-word Op-Ed piece might work well in your campus paper, but it is probably at least 500 words too long for a blog. For instance, do you find yourself tiring of these guidelines? So far, they're 420 words long. If your post is going to be longer than 350 words, put in a break so it will continue off the main page. This allows older posts to be more easily viewed by visitors.

Finish your posts well. Check for grammar and spelling, even though it's the internet. Standardize your emphasis throughout. Pick bold or italics and stick with it. Don't add in different fonts, text sizes, text colors, or words which are underlined or written all in CAPS. This results in a sloppy presentation and makes your post difficult to read. Avoid clipart.

The main challenge of blogging is consistently locating good content, but this too will become easier with practice. If you do not have a regular stream of personal activism stories from your YAL chapter, develop a regular beat of blogs, news sites, cartoonists, and even Twitter users whose sites are typically dependable as sources. Once you have a reliable set of bookmarks, getting a couple of informative and significant posts up every day will become an easy habit.



# FACEBOOK & SOCIAL NETWORKS

## Where the People are

Facebook, Myspace, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube. is where the youth is fairly accessible. Social networking has blown up in recent years to be a leading form of communication strategies. Social networking is also a great way to give your chapter the exposure necessary to assist in growth on campus.

### Advantages

Social networking allows one person to reach out to countless numbers through the vast power of the internet. Social networking is simple, appealing, entertaining, effective, and accessible to just about everyone. Use multiple forms of social networking to your advantage in your recruitment and promotion efforts.

### Facebook

Facebook is an effective way to communicate with current members, find potential new members on campus, and reach out to similar groups for assistance on various efforts.

First, you need to create a Facebook group for YAL on your campus. This will be the social networking headquarters for your chapter. Since Facebook is so widely used, be sure that your group comes off as professional to others. To achieve this, make sure to include the following: accurate contact information, a mission statement, up to date announcements about meetings, and a unique group logo.

Once a facebook group is established you can begin to network throughout campus. Start by inviting

friends, acquaintances, allies of YAL, and contacts received from tabling to join. Also look on facebook for like-minded groups and build relations there. Finding similar groups should be an easy task. Student organizations such as “University of America Libertarians,” groups that promote an libertarian ides, or even joke groups on campus that mock politicians and political parties are all example of where to build relations.

Next, you need to become active in those groups. This can be done by posting on their wall or discussion forum about YAL, inviting those members to join YAL, or connecting with that group’s administrator. If you are able to get the other group’s current admin to help, ask them to either provide you admin privileges to message the group, or send out a message on your behalf to their group encouraging members of their group to look more into YAL by joining your chapter’s facebook group.

Now that you have members in the group who check it frequently, keep the group updated and active. To stay active, have a discussion board that is relevant to YAL and mentions other gatherings of your chapter, send weekly messages to members, and continually post photos or videos about group activities.

Consider assigning facebook group maintenance duties to an active member.

## Twitter

A YAL twitter account for your university will not only keep followers up to date on meetings and YAL campus events, but is a way to stay in touch with YAL members in your chapter and on other campuses.

For recruitment reasons you will want to use your twitter account to connect and be active on other twitter accounts associated with your university. The important thing is to get your name out there and drive traffic to your chapter's account

For example, if YAL is going to have a table or tailgate before a football game, post on your athletic department's twitter account (i.e. @UniversityAthletics) to announce the event. Also be active on like-minded organization accounts from campus.

Staying active on others' twitter accounts will drive traffic to your twitter and then to your group's facebook page where more information and details are provided.

## Key points to remember

- **Be active.** Don't just let an account sit there and expect other's to join. Use your social network accounts to seek and recruit. Also encourage current members to stay active on the social networks.
- **Promote.** Use networks to promote events for recruitment and media reasons.
- **Diversify.** Use many different networks for your chapter. The more networks you use and stay active on, the more likely prospective members will stumble across YAL on your campus and seek more information on.
- **Integrate networks.** Interlink all of your networks to each other in a way that if a prospective member stumbles upon your twitter, they are easily directed to the facebook group and from there find a link to your

chapter website or blog.

For additional information and examples of social networking to use, visit the YAL's national site to see what the National Office does.

# DEVELOPMENT

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# FUNDRAISING

**Just Do It**

If your chapter wants to do anything substantial, you're going to have to do fundraising. Maybe someone on your team loves to do it. Most likely not.

