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Women's Rhetoric – Making a Difference

The Argumentative Strategies of Women in Public Life
Sweden & South Africa
2004-2007



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Introduction

Brigitte Mral & Philippe Joseph Salazar

The following collection of articles focuses on women's rhetoric and is a result of a research collaboration started by Örebro University and the Centre for Rhetoric Studies at Cape Town University. The project "*Women's Rhetoric in South Africa and Sweden. A Comparative Study in Democratic Deliberation*" was financed by NRF and SIDA and headed by Principal Investigators Brigitte Mral and Philippe-Joseph Salazar. The editorial material is based on empirical studies undertaken by master students from both universities. The aim of the project has been to compare female politician's and organization's deliberation to study rhetorical strategies and gain insight to the use of language in the differing cultural context of South Africa and Sweden.

Detailed description of the subject

The question of the "regendering of rhetoric" has undergone radical development in the past twenty years, leading to a diversification of rhetoric theory and practice concerning democracy and deliberation.¹ South Africa's consolidating democracy stands firmly by its constitutional principle of non-discrimination on the basis of gender as well as a sustained policy of gender redress. Sweden has a long tradition of women's active involvement in the public sphere. The aim of the proposed research is to study spheres of public deliberation, in two historically contrasted yet fundamentally analogous democracies, from a rhetorical standpoint. The articles explore the practice of public deliberation and gender so as to arrive at a clearer understanding of how women deliberate and interact with male-centred deliberators in the sub-spheres of political argumentation, community debating and popular media rhetoric.

The project focuses on two areas:

1. Women's rhetorical leadership in politics

In Sweden, women nowadays make up almost 50 % of the MPs and several of the senior posts in the party leadership are also held by women. There is a long tradition of efforts to establish gender equality in Sweden, which started with Alva Myrdal and other women politicians in the 1930s. The public role of women has over the past 20 years shifted from a

¹ Campbell (1989), Foss, Foss & Griffin (1998), Glenn (1997), Lunsford (1996)

demonstrative adjustment to male uniform patterns in style of argument and style of delivery to a palpable feminisation and individualisation. In South Africa, both Houses of Parliament have female Speakers; there is a notable cohort of women MPs and Councillors, as well as Provincial Legislatures Members. The cabinet itself shows a remarkable presence of women. This first area of research aims at generating, from individual figures' rhetorical strategies, overall conclusions about women's rhetorical choices in situations where male dominance is no longer evident and at formulating conclusions on how women politicians are perceived as public deliberators.

2. Women's rhetoric at grass root level

Right from the turn of the 20th century community deliberative practices were enhanced in Sweden. Discussion groups were established by women teaching other women how to develop public speaking and debating skills. Grass root rhetoric continued throughout the 20th century, not least during the emancipatory movements of the 70s. In South Africa, the Struggle for Liberation (and, by contrast, the developmental nature of a white middle class, Afrikaans culture from the 50s onward), witnessed a remarkable growth of grass root rhetoric: Black women in church organizations, white women in debating circles (leading to the Black Sash movement that, symbolically, had to resort to "silent" protest, and gestured rhetoric), and women organizers in trade-unions. In short of a strong, contentious, live system of grass root deliberation was once ferment in the collapse of apartheid. What characterises these initiatives seems without exception to have been a focus on what Habermas calls communicative action, i.e. a consensus focused, egalitarian form of communication aiming at the development of common lines of action in the public sphere.

Theoretical background

Gender theory is not just about additively introducing female perspectives and examples in the rhetorical tradition, but it is also about analysing rhetoric as the bi-gendered phenomenon it really is. Traditionally and historically, rhetoric has until recently been an art reserved for men and thereby clearly gender-determined. It has been a power tool used to pursue the interests of power and power has been a male sphere; in politics, in law as well as in religion. Rhetoric has often been pursued and taught as agonistic art, focused on the fighting elements, where the objective is to win over the opposition with any verbal and non-verbal means available, not just with rational arguments. This can be said to have been effective and well

adapted to its purpose in centralistic and hierarchically governed societies, be it with democratic or other forms of government. Today, the situation is different as power has been decentralised and it is no longer solely a concern of the white western man (even if it still is to a large degree). But above all, public language has to a greater extent been democratised and new voices have tried to break through the dominating communication pattern. Rhetoric in its traditional form, both as an analytical and practical instrument, is therefore by many viewed as being too limited for the present reality, which is less patriarchal than any known reality in history.

In the course of history, women, and other groups finding themselves in underprivileged positions, have developed sophisticated strategies to assert themselves in the patriarchal rhetorical field. There is now a great variation of empirical studies of individual women rhetoricians, especially within American rhetorical research.² The interest in this research area is however also growing in other countries.³ At present, intense discussions are taking place with respect to a reevaluation of the Aristotelian foundations for rhetoric research from a gender perspective. As an example, it has been said that not least the rhetorical production model means different things to women and men: *Invention*, i.e. the way of discovering the content of a discourse stand for different things to men and women; so does differentiated approaches to “rhetorical situations”: “The act of invention for women, then, begins in a different place from Aristotle’s conception of invention: Women must first invent a way to speak in the context of being silenced and rendered invisible as persons”.⁴

A further assumption in rhetoric research is that rhetoric is dependent on the situation. In times when the rhetorical situation was exclusively male, principles for public speaking were developed, which worked for a male communication culture; competitive, agonistic and formalised. One strategy used by women was then to adjust to this communication pattern. But most often it was essential to support one’s argumentation with considerably more than

² Campbell (1989, 1993, 1994), Levin & Sullivan (1995), Wertheimer (1997), Sutherland & Sutcliffe; Ritchie & Ronald (2001)

³ Mral; Bischoff & Wagner Egelhardt

⁴ Ritchie & Ronald (2001) p. xvii

formal arguments. The task was first and foremost to create, in an offensive manner, a well-functioning *ethos* and *persona*.⁵

To a great extent, women's choice for deliberative actions ever since the scientific revolution was governed by the female starting point.⁶ Women's establishment of *ethos* and handling of *logos* and *pathos* are done on considerably different conditions and in different ways than men's choice of rhetorical means.⁷ Women's differing choices of rhetorical strategies have mostly been noted in general terms and from individual empirical examples, while synthesising studies are rarer. This project attempts to provide a first synthesis, based on the study of two democracies.

Nonetheless, women's argumentation has often been a rhetoric of powerlessness. They have developed strategies to break through the mechanisms of exclusion, and they still do, not least within modern rhetoric research. In 1996, Michael Billig pointed out that the revival of rhetoric in the academic field had so far had a clear masculine mark. Despite the post-modern talk about "the celebration of otherness" he says, "The 'Other' in fact still is excluded".⁸

When analysing alternative speakers, as we intended to do in both areas described above, it soon becomes very clear that these, in many respects, have developed more sophisticated and varied rhetorical strategies than speakers accepted in the dominating public sphere. Since women's voices have been suppressed for such a long time and have had so many barriers to break through, women have often developed advanced techniques to enable efficiency. The study of women speakers therefore widens the theoretical horizon of rhetoric. Or, as Campbell claimed already in 1989: "the rhetoric of outgroups is, comparatively speaking, more important for rhetorical criticism and theory".⁹ What is especially notable in women rhetoricians is a great sensitivity to the demands and expectations of the audience, which often results in a virtuoso as well as what, from a historical perspective, is a very entertaining game with the prejudices of the audience.¹⁰

⁵ Mral (2003)

⁶ Salazar (1997), Nativel (1999), Logan (1999), Carr (2003)

⁷ Salazar (1999), Mral (1999)

⁸ Billig (1996)

⁹ Campbell (1989) p. 23

¹⁰ Weber (1990), Mral (1999)

Turning the perspective of rhetoric vis à vis democracy studies from the rhetoric of the dominating part to the rhetorical strategies of the once dominated element also opens our eyes to the democratic potential of rhetoric. This project on Swedish and South African women deliberators has a direct bearing on such a debate.

This project wishes to make a significant contribution to rhetoric studies by providing historical, theoretical and practical analyses about women as deliberators, thus enabling a transition from a seemingly neutral approach to a more open and flexible theory, which abandons what, in the words of Bourdieu, could be called “the necessary denial” of rhetoric, i.e. the exclusion of everything that does not fit into the white, male, agonistic pattern for public argumentation and popular deliberation.

Each area of study has its own objective, being one, the study of political rhetoric by women in office; two, the study of popular rhetoric by women at grass root level. Methodology is in part based on historical research, in part on interviews, in part on rhetorical criticism.

Disposition

The book is divided in two sections where the first part comprises articles regarding female politician’s deliberation and rhetorical strategies to influence. The opening article, written by Maja von Stedingk Wigren, introduces a Swedish perspective with help of a feminist party. von Stedingk Wigren investigates how a new party is established on the political scene, what rhetorical strategies it employs and how it positions itself rhetorically. The following article, written by Helena Hansson Nylund, focuses on the South African politician Nosiviwe Mapisa Nqakula, leader of ANC Women’s League. Hansson Nylund examines perspectives of power structures and rhetoric with a hierarchical view that perceives rhetoric as a persuasive struggle, and an egalitarian outlook forwarded mainly by a feminist analysis of women’s rhetoric.¹¹ The two perspectives, described in terms of horizontal and vertical attitude, gives insight in the guiding aspects of political rhetoric. Aditi Hunma’s, who is the author of the third article, assesses three South African women as rhetorical agents. Hunma highlights how public argumentation justifies past actions in order to persuade public stakeholders to act and to construct a positive persona. The report guides us in a discussion on how media constructs female images, and the significance they place particularly on gender.

¹¹ Campbell (1973), Mral (1999) pp. 217-222, Hellspong (2003)

The second part of the book is that of a grass root perspective. The opening article is written by Nicole Borg who studies the non governmental organization GAP and its search for effective rhetorical strategies to eradicate gender based violence in South Africa. Borg analyzes in which way the organization persuades to position the issue higher up on the political agenda. The final study, written by Gunilla Malm, focuses on the rhetorical strategies employed by a feminist grass root organization based in Sweden. Malm directs spotlight on how the group handles a subordinate position when striving for equality between women and men, and how they work to persuade.

The final part of the book is an introduction of the DVD made by Nathalie Rosa Bucher, Monique Bermeister and Catherine Morris who filmed events around the annual “16 Days of Activism” against violence directed toward women and children. The last chapter is a presentation of the speakers appearing on the film.

The book is far from comprehensive and we discovered during the work in progress that the issues are far more complex and multifaceted to be able to make straightforward comparisons between them at this stage. The contribution of the book will be viewed as a collection of case studies that hopefully can inspire others to continue the work we have started in this particular area of women’s rhetoric.

The individual contributions also shift in character depending on research interests and presentation preferences. Some of them are formal research papers whilst one of the contributions is a DVD which adds visual documentation of female politician’s in differing rhetorical settings.

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Part I

A Political Perspective

The Pink Party

A Feminist Party Enters the Swedish Political Arena

Maja von Stedingk Wigren

The political arena is by tradition shaped and dominated by men. Women have only begun to gain ground during the last hundred years, which means that political participation has been more or less impossible for female members of society. Rhetoric has been closely connected to public speaking since Ancient Greece and its arena has been formed and subjugated by men. Women have been seen as belonging to the private sphere yet in the last decades this view has changed dramatically. Women in our days have, if not an obvious, then at least an accepted chance to act as public speakers for differing causes.

My aim in this article is to study a new feminist party in Swedish politics. Certain characteristics make this party interesting within a rhetorical context. Firstly, new parties are seldom started, and to see how a new party establishes and positions itself rhetorically is highly interesting from a research point of view. Secondly, this party is interesting since it was started by women with a clear and outspoken feministic political line. What will be analyzed is not a single speaker, not a speech or other traditionally rhetorical artefacts, but an organization – a political movement. Since the party came about with a clear feminist angle into the traditional political arena it was seen as a controversial movement.

Movements are rhetorical acts, according to Cathcart.¹² They are consequently something worth analyzing from a rhetorical perspective. Cathcart goes on by saying that "...movements are a kind of ritual conflict whose most distinguishing form is *confrontation*".¹³ Whether or not this is something typical for the new, feministic, Swedish party will be further investigated throughout the article. The party can not be viewed as an individual speaker which may be regarded as problematic for the rhetorical analysis. Yet, the arguments and rhetorical strategies must be possible to investigate within the frame of an organization. Foss writes that a rhetorical artefact can be many things, such as use of symbols, written or spoken language, non-verbal symbols or an organization.¹⁴ The party will here be seen as the sender of rhetorical messages.

¹² Cathcart (1990) p. 361

¹³ Ibid. p. 362

¹⁴ Foss (1996) p. 12

The feminist angle is also of great importance and deserves closer attention. Campbell argues that "...women's liberation is a separate genre of rhetoric."¹⁵ In the background chapter this will be discussed more thoroughly. As said, women do not have a long history of public speaking, thus their style and strategies will be looked at in the background chapter.

The aim of this article is, with consideration to the aspects just discussed, to view the feminist party closer through a rhetorical analysis. The questions of focus are:

- What are the party's *political standpoints* and messages?
- How do they reach out with their messages through *language* and *symbolic action*?

The material analysed is the party's political documents and their official website. Media reporting has also been of some interest.

Women in politics – background

Women's issues are not completely new phenomena in Swedish politics. Since 1921 women in Sweden have been allowed to vote for Parliament, and in 1921 four of the 230 members elected into Parliament were women.¹⁶ But giving women access to politics was not something that happened over night. Women who wanted the right to vote in political elections carried out a long struggle from the nineteenth century. Mral writes that ever since the 1880s there had been a constant discussion of women's rights.¹⁷ Even though women historically had not been allowed to speak in public, there have been exceptions from this rule. Mral argues that women never had an easy task speaking in public, and gives examples of women since Aspasia living around 400 B.C. to politically public speaking women under the 19th century's popular movements.¹⁸ The focus for women speaking in public has often been equal opportunities and issues concerning gender equality.