Since YAL National is a 501c4 non-profit organization, we have to raise money to support our activities by continually calling and emailing donors.

## **Student Government Funding**

Your school organization will have an easier time than the national office, as most schools provide funding from mandatory student government fees. We might hate the idea of forced fees, but as long as it exists you may as well use it to fund your organization - and later appoint someone to run for campus President and abolish your student government altogether.

Until that happens, usually school governments have a board of representatives that hear club funding needs. The more active a student club is, the more likely they will give you funding.

This is where you need to get familiar with how your student government works. Have a member attend those meetings, and develop relationships with student government officials. There's nothing wrong with being friendly and polite, even if you disagree with their jobs. Besides, you're more likely to have a positive affect on the system if you are courteous. And, you'll have more money to fund

Liberty-minded programs on your campus to counter their work.

## **Outside Donations**

Most school governments will also require that your club raise some of its own money, usually a certain percentage of the total money you ask for. So, if your school allocates \$2,000 to your local YAL Chapter, you may be required to fundraise \$200, or 10% of that total.

Some clubs require a yearly fee for membership to cover this fundraising cost. But, remember, students already paid a student government fee and shouldn't have to pay more money into a system just to get their own money back.

Instead, here are some tips for raising money for your organization. You can also try the traditional bake sale or car wash fundraiser, or you can try what real non-profit organizations do and actually find donors.

- Compile a list of everyone you know, even if they disagree with your organization's philosophy.
- Write out how much you think they can reasonably afford to donate. Estimate how much they spend on going out to restaurants, and multiply that number by a factor of 2 or 3.
- Call every single one of the people you wrote down on that list and ask for double the amount you thought they could afford. Call that person,

explain what your chapter does, and ask for a specific specific amount, like \$500. After you say that specific dollar amount keep your mouth shut until they respond.

- If they say “Yes,” say thank you. Send them a stamped, self-addressed envelope in the mail the next day so they can drop in a signed check and mail it back to you.
- If they say “No” then ask them for the amount you originally thought they could reasonably give - that restaurant number times two or three. Keep your mouth shut again after you’ve said the specific dollar amount until they say something.
- Ask them one more time for half of that if they say “No” again.
- If no money is donated, say “Well, thank you for your time, and keep enjoying socialism.” No, just say a simple “Thanks and have a nice day.”

If you’re serious about growing your organization, this is something you simply have to do. So if you have a chapter member with an aggressive personality, and it’s their kind of thing, please let them do it.

Remember that school clubs are funding with other students’ money. Sound like any other governments we know about? If those student fees didn’t exist, you’d have the raise that money anyway. You can sell merchandise, charge a member fee, or figure out how to do stuff for cheap.

## Use the Free Market

If allowed by your school, you can always sell merchandise for a small profit. Websites like Zazzle and Cafe Press let you sell various sorts of merchandise for a small profit, usually 10% of the cost of the product.

Your chapter could sell T-shirts, stickers, booklets - things that promote your organization and make you money at the same time.

You could also set up accounts that link to other sellers’

websites. There are RSS codes that will track a computer’s IP address, then if someone buys a product because they saw it through your chapters’ website, you get a small finder’s fee. Cafe Press and Zazzle both do this, as well as Amazon and a few other internet-based sellers.

## Other Ideas

Hold a music concert, sell pre-sale tickets or at the door. Use the event to promote your organization, but also have a good time. Hold a yard sale. A lot of communities have group yard sales or flea markets in order to attract large crowds. You might also ask friends and neighbors to donate materials to your organization instead of having to purchase them.

# STRATEGIC PARTNERS

## You Don't Have to be Alone

Don't be the lone voice in the wilderness. There are hundreds of other organizations willing to support your cause.

### YAL's Partners

YAL National has spent some time developing its own list of friendly organizations that we call "Strategic Partners."

This list is a collection of non-profit organizations dedicated to the cause of Liberty and Constitutional Government.

And many of these organizations have tons of resources they want to provide your chapter with.

For a list of Strategic Partners, visit:  
<http://www.yaliberty.org/node/11766>

Or, scroll to the bottom of any page on the YAL website and there will be a box labeled "Strategic Partners" at the bottom.