In the 19th century only a smaller part of the grown up population in Sweden had the right to vote. Many men were not allowed to vote because of their low salaries, and women were not allowed thereto since they were not seen as legally mature. It was a tough struggle which lasted for many decades that later on gave all women the right to vote. Women were not a

¹⁵ Campbell (1990) p. 398

¹⁶ Ohlander (2001) p. 115

¹⁷ Mral (1999b) p.163

¹⁸ See Mral (1999a)

common sight on the political arena, and for most women the thought of acting political was inconceivable.¹⁹ Women were thought of as belonging to the private sphere, and had trouble finding an arena in public to make their voices heard.

One arena where women found a space to act in public was the popular movements.²⁰ The popular movements were not gender equal, but there existed an idea about everybody's equal worth and opportunity to be a part of the democratic process.²¹ These democratic ideas were a force for women to take up the struggle for equal rights in America as well as in Sweden.²² In Sweden a vast amount of speeches made by women concerned the right to vote.

Mral writes that women who were striving for the right to vote argued against existing laws and power conditions and also against existential misgivings about the resolution of gender roles, family bounds and social order.²³ These women, pushing for social rights, were seen as a threat to the structure of society in more than one way. Campbell (1990) explains:

Consequently, feminist rhetoric is substantively unique by definition, because no matter how traditional its argumentation, how justificatory its form, how discursive its method, or how scholarly its style, it attacks the entire psychosocial reality, the most fundamental values, of the cultural context in which it occurs.²⁴

Mral and Campbell agree on the thesis that women speaking in public have been seen as a threat, no matter how they acted, just because they were women. This must be seen as a large hindrance for female orators. How should a woman act to reach her audience when she first of all has to break the psychological barrier to reach through as a woman? Mral says that women's choice of persona (rhetorical mask) was very important, and that the mask was chosen both from her own personality but also with regard to the audience's expectations.²⁵ What persona a woman chose had to be contemplated in more than one way. Not all personas were allowed for a woman, and around the turn of the century in Sweden, it was considered

¹⁹ Mral (2001) p. 43

²⁰ The popular movements in Sweden, religious, political and temperance were under this time a growing movement that fought for equality between classes and gender, often through speeches and meetings.

²¹ Mral (2001) p. 43

²² Mral (1999a) p.152

²³ Mral (2001) p. 43

²⁴ Campbell (1990) p. 390

²⁵ Mral (1999a) pp. 16

that women who spoke in public took a male role and therefore lost their womanliness.²⁶ Despite these conditions many women made a living by travelling the country, giving speeches for a longer or shorter period. Since many of these women were teachers they were used to speaking in front of groups, but none of them had a rhetorical education.²⁷ This is well concluded when Mral states:

Women speakers choose their strategies just as men do – but in the women’s case this occurs from a different, and subordinate, position in a patriarchal society.²⁸

A woman, as public speaker, needs to contemplate her performance in greater detail than a man to win the goodwill of an audience. Style is another aspect of importance since there seems to be different styles in male and female argumentation. Mral writes that men are more aggressive and combat orientated in their argumentation than women. The ideal of fighting about the best argument can be put against the female way of searching consensus.²⁹ Glenn agrees with the notion of a calmer and non confronting female rhetoric, when saying that “[i]f collaboration, invitation, and dialogue could be considered persuasive techniques, then women could be rhetoricians.”³⁰ Silence can be seen as a rhetorical strategy, but only when the person being silent chooses it. To be silenced is not to use a strategy. She also writes that silence well may be undervalued and misunderstood as a feminine rhetorical strategy.³¹ Thus the way of arguing attitude is not constant, but can be considered to be a matter of gender.

Much has happened since 1921 when women in Sweden achieved the right to vote and act politically. Today women in politics are not seen as extraordinary or unusual. The number of ministers in Parliament in Sweden is 349 persons, and the division between men and women is almost equal. Though, not all women are satisfied with the equality in Swedish society. The salaries are not equal between genders, mothers are at home more with the children than the fathers, and many women are victims of domestic violence. The struggle for equal rights has had ups and downs through Swedish history; it has been stronger around the turn of the 18th and 19th century, under the 1970’s and today.

²⁶ Mral (1999b) p. 163

²⁷ Ibid. p. 164

²⁸ Ibid. p. 170

²⁹ Mral (2006) p. 152

³⁰ Glenn (2006) p. 100

³¹ Ibid. p. 103

Before the election for Parliament in 1994 a few women started a group called “Stödstrumporna” (eng. ~supportive stockings). They drove the parole “All the pay and half the power” and “threatened” to start a feminist party. This drove other parties to place more women on the voting lists, the group viewed their work as completed, and the group dissolved. However, women’s struggle did not end here: in the beginning of the 21st century interesting events took place, which will now be discussed in greater detail.

The Feminist Initiative enters the arena

On the 4th of April 2005 there was a press conference given by four women in Stockholm. They stated that they had formed a new feminist network called the Feminist Initiative, and their goal was to place women issues on the political agenda. The press conference drew much media attention and the next day media was flooded by the news.

There are numerous articles and media reporting from the start of the Feminist Initiative. Media coverage will be of interest in this article since it was massive and also an important means for the party to reach out to possible voters. Yet the main focus of the article is the party documentation and rhetorical actions: The political platform and election manifesto, the communication between leaders and members, their efforts to win votes by action and political ideas. By looking at different parts in their rhetorical strategies, by language and symbolic actions, the aim is to explain political standpoints and identify the rhetorical choices made to reach out.

One of the women giving the press conference in April 2005 was the former leader of the left wing party in Sweden, Gudrun Schyman. She was the left wing party leader in Sweden from 1993 until 2003, and is an experienced public speaker. She was a popular leader and considered to be the main reason for the positive election results in Parliament. Schyman has a special way of presenting herself and often wears red clothes and high heels. As an orator she has not adapted to the “male political persona” with toned down colors. Mral writes that Schyman loves to be in discussions, but that she rarely gives an aggressive impression. She uses humor and likes to laugh, a dry and half ironic laughter.³² As it turns out this woman was going to be a very important person for the new Feminist Initiative. Her political experience

³² Mral (2003) p. 333

came to be of great value for the new party and media showed much interest for Schyman and sought many interviews.

The group declared at the press conference that they did not have one leader; everybody was equally important and influential. They strived to create a flat organization. This is not a new phenomenon in women's organizations. Campbell writes the following concerning women's movement in the 60ies:

In paradigmatic form, "consciousness raising" involves meetings of small, leaderless groups in which each person is encouraged to express her personal feelings and experiences. There is no leader, rhetor or expert. All participate and lead; all are considered expert. The goal is to make the personal political: to create awareness (through shared experiences) that what were thought to be personal deficiencies and individual problems are common and shared, a result of their position as women.³³

Both the idea of leaderless meetings and the way of making the personal into politics can be seen in the Feminist Initiative. The group has never had a formal leader, but a committee, and it was from this committee the women at the press conference came. Their way of making the personal political will be clarified later on in this article. If we see to Campbell's arguments this could not be avoided in the Feminist Initiative, since she says: "All the issues of women's liberation are simultaneously personal and political."³⁴

The Feminist Initiative did not want to belong to either the right or the left on the political scale. They wanted to attract women (and to a certain degree men) from both sides of politics. This is not a new phenomenon among women political speakers. According to Mral one observable fact regarding women active as public, political speakers around the turn of the century was that they collaborated across the ideological borders.³⁵ It can seem as though women issues are stronger factors than the political ideological belonging.