Scroll through the list of organizations, and many of their pages contain a paragraph describing the resources they offer to students. Usually they are within a paragraph labeled "Student Resources."

You can contact these organizations directly. Let them know you are an official chapter of the Young Americans for Liberty, and they'll more than likely be interested in sending you materials they specialize in.

We recommend contacting the Leadership Institute first, as YAL National works most closely with them and their organization is designed to help school chapters like yours.

### The Leadership Institute

1101 North Highland Street  
Arlington, VA 22201  
Phone: (703) 247-2000  
[leadershipinstitute.org](http://leadershipinstitute.org)

### Other School Clubs

Most likely, your school won't have many other libertarian-minded clubs. But aren't most people really libertarians anyway? Republican organizations will agree with you on health care and financial issues. And Democrat clubs will agree with you on personal liberties and antiwar efforts.

Don't exclude either of them. Just because you work together doesn't mean you endorse their entire platform. It's the ideas and philosophies you are concerned about. As long as you stay true to the ideas of Liberty, these lukewarm organizations aren't going to water your chapter down.

You should be actively open about your philosophy, but also maintain a positive and friendly relationship with other groups. If you don't reach out to new audiences how do you expect to spread the message?

Again, it isn't about left or right anymore. It's about the purist ideas of freedom.

You can find a list of campus organizations from your school's website, or check out student activities fairs and start talking to people. If anything, it's nice to see what other people are doing and have open discussions with them.

## Local Organizations

Your chapter may wish to develop its own list of Strategic Partners. They can be other local non-profits in the area or even develop a relationship with national organizations from Washington DC.

Every city, county, and state will have its own liberty-based organizations. They might only deal with State or County issues. And getting involved locally for the movement is one of the biggest reasons we have school chapters in the first place.

Do some searching on the internet, check out local newspapers, and try to attend some of their events. Establish relationships wherever you can.

## What Do I Do With Strategic Partners?

Sometimes you'll just want to have a contact list available for help. Other times, you want to get some publicity.

Check out the chapter on "Media Relations and Contacts." Your chapter could send Press Releases to your partners so they can cover your story, or make a link on your blog.

You might also get free access to the organization's events, and speak as a representative of your organization.

Even if you don't plan on doing anything with a Strategic Partner, it's good to be well connected for some

unknown event in the future. If you have that contact information, you'll be better placed to get your Chapter known locally.

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# PRESS RELEASES

## The Gateway to Publicity

A press release is a brief synopsis that announces an event or piece of news for the intention of “pitching” a story towards a media outlet. Even though a press release is not necessarily written to be a news article, it is not uncommon for an editor to publish a press release as one.

When writing a press release, always remember that you are not solely making an announcement. You are pitching a story. News sources go through countless press releases everyday, and toss out many of them. By developing a well-written and well-managed release, you will have higher chances of your story getting picked up.

### Elements of a Press Release

**Length.** Keep your press release to one page in length, two at an absolute most.

**Contact Information.** Provide the name of your YAL chapter along with a contact person’s name, number, and an email address of a member who will serve as a contact for the press.

**Release date.** If there is a specific date for the content to be released, use that date. “For Immediate Release” needs to be typed in an easily identifiable area—preferably in the upper left-hand corner of the release.

**Headline.** The headline is crafted in such a way to get the media contact’s attention towards the release and make them want to continue reading. Your press re-

lease is competing with many others. If your headline doesn’t get the editor or writer interested enough to keep reading, then it won’t be used.

The best type of headline will capitalize on the unique nature of your story, while summarizing it too—so try to inject a bit of news into your headline. The headline should always be typed in bold face. The length of a headline can vary from a few words, to a few lines. Just remember, the better the headline on your press release, the better the chances are it will be read.

**Body.** This is the part of the release you are pitching towards the media for them to pick up on and further develop. There are two main parts to the body: the lead and the actual body.

**The Lead.** The lead is the first paragraph in your press release. The main purpose of the lead is to answer the five crucial questions of who, what, where, and when. If possible, answer the question of how too.

**The Body.** In the body you will go more into the details and coverage of the story.

The body of the press release needs to be written to resemble an inverted pyramid; meaning that each succeeding paragraph should be of declining importance. If an editor decides to run the original press release and does not have space to use the whole release, they can cut it from bottom up without losing the most important information

In the body you want to provide more background information on the story or event, what your YAL chapter set out to accomplish, any future plans for your chapter regarding this topic. If the release is after the event, include the turnout and response from your campus and community.