Media interest

When the Feminist Initiative first appeared media was very interested, as stated earlier. The group received much publicity and the debate concerning the party was massive. But after a

³³ Campbell (1990) pp. 393

³⁴ Ibid. p. 399

³⁵ Mral (1999b) p. 164

couple of months the interest among journalists seemed to decline. The Feminist Initiative still sent out press releases and tried to reach out, but their messages were not picked up by media. Undoubtedly media plays a huge role in politics and has the power to silence social occurrences which can be related to techniques of dominance. Silence was not self-chosen and should for that reason not be seen as a rhetorical strategy in the way that Glenn says silence can be an effective strategy. However, it must be seen as a rhetorical strategy from the media point of view, to choose who is allowed to reach out to society with what messages and when.

The same evening as the first press conference had been held Schyman was interviewed for *Aktuellt*.³⁶ In the studio a picture behind Schyman declared “Stirring politics”, which can be seen as a feminine metaphor, belonging to the private sphere. The following day’s theme in media reporting regarding Feminist Initiative was the question: are they going to make it? Two things seemed to be of concern for the negative media picture that was portrayed of the Feminist Initiative. First there was no leader and secondly they did not want to belong either to the right or the left side on the political scale. These two facts were seen as indisputable problems in media reporting. The Feminist Initiative claimed that this was the whole idea, to make something new and deviate from inflexible thinking towards a more elastic attitude. The fact that the group was started *by* women and mainly *for* women issues also caused a sizeable debate in media. The group meant that they wanted to look at all political issues from the feminist point of view, and not work as the established parties do by occasionally addressing feminist issues. This approach was also a great concern for many of the experts commenting on the Feminist Initiative agenda in media.

The ways in which issues were addressed by Feminist Initiative representatives in media made obvious that they were not media trained. One telling example was when Sofia Karlsson made an interview in the popular radio morning show *Morgonpasset* on the 6th of April 2005. Questions concerning how politics built upon a feminist point of view would take form were asked and one of the more specific questions concerned traffic and how a feminist motorway would look. Karlsson’s answered that it would be pink.³⁷ This was most likely an attempt to use irony and however it was successful, or maybe even harmful for the new group, is hard to say. The ethos of the group was questioned in media from the beginning and imprecise ironic

³⁶ *Aktuellt* is one of the most popular news programs in Swedish Public Service Television

³⁷ <http://www.feminetik.se/diskutera/index.php?sub=3&mid=61571> (2007-04-20)

answers like this did not help strengthen the group credibility. Unperfected statements were in the beginning a hindrance to reach out with the actual thought through organizational opinions. The Feminist Initiative continuously had to clarify what they meant in different situations which took time and energy from issues of interest.

During the first year there were some conflicts within the Feminist Initiative. These were often given much space in media reporting. One of the party founders, Tiina Rosenberg, had a particularly hard time with media. Rosenberg is a professor in Gender Studies and she was persecuted with such vigor by media that it became impossible for her to carry out her professional responsibilities. She was displayed as a national witch since after making comments in media about men and the differences between the social statuses of gender. After six weeks of relentless media persecution she left the Feminist Initiative.

Ups and downs

Even though media's presentation of the Feminist Initiative was negative, the opinion among the Swedish voters was positive. Already in December 2004 when Schyman gave air to the thought of starting a new feminist Party 22% of voters claimed they could vote for such a Party.³⁸ These high numbers followed the organization for some time. But in September 2005 the support was 11%³⁹, which nonetheless still is high. Yet in the election for the Parliament one year later the support had declined considerably. The Feminist Initiative claimed less than 1% of the votes. The reasons for the fall were many, but some of them seem to have been:

- The negative media picture.
- The so-called Roks-affair⁴⁰ with which the Feminist Initiative was connected, though they had nothing to do with one another.
- Conflicts within the organization were exposed and enlarged in the media.

The first Annual meeting – the inauguration of a new party

In September 2005 the organization called their members to an annual meeting. Both individual members and groups around the country were encouraged to send in member bills

³⁸ www.aftonbladet.se/vss/val2006/story/utskrift/0,3258,708911,00.html (2005-10-05)

³⁹ Aftonbladet (2005-09-14) p. 8

⁴⁰ Roks is the National organization for women's watch. Under the fall 2005 a negative TV production was sent in the Swedish television. One of the leaders in the organizations Roks seemed to comment very negative about men, and a lively discussion on feminism blowed up. In media the Feminist Initiative was connected with the women's organization and the negative sight of feminism was directed to the Feminist Initiative.

stating what topics the organization should concentrate on. The annual meeting resulted in a resolution regarding power exception, and later on it turned into the political platform and the election manifesto (which will be analyzed later on in this article). The main question under the annual meeting was however not these particular standpoints, it was whether or not the organization should reorganize into a political party. A decision was made to run for the Parliament election in 2006 and to brake against traditional political standards and choose three spokespersons instead of one leader. These spokespersons were: Gudrun Schyman, Sofia Karlsson and Devrim Mavi.

The annual meeting attained plenty media attention, as did the forming of a new party. The strategy to keep the organization flat was also newsworthy as was the decision to have three spokespersons and the party's unwillingness to place itself to the right or the left on the political scale. A couple of weeks after the annual meeting the Feminist Initiative still received much publicity in media, but in the winter the interest seemed to fade, and soon it was quiet. The Feminist Initiative continued to send out press releases, but the silence was almost complete.

Unexpected help

Short before the Parliament election in 2006 the Feminist Initiative acquired help from a distinguished guest, namely Jane Fonda. During her book tour in the spring earlier the same year Fonda and Schyman met and became friends. When she was asked to come and help the party in the spurt before the election she accepted and also brought along her feminist friend Eva Ensler. They both took part in square meetings and seminars, where they demonstrated their support for the Feminist Initiative.⁴¹ To invite famous individuals to support a campaign can be seen as an authority argument, a way to let the message be said also from someone with a strong ethos in the issues discussed. Jane Fonda has been interested in women's issues for a long time and must be regarded as having a strong ethos within the area. But to bring in women from other countries also shows that the struggle is international. The issues raised by the Feminist Initiative are not only discussed in Sweden, but also around the world. It can be a strong argument to show the dignity and the importance of the issue. The international aspects and the solidarity between women all over the world are displayed in a press release published by the Feminist Initiative when Fonda and Ensler arrived.⁴² The strategy to use famous

⁴¹ <http://www.expressen.se/1.409756> (2007-05-07)

⁴² http://www.feministisktinitiativ.se/downloads/medi/pressmed_060915_3.pdf (2007-05-07)

person's ethos is also found by Nicole Borg in her analysis *The Rhetorical Strategies of a South African NGO*.