**Ending.** After the last paragraph drop to the next line, type out “###” and center align it. If your release is more than one page, type “-more-” at the center bottom of each page that is not last.

By getting all the crucial points across in the lead, you have now captured the attention of the individual reading your press release. Once they continue past the lead, they are now dedicated towards learning more about your event or news.

## Tips for Writing the Press Release

- Proofread. There is nothing more unprofessional than sending a “professional” press release that is full of errors.
- Simplify. Stick to using strong verbs, lively information, and text that flows well without repetition. Do not use an extravagant word when a simple one will do. Do not try to “fancy” up the press release by inserting too many adjectives; instead make sure only relevant news is present.
- Keep each sentence short and to the point. Structure each paragraph to only be a couple of sentences in length.
- Always end each page with a complete paragraph. Do not break a paragraph into two pages.
- If you use numerals in your release, type out numbers one to ten, and write numerals from 11 on up.
- Always give an exact date in a press release. For ex-

ample, state “September 17th” instead of “next Thursday” or “tomorrow.”

- If you choose to send in a picture with your press release, the caption needs to be typed on a separate piece of plain white paper.

## Other Considerations

Here are some other suggestions to make your press release the best it can possibly be.

- Beneficial. Write your release in a way that will allow the readers to benefit from what you have to say. Don’t just write to report, write to promote and educate the reader.
- Footer. Have a footer at the bottom of your press release that provides a brief explanation of YAL on your campus and its mission.
- Tip Sheets. Consider attaching a tip sheet about YAL on your campus. This will provide the recipient with general information and important facts, without cluttering the actual press release.

## After Sending the Release

- Be available. The individuals you have listed as “contact” on the release needs to be easy accessible on the days shortly after the release is sent out.
- Be prepared. Your contact representative should prepare answers to questions a reporter is likely to ask. If an answer is not known, the contact needs to be prepared to find the answer and get back to the reporter in timely manner.
- Treat reporters with courtesy. Even better, try to become friends with them. The more a reporter knows who you are, the more likely they will use you for their information. If you can, try to meet with re-

porters you work with in person, perhaps take them out to lunch.

## **Media Advisories**

A media advisory is similar to a press release. Its purpose is to quickly get the media's attention.

However, unlike a press release that tells or pitches a story, a media announcement is meant to alert the press about the specifics of an upcoming event.

You will send out a media advisory several times before an event. Generally you want to send out the media advisory a month, a week, and a day before the event.

A media advisory, which is never longer than one page, will include information in this order:

- Name of Group/Logo
- Media Advisory: Headline
- Released: Month/Day/Year/Time
- Contact Information:
- What:
- Topic:
- Where:
- When: Date and Time
- Brief description of what will happen at the event.
- Who will be at the event? Why are they holding the event?
- Any Additional information

# Press Release Example

LOGO

TITLE OF ORGANIZATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

00 Month 2010

Contact:

Phone Number:

Email:

## PRESS RELEASE

### Headline

(Sub-headline if necessary)

CITY, STATE – Brief description of the story. (What would you say if you only had one sentence on the issue?) Who, what, where, when, why.

Students representing \_\_\_\_\_ (name of group), a campus group started by \_\_\_\_\_ (student name), what the group did.

“Quote from an event leader from YAL,” said \_\_\_\_\_.

Brief description of the group’s mission regarding the event. Expand this description of what happened, include names, include out come of event.

“Quote from other”

Future plans for the group on the issue. Or other upcoming events.

For more information on (group name), visit [www.insert\\_group\\_site\\_here.com](http://www.insert_group_site_here.com)

The (group name) was founded in (year) by (student name). The (group name) is dedicated to (mission statement here).

###

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## School Newspapers are Merely a Tool

The “Letters to the Editor” section of any newspaper is a great way to notify that your chapter exists and what its opinions and philosophical positions are. Readers often value outside voices to a newspaper.

When writing a letter to the editor, make sure it is relevant to something the paper recently dealt with or is a relevant topic that either students or the local community is dealing with.

Letters should be short and simple. Make a strong statement and then briefly support it with facts.

An easy way to ensure that your article gets into your school newspaper is to attack an article that was written in the last issue. For instance, say a writer in last week’s newspaper wrote an article saying that all students want socialized health care because students cannot afford it on their own.

Attack this blatant statement in a letter to the editor using language like, “I am completely insulted by last week’s article entitled *Students Can’t Afford Health Care* written by Ted Smith. His arrogant statements could not have been further from the truth.”

Newspapers like the conflict because they believe it will increase the amount of students that read the newspaper. And it does. In fact, your YAL Chapter’s own Publication could constantly combat articles in your school’s newspaper, and you could expect quite a bit of attention from it.

At some point you may even have a “Letter to the

Editor” battle, if you address a journalist’s topic on the spot and really get down to a pressing issue in which there are multiple points of view.

### Getting Inside the Beast

A great way to get more attention for your chapter is to get one of your members inside the school newspaper. The school newspaper will hold “budget” meetings which go over the articles they want to address for next week’s issue.

It’s easy to get into these meetings, because usually there isn’t enough people to write all the articles that the school newspaper would like to have written. Get a YAL member who likes journalism to write some articles for the school newspaper, and see how their group functions. That way you’ll know how to address your Letters to the Editor, or even get the school newspaper to accept independent article submissions outside of a budget meeting.

Even better, you can start forming a relationship with your school newspaper so that when you send them a Press Release they are more likely to accept your information and write stories about your Young Americans for Liberty Chapter.

# MEDIA RELATIONS & CONTACTS

## Treat Your Connections Like Gold

### Contact Lists

A media contact list is a compilation of the names, addresses, email addresses and phone numbers of contacts at media outlets. This list will become your “go-to” contact database to use when you want to get a story in print or on the air. Your media contact list is a work in progress. It will be comprised of contacts from a current directory in addition to personal contacts you’ve worked more with.

When preparing to build your first contact list, a good amount of time and effort is required. You will need to investigate the following sources of media:

- Newspapers
- Radio Stations
- Television stations
- Wire Services, like the Associated Press and Reuters

A thorough media list will be comprised of the following contacts from each:

- Editors
- Writers
- Reporters
- Program directors

For each contact, have the following information:

- Name
- Title
- Affiliation
- Office address
- Phone number
- E-mail address
- Fax number

- Preferred method of contact
- Deadlines (For example, most daily paper’s have a 9 p.m., deadline, but weekly papers typically vary from publication to publication)

Start compiling your list locally and work your way outwards. This means to start obtaining contacts from on-campus media such as the campus paper and radio station, then work towards establishing community and regional contacts. Lastly, add state-wide and national contacts to your list.

One way to gather information for your contacts is to swing by your school library and see if they have a subscription to any of the following databases: Broadcast Yearbook, Editor and Publishers Yearbook, or BPI Media Services. If you don’t have access to a database, you can simply pick up a phone book, or go to the webpage’s of news sources to look for contact information.

Overtime, your contact list will continue to expand effortlessly, and provide your chapter with even more sources of exposure. Compile your list in a computer spreadsheet to keep it organized, versatile, and easy to update or transfer.

If possible, try to start building relations with your local media even if you have not worked with them yet. This way the contact will be more familiar with your chapter and the overall mission for future work

or references.

Once you have your initial media contact list set up, narrow in on local sources to find out which editors, producers, or writers will be interested most in your chapter's mission. You can send a letter or email to these contacts for the sole purpose of introducing yourself and briefly telling them about YAL on your campus. At the end of your email or letter, try to set up a face-to-face meeting with the contact.

## **Building Relations with Local Newspapers**

Most weekly local newspapers do not use a wire service, nor do they dedicate much space to national or international news. Instead, they depend heavily on local news to fill their pages. Since these papers do rely so heavily on local news, you will stand a better chance of getting your press release in print.

Since local papers do not run on a large staff, it is important that your press release is sent to them in an accurate state and on time. Get your press release to your local weekly paper up to a week ahead of other outlets you work with in order to meet similar publication times.

Every time you get media coverage, send a letter of appreciation to the reporter or editor who used your material. Flattery will get you far with the media when it comes to building a strong relationship.

This thank you letter should set out to thank the person for taking time to write about your chapter of YAL, while also briefly mentioning one or two upcoming events or stories that may be right for the publication. Make sure the letter is brief and provides a sincere thank you. From now on the reporter will think of you as being pleasant to work with, and will be willing to work with your chapter more in the future.