Language

To acquire information regarding the party's political opinions and formulations I have collected empirical material in form of member letters to see how they describe themselves and the language usage in the Political Platform and Election Manifesto. This aims to uncover the standpoints and rhetorical linguistic strategies used by the Feminist Initiative.

Issues to work at

The topics the Feminist Initiative struggled for were, as said, decided by the members under the first annual meeting. At the annual meeting it was determined that the following five issues were to be main focus points for the party in the 2006 Election:

- Women's salaries must be raised.
- Gender based violence must be stopped.
- Parental allowance must be individualized.
- A world free from discrimination must be the foundation.
- The building of the society must start in women's conditions.⁴³

These focus points are also listed in the Election Manifesto, with one addition:

- Civil, urban and domestic planning should lean on and be extracted out of women needs and conditions!⁴⁴

The Feminist Initiative chooses a confrontational line in their analysis of society and in their political standpoints. Cathcart points out that this is common for a movement:

The enactment of confrontation gives a movement its identity, its substance and its form. No movement for radical change can be taken seriously without acts of confrontation. The system co-opts all actions which do not question the basic order, and transforms them into system

⁴³ <http://www.feministisktinitiativ.se/politik.php> (2007-03-19)

⁴⁴ 2006 Feminist Election Manifesto

messages. Confrontational rhetoric shouts “Stop!” at the system, saying, “You cannot go on assuming you are the true and correct order; you must see yourself as the evil thing you are.”⁴⁵

Their analysis of society is tough and thorough. They see much they want to change, and they attack the present system with a few main questions, something that continues in the Political Platform where they engage a wider discussion around issues of interest.

The Political Platform

In the Political Platform the Feminist Initiative presents the party by identifying the problems they see in Sweden and in Swedish politics, and what they want to do about it.

The Feminist Initiative declares that their vision is “...a world in which all humans have the same potential and ability to live full and complete lives”⁴⁶. The meaning of it being that this is not the reality they see in society since “[w]omen are systematically subordinated to men”⁴⁷. In both the introduction and the end of the text they *refer to the past* when they say that this is not a new notion, but a struggle that has been going on for a long time. They want to see results in this struggle. They also make clear that they are aware of the problem that all women do not meet the same dilemmas, and that their interests, hopes, societal positions, skin color or cultural belonging (for example) can differ. But they also say that “...beyond the differences lies one similarity: women’s lives, choices, and opportunities are restricted by the patriarchal structure.”⁴⁸ This can be referred to Campbell who argues:

The rhetorical problem may be summarized as follows: women are divided from one another by almost all the usual sources of identification – age, education, income, ethnic origin, even geography. In addition, counter-persuasive forces are pervasive and potent – nearly all spend their lives in close proximity to, and under the control of, males – fathers, husbands, employers, etc.⁴⁹

”Women” is a large generalisation, which cannot easily be seen as merely one group, but at the same time the Feminist Initiative and Campbell state that they *can*. The society in which women live is much run and powered by men.

⁴⁵ Cathcart (1990) p. 368

⁴⁶ Political Platform for a Feminist Initiative. p. 1

⁴⁷ Ibid. p. 1

⁴⁸ Ibid. p.1

⁴⁹ Campbell (1990) p. 393

Men and women in the Political Platform – polarization

In the Political Platform the dividing up between women and men is clear. There is a “we” in the text, that is stated early when declaring that the Feminist Initiative turns to “...women who want to abolish the patriarchal order and to those men who join this struggle in solidarity”⁵⁰. It is thus not for everybody’s best Feminist Initiative is fighting, but for women’s best. And those men who want to join are welcome to support the fight, but there is little for them to gain. If they want to join the struggle they should do so of solidarity. The message identifiable between the lines is that an equal society would be best for both men and women, but this is not clearly stated. The main audience is women, since the “we” more often include women than “everyone who wants an equal society”.

The “us” and “them”, based on gender, throughout the text is further shown by a division like the figure:

<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
Them	Us
Evil	Good
Perpetrator	Victim
Traditionalism	Renewal/changer
Subordinating	Subordinated

The polarization is obvious; there is a good and bad side. It seems to be more of a female struggle against the male patriarch than everybody’s struggle for an equal society. This is also stated in the platform, when it is declared that men have to take a step back to allow women more room. Society cannot be the way it is now and at the same time let women in. There is a need for bigger change if a true equality shall be possible.

A democracy problem with women liberators

The problem that the Feminist Initiative sees with the subordination of women is raised to a higher level than the individual woman’s rights. They state “...[t]he things that men are, do and say take on a higher value than the things that women are, do, and say. This order is a social problem and a problem of justice; above all it is a problem of democracy.”⁵¹ They give

⁵⁰ Political Platform for a Feminist Initiative, p. 1

⁵¹ Political Platform for a Feminist Initiative, p. 1

us a problem and a solution, and the solution is called the Feminist Initiative. They paint a picture as being the liberators when claiming that they are “...devoted to the thought of freeing women...”⁵² and that they “...strive for the liberation of all women.”⁵³ It is an ongoing fight between genders, where women are the prisoners, the victims, and men are the perpetrators. The problems these women see and want to solve are the large differences and unfairness in democracy. They see a world that is dominated by men, and mean that a real democracy would give women equal rights as men, as well as people from different backgrounds, ethnical belongings, sexual belongings etc. When Cathcart writes “[t]he rhetoric of a movement is a rhetoric of re-ordering rather than of reforming”⁵⁴ it suites well to the ideas of the Feminist Initiative. They are searching for new ways to structure society, a solution presenting women and men with equal opportunities.

Metaphors

Female traits have always been viewed as emotional with a non-aggressive speaking style.⁵⁵ Her place in history has been in the private sphere and the care taking role. Though, Campbell says that in feminist rhetoric “...attack metaphors” and symbolic reversals, also seem to be characteristic.”⁵⁶ This can also be seen in the political platform for the Feminist Initiative. The metaphors are often taken from the fight and battle area, areas that may more often be regarded as male metaphors. This can be seen in contrast to the first TV interview with Gudrun Shyman where the background picture exclaimed, “stirring the politics”. TV uses feminine metaphors while the party members use masculine ones. Examples of the battle inspired metaphors in the text are:

Struggle
Demands
Challenge
Abolish
Freeing, liberation
Patriarchal power structure

⁵² Political Platform for a Feminist Initiative, p. 1

⁵³ Ibid. p.1

⁵⁴ Cathcart (1990) p. 367

⁵⁵ Mral (1999a) pp.12

⁵⁶ Campbell (1990) p.397

A paradox which the party has to struggle with is the explanatory demands forcing much attention outwards and stifling the party's attention towards important internal work. On the *inside* the flat organization is important, everyone has equal right to speak and be heard. No one is the leader, and decisions are made together. When turning to the *world around*, on the other hand, the struggle is evident, and there is aggressiveness in the analysis of the world and in the use of language. Mral states that women are seen to be more at home in dialogue, but that it would be absurd to assert that women are not interested in or capable of battle oriented argumentation. The reason for women's traditional choice of argumentation strategies is that classic agonistic argumentation has not often been an option.⁵⁷ In the case of the Feminist Initiative we can see that both the dialogue strategy and the battle oriented strategy are used, but in different arenas. Within the group the democratic intention of letting all voices be heard is important, but when turning outside the façade is harder and more aggressive in style.

Rhetoric group

In the fall of 2006 a new faction started within the Feminist Initiative after the initiative of a male member. It was a group for those who were interested in rhetoric. The faction was interested in the definition of feminism, word choices, and how their message was mediated.⁵⁸ There is an awareness of the power of language within the party. The group wants to educate themselves and develop better rhetorical skills through discussions and contact with other interested in the field. The Feminist Initiative has had a tough time with many misfortunes. This leads them to the question of how they can try to make the situation better by finding better strategic ways to reach out. Compared to the traditional women's groups throughout history this shows an insight in the importance of education in rhetoric. Today women have the same educational opportunities as men, and that might be one reason for the interest in education.

Weekly member letters

During the first year the spokespersons took turns writing a weekly membership letter. They wrote about what they had been doing, what their thoughts were and they highlighted accomplished members or groups of members. They also encouraged members to keep up the good work. The letters were especially encouraging during the period of negative media

⁵⁷ Mral (2005) p.227

⁵⁸ <http://www.feministisktinitiativ.se/artiklar.php?show=414> (2007-04-22)

coverage. This can be seen as a way of being personal within the political group, where a personal touch has not always had a natural belonging. The spokespersons are not talking *to* the members; they are talking *with* them in a personal way.

Feminism – a love affair

One drive that the Feminist Initiative had was under the parole “Feminism – a love affair”. In a folder they gave *six proposals for more love*:

- The right to love at the end of life
- Take women’s sexual problems seriously
- Share the parental allowance equally
- Fair salaries
- Stop the humiliation of women in porn, commercial and media
- Sex and coexistence – compulsory subject in school

To reach out with this message the members gave out flyers on the streets around Valentine’s Day in 2006. Here they connected love and politics, and so tried to turn the personal into politics, just as Campbell argues the women’s liberation’s organizations often do.

Election posters

The election posters were often edgy and constructed in humoristic ways. The texts were pink on white paper, colours that were familiar for the audience as belonging to the Feminist Initiative. Some examples of the texts on the posters are:

- To all fellows who are tired of paying the bill: Vote for us, and the girls will have more in their wallets.
How about equal salaries?
- We don’t think men should have to go to porn clubs to be dominated.
How about more women in the board rooms?
- To us everybody has equal worth: homo, bi, trans, hetero and Christian Democrat.
How about showing respect?
- In Sweden everybody is equally worth.*
Except for women, who are worth 4300 SEK less per month than men, though they work just as much.

How about equal salaries?

- The Alliance or the coalition? 100 kronor bet that a man will be the next prime minister.

*How about more power for women?*⁵⁹

The texts are obviously built on humour, and seek to wake a reaction in the audience. To reach through, Mral writes, female speakers often use humour.⁶⁰ That all the election posters were built this way shows that it was the strategy they had chosen for the campaign. There had during the foregoing year been many negative media pictures of the party, and maybe this was one way to try to reach out with another image than the angry one, namely the humoristic side. Lunsford and Ruszkiewicz say that “[y]ou can use humour as a strategy to make readers well disposed to your own projects or to ridicule people and concepts you don’t like.”⁶¹ In the posters Feminist Initiative uses both these strategies. One of the posters demonstrates that the party does not think the Christian Democrats show people, irrespective of sexual belonging, respect. On all of the posters they make a statement on what they want to achieve, after having showed what they are reacting against by making some kind of “twist of logic”, something that according to Lunsford and Ruszkiewicz often gives the use of humour power.⁶²

On the posters they give us one portrait of how the society works, and question it. This defensive attitude, according to Mral, is often forced on the female speakers, while much in their agitation are reactions to the arguments from the opponent.⁶³ The opponent in this case can be seen as society and established parties running society.

The website

The website of Feminist Initiative is used extensively by members and it is continuously updated. It is evident to see that the website has been created for the use of members as well as other interested visitors.

⁵⁹ <http://www.feministisktinitiativ.se/kampanjmaterial.php> (2007-04-21)

⁶⁰ Mral (2003) p. 345 and Mral (2006) pp. 163

⁶¹ Lunsford & Ruszkiewicz (1999) pp. 199

⁶² Ibid. p. 201

⁶³ Mral (2006) p.159



www.feministisktinitiativ.se (2007-01-04)

The page has pink frames, a **color** that has been used continuously for the complete material of the Feminist Initiative. The sharp pink color on the top is the background color in the logotype. The logotype consists of a large “F” and an exclamation mark, also a small “i” turned upside down, an effective visual sign.

In the upper right corner we find the possibility to choose a language for the page. In addition to Swedish, it is possible to choose between ten languages, which show that they want to reach more women than those who know Swedish or English. The whole page is not translated to other languages, but the political platform is, and the Election Manifesto is translated to many of the languages. This shows the awareness that has been pointed out earlier in the political platform about women’s differing backgrounds. The party demonstrates a wish to reach beyond the Swedish public.

The **links** are named: News, Politics, About F!, Articles, Member pages, Press, Coming up and Contact. This is a rather classic menu series.

The yellow column to the left has no heading, but contains **news** from and about F!. Over the yellow block is a **chronicle** from one of the members.

In the middle, the white space on the page, are **news and messages** mixed with new contributions to discussions written by members – it is not only the leaders who are contributing to the discussion on the website, members can also reach each other here.

To the right, in the soft pink column we can reach the **web shop**, send e-cards and read about the **spokespersons**. Below we see the **calendar** on what is happening in the party's member groups around the country.

The Feminist Initiative presents themselves in a rather common way on their webpage. It is easy to navigate, the colors are homogenous and the different audiences (such as members, press and generally interested) can easily find the information they seek. Yet, there are rhetorical choices that are not quite as ordinary as this one.

Symbols and symbolic actions

The ways in which the Feminist Initiative tries to reach out to their audience to win votes and be a part of the social equality debate are many. Some are made to reach a specific audience, others to be seen and heard in the loud roar of media. To acquire a broader understanding of the strategies used to reach out I will look at the use of symbolic actions from different arenas, from the building of a group identity to metaphorical physical actions. The aim is to identify what rhetorical choices the party has made concerning these actions.

The election cottage

The weeks before Parliament elections in Sweden all the established parties place election cottages at squares of the cities. These are usually made of wood, they have a table with folders and information and politicians try to recruit people passing by. The Feminist Initiative had a new idea of what an election cottage should look like.