LEAVING  
LEGACY

# A

## FINDING NEW LEADERS 61





# FINDING NEW LEADERS

## Keeping the Fire Alive

A club is only as good as its leadership, and if leadership is not to be perpetuated, then any organization is bound to fail. Of course, you and your chapter leaders are not capable of leading a club indefinitely.

If you wish to see your club survive, thrive and grow in to the future - and this should be a prerequisite for all leaders - then an explicit plan must be implemented which recognizes that good leaders do not always just rise to the top, nor do they necessarily recognize their own abilities and inclinations.

This is why any adequate leadership development program must:

1. Provide ample opportunities for potential future leaders to exhibit their abilities.
2. Constantly and consciously be on the lookout for potential leaders.
3. Cultivate multiple leaders at a time with the knowledge that some won't turn out as expected or not follow through.

### Leadership Opportunities

The best way to seek out, develop, and choose future leaders is to provide ample leadership opportunities. These opportunities can take many forms such as committees and special events.

For example, if your chapter wishes to run an event, and the event is not meant to be very large or visible,

it is a good idea to form a committee and appoint a freshman or new members to act as chairman. This small leadership role gives that member a chance to show some leadership potential.

So long as this potential leader acts in conjunction with the current leadership who can assure that nothing goes seriously wrong, then - not only has a good event been put together - but the current leadership did not have to spend as much time and stress on it as they normally would have.

Committees and special events offer the best way to encourage, promote, and identify potential leadership. This is mainly because these opportunities can take on so many different forms, offering the greatest number of interests and opportunities to the greatest number of potential leaders.

It would also be wise of any chapter to create two executive board positions to act as Freshman Liaisons.

These two students would be appointed to the executive board after going through an application and interview process and are farmed from the new freshman class at the beginning of the school year.

If your school hosts a club fair or similar opportunity for new freshmen to see the various different athletic, social, and club opportunities your school offers, then applications for these positions can be handed out then.

Creating and filling these positions are beneficial for two reasons:

1. Applicants for these positions are often times natural leaders and willing to put themselves in uncomfortable situations. They are also likely devoted to your philosophy and willing to work hard for the cause.

2. The two freshmen who are appointed can be trained and applied as the executive board sees fit. Not only do they become familiar with the policies, goals, and intricacies of the organization, but they have a vested interest in its success, especially if they wish to seek a higher position in the organization in the future.

As a warning, however, freshman liaisons often do not turn out the way one predicts and applicants who would otherwise be excellent leaders are inevitably turned down. It is important that one maintains a discerning eye towards freshman liaison. When an appointed freshman liaison does not fulfill their role according to expectations, it may be necessary to remove them from their position or, at a minimum, make sure that other applicants who were turned down are provided with ample opportunities to show and develop their potential. Just because someone has been turned down for freshman liaison does not mean they are not a viable, potential leader.

## Identifying Potential Leaders

It is very important to keep a constant and conscious lookout for potential leaders. These people will often show some or all of the following characteristics:

1. They show up to many if not all of your organization's meetings and events, especially the smaller ones.

2. They offer their time and service.

3. They are involved with other organizations and

groups.

4. They bring friends to meetings and events.

5. They show enthusiasm about the organization.

Once these people are identified, they should be asked to head up a committee, project, or something else that can not only cultivate their leadership talents and abilities but expose what talents they currently have.

## Cultivating Leaders

The success and legacy of your organization is so important that it is vital that you cultivate multiple leaders at a time. This is primarily because many potential leaders won't turn out as expected: some simply won't be good leaders worthy of taking on a primary role, others might find interest in other groups or clubs and pursue opportunities in those directions, and yet some might even change their politics and philosophy.

In short, make sure your organization is always cultivating multiple leaders at one time.

There are multiple benefits to cultivating several leaders at a time:

1. The organization can choose from a number of qualified candidates for leadership roles, and

2. A feeling of competition between potential leaders may make them work harder and do more for the organization in order to prove their leadership capabilities and right to become an official leader in the club.

We hope this activism kit has provided you with information and ideas in a thorough yet simple way. YAL National will continue to provide you resources and aid to help your chapter become to most active and effective group on your campus.

*- YAL National*