<http://www.feministisktinitiativ.se/pressbilder.php> (2007-04-03)

Their cottage was all pink with no classic walls with doors. Instead the thin walls were lifted up like a roof, and inside there were nice sofas to sit in. The colour of the cottage was the same as the colour in the Feminist Initiative logo. It is sharp and could be seen from a far distance. The party was not trying to hide in any way, but wanted to stand out as something new, a true alternative to old-fashioned politics, and in some way the cottage can be seen as a metaphor and a symbol for this desire. To offer the visitors a pleasant seat in a sofa is not common in the election cottages. This might be a way of showing the party's softer side, that they want you to take a break and discuss politics in a new way.

The Election Tour

The time before the Parliament election was hectic for the active members. They wrote debate articles, went to meetings, gave speeches and handed out flyers on the streets. Issues raised in the debate articles were the single mother's difficult situation, questioning the norms for what is perceived as being ok for men to do but not women, multitude and refutation against the claim that the Feminist Initiative is an one-question party.⁶⁴ The three spokes persons travelled all over Sweden to give speeches and meet the members and the voters face to face.

Balloons

Balloons are often used as symbols in political parties and the Feminist Initiative is no exception. The balloons are sharp pink and purple, as the party's colours. At the first annual meeting in 2005 a larger number of balloons were released, which can be seen as a metaphor of the Feminist Initiative, and with them the feminist struggle, flying up on the political agenda. In February 2006, when the organization formally handed in the application to be registered as a political party, balloons accompanied the members on the walk to the Election Authority's Office.

⁶⁴ <http://www.feministisktinitiativ.se/debattartiklar.php?show=all> (2007-10-22)



<http://www.feministisktinitiativ.se/img/news/1141813237.jpg> (2007-10-21)

Both these events were reported in media, and in pictures balloons are a common background for the members. The use of balloons is a constantly recurring theme, it gives the audience a visual sign to remember and helps interpret what the picture portrays, without having to read the text.

Web shop

The web shop is shown on the webpage. Here we can buy the pink F!-balloons, t-shirts, pencils, caps, necklaces and umbrellas with the logotype on. A DVD showing a speech given by Gudrun Schyman, and feminist letters written by Gudrun Schyman is also for sale. Presumably this is first and foremost for members who may wish to demonstrate being supporters.

Conclusion

In the spring of 2007 the Feminist Initiative made clear that they were no longer a political party. Instead they wanted to work as a popular movement. They had failed acquiring seats in Parliament and now they wished to educate the Swedes in feminist issues. The path from the group's announcement in 2005 until the election one and a half years later was not easy. "Stödstrumporna" had ten years earlier *threatened* to start a feminist party. The Feminist Initiative did not make threats they *did* start one. According to the large number of people who said they could be interested in voting for such a party, the Feminist Initiative was seen more as a promise than as a threat. In media, though, the Feminist Initiative was pictured

more as a threat than a promise. Both the chosen strategies and the representatives were strongly questioned.

Two obvious strategies can be seen in the Feminist Initiative; how they act within the party and how they act on the outside. Within the group the flat organization is important, all voices are important and meaningful and will be heard. The personal style is displayed in the weekly letters from the spokespersons, where the encouraging tone is obvious, but also in the strong use of colours and maybe most of all in the use of the word “we”. Shaping this kind of togetherness was probably very important, especially since the media tone was harsh. The façade the party wanted to show was united, but it was not an easy task when media was more interested in the discussions and dissonances. Interesting to point out is that Gunilla Malm landed in the same result in her analysis of the feminist student grass root organization.

The united façade is showed for example in the political platform, where the analysis of the Swedish, and international, society is thorough and “men blaming”. Those addressed are mainly female. The polarization between men and women is clear in the platform, where men are talked of as perpetrators and women as victims. This confrontational style is easy to bind to Cathcart’s theory on movements wanting a change of a system by saying “no” to the present order, something that the Feminist Initiative does implicitly as well as explicitly.

Another interesting point to make is the use of colour as visual sign. The sharp pink colour stands out, and is not alike any other Swedish political party’s colour. The colour can be found as well in the logotype, which also is an obvious visual sign in itself, as on the election cottage, on the balloons and on the website. Not only the ideas the party presented, but also the presentation of them, stood out when the pink party entered the Swedish political arena.

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Leadership rhetoric of ANC Women's League

Vertical and horizontal in relation

Helena Hansson Nylund

Two perspectives have been forwarded in the discussions on power structures and rhetoric, a hierarchical view that sees rhetoric as a persuasive struggle, and a more egalitarian that has been forwarded mainly by a feminist analysis of women's rhetoric.⁶⁵ In the following text, these two perspectives, described in terms of horizontal and vertical attitude, give us insight in the guiding aspects of political rhetoric.

As the democracy is consolidating in South Africa, the country is facing general welfare problems and the leading party, African National Congress (ANC) is seeking ways to gather people around the party's ideas. This text is a summary of an analysis made of the acceptance speech given by Nosiviwe Mapisa Nqakula, leader of African National Congress Women's League (ANCWL), at the party's National Congress of 2003. Published in the latest steering document of ANCWL, the speech gives ideological direction to the women of the organization.

Motherhood and female leadership in South Africa

There are a number of perspectives that can be forwarded in an analysis of the leadership rhetoric of ANCWL, especially concerning the dynamic between the vertical and the horizontal attitudes. The relation to religion is one example, traditional culture is another.⁶⁶ The perspective that will be used to understand the rhetorical choices of Nqakula in this analysis is the traditional historical role of the family and its implications for the female role.

Women's roles as mothers, daughters and wives have consequences for female political participation in southern Africa in general. Family life is in many cases the basis for practical political claims made by women and the argument for engaging women in political life. The traditional role of motherhood can in that matter be seen as an important symbolic ground of

⁶⁵ Campbell (1973), Mral (1999) pp. 217-222, Hellspong (2003)

⁶⁶ For an example of religion in this matter, see Salazar (2002)

female authority, based on moral connotations and private issues connected to reproduction and child care.⁶⁷

South Africa is famous for the ideological unity in the campaign for gender equality. In the beginning of the 1990ies, the Women's National Coalition (WNC) was an example of a broad coalition that accomplished constitutional guarantees for female emancipation and equality through the drafting and continuing implementation of the document "Women's Charter".⁶⁸ But this image of gender equality has not been the case historically in South African politics. When ANC was formed in 1912, women were not allowed as members.

Although not involved in party politics, women did not remain passive in the anti-apartheid movement. One important aspect of the mobilization of women during apartheid was the emphasis on motherhood. The participation of women in the anti-apartheid struggle required a formulation of a female public identity to complement the family centred identity that was the former most connected to the definition of being a woman. To speak to women as mothers located them in a traditionally acceptable role. It also offered a broad basis for women to contextualize political claims. Being a mother was a commonality for a large number of women living in South Africa at the time of apartheid and identified common issues related to having children and a family.⁶⁹

One of the most important issues that involved women as mothers in the struggle against apartheid was the demonstration against pass laws. The fact that people had to pay fees to receive permits, in form of reference books, for all the essential parts of ordinary life, such as for the residence, the working place and for entertainment, is described as the most outstanding proof of the oppression of black people in South Africa. Previously, women had been excluded from pass laws, with the exception of the Orange Free State, but it was announced in 1955 that the aim was for it to include all women of South Africa. On Women's Day in 1956, the decision was made to organise a large demonstration in Pretoria, on the 9th of August. The demonstration is referred to as the largest protest involving women in South Africa and it had an immense impact both on the political identity for black women and on the

⁶⁷ Tripp (2003) pp. 249

⁶⁸ Tripp (2003) p. 248, Cock & Bernstein, (2001)

⁶⁹ Walker (1982)

attitude towards women by their male comrades. The date of the demonstration is now celebrated as the South African women's day.⁷⁰

To speak to women with reference to an identity known and familiar to both male colleagues and family members possibly made it easier historically to recruit female participants for the anti-apartheid work. Considering the strong authority of motherhood in the South African culture, the reference to motherhood would strengthen the female credibility. It is also a characteristic that was and is easy to identify with, and the interests of mothers are the interests of a lot of women. The motherhood identity also extends the availability to make connections with the male culture in society that otherwise might have been sceptical about the participation of women. As men had not been used to see women acting in politics, it would possibly be easier for a woman to introduce herself with reference to the milieu where she is a natural authority: the family.⁷¹

But on the other hand, the identity of motherhood also emphasised a female role that was not considered equal to the male role in the public area. We can trace this discussion back to the problem identified by Judith Butler as the conflict involved when marginalized groups have to use a proper identity shaped by oppression to claim their rights. By using the identity as an argument, the identity is at the same time enforced. When women are referring to their roles as mothers, they are using the audience's prejudices about them as speakers to forward their claims. It is a defensive strategy, considered by Mral as the rhetorical notion of *antistrephon*. The use of the motherhood identity in a patriarchal society can be seen as a pragmatic way of adjusting to the underprivileged position to forward claims.⁷²

The image of the mother as a rhetorical strategy of credibility can thus be criticised for enforcing patriarchal structures and not being in favour of women's emancipation.⁷³ But an interesting point regarding the symbolic ground of female authority is the difference between a western understanding of the mother as a passive figure, and the image of the mother as a strong authority in the African context. For example, in the freedom struggle in Namibia, women acting as family members did act under a traditionally accepted identity, but did not

⁷⁰ Walker (1982) p.26 pp. 190-197

⁷¹ For an introduction to the different stages of identification and credibility, see Burke (1969)

⁷² Butler (1990) p. 147, Mral (1999), Mral (2005)

⁷³ See for example Lewis (1993), Nilsson (2004) pp. 56-69

have to subordinate to a passive role. Rather, their active participation in the resistance should be seen as a part of their legitimate roles as mothers.⁷⁴

“Black feminism” is the main idea that stresses the role of motherhood and women’s supportive role in the family as a strong ground for ethos in public life. In South Africa, black feminists are focusing on the family as the primary scene for involvement in the struggle against apartheid. Their rhetorical strategies may not be of high value for traditional feminists whom do not recognize the power potential of specific identities connected to being a woman, such as motherhood. Following the arguments of black feminists, the family has been the foundation for the anti-apartheid struggle, and the mothers of the families have led the work through domestic work under pressure from small economic possibilities. Acting in a system defined by patriarchal norms, the mother formed her legitimacy through subtle strategies which can also challenge the male norms.⁷⁵

Female legitimacy for participation in ANC was partly based on the image of the mother as a nurturer, a caregiver, someone that could keep the struggle together and work for unification. The nurturing aspect of motherhood is reflected through empathy, contingency and communication that supports the listeners own thinking. The motherhood credibility is in this way created through fostering of a group identity by building on encouraging relationships. But the image of the mother also has a militant side as shown in the study of early union agitation. The militant aspect of motherhood is based on the struggle against all the things that can threaten the child. It is both a nurturing, caring power and an aggressive, confrontational force that teaches children to resist and oppose the social structures that threaten them. The dynamic between militancy and struggle and the care giving unifying spirit of motherhood shows that the motherhood identity is complex and involves more than the egalitarian rhetoric connected with female rhetoric since Campbell. The militant side has got masculine connotations, and as suggested by Mari Boor Tonn, the maternal culture involves a dynamic between vertical and horizontal attitudes. Motherhood as a rhetorical concept is thus complex since it is both hierarchical and egalitarian in its approach towards the listeners. The aspects involve authority, fostering, equality in communication as well as aggressive struggle.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Soiri (1996) pp. 90 An example of motherhood as a weak identity for political participation is found in Culley and Angelique (2003)

⁷⁵ Lewis (1993)

⁷⁶ Boor Tonn (1996) p. 18

The speech chosen for this analysis is interesting in several aspects regarding the issues mentioned. ANCWL is a specific women's organization, but it is formulated within an organization of traditional male dominated rhetorical struggle. Possibly, the women in the ANCWL are affected by the party's rhetoric at large and have adopted a vertical rhetorical attitude, which affects also the relationship among different women of the party. In this respect we should bear in mind that the speech is made in a clear hierarchical context, as the socio-economic situation in the country has had implications for the relationship between women in South Africa. But at the same time, it is clear that the ANCWL has always followed its own path in relation to ANC, and it has been historically important for women of the organization to formulate a female rhetoric, connected to womanhood and the role of the mother. The essentialist "black feminism" has probably had influence on how the women of ANCWL see themselves. The image of the mother as a point of reference for the black feminism of South Africa, with its symbols of care and militancy, results in an interesting relationship between vertical and horizontal.

Aim and method of the analysis

The study is aimed at finding if a hierarchical, vertical or a more egalitarian, or horizontal, attitude has been guiding the speaker in the *inventio* process, when she has made choices on how to present the leading thesis and the arguments for it. To understand the rhetorical choices made by Nqakula, the analysis is concentrated on the topics of *agent*, *act*, *scene*, *purpose* and *agency*. By looking closely at the rhetoric through these topics, a number of terms have been identified as bearing for the ideas that are communicated within the speech. This method of analysis is presented and developed in the works of Kenneth Burke. He has named the topics presented above as a *pentad*, since he describes the terms as all connected with each other. Important for this analysis is the idea that the topics presented above can be seen as tools to discover underlying ideas of the speech.

The terms of the pentad are all connected with each other in a system which is described metaphorically by the image of a hand by Burke. The five terms are separated just as fingers, but all connected to the palm. That means that they are ideas that are all united in a centre of a larger idea, and that idea is the reference for the speaker in correlating the terms of the pentad. The rhetorical consequence of the underlying idea can be summarized in the term *attitude*. The speaker thus has one or more specific ideas about reality that forms his or her rhetorical

attitude, which in turn guides the invention process and the rhetorical choices that can be studied through the analysis of the pentad terms.⁷⁷ The starting point for the analysis made is that the two concepts of vertical and horizontal can be studied as rhetorical attitudes within the speech of Nqakula.

Ambiguities in the speech

The speech contains four parts. The first passage is a celebration of the women that have formed the leadership of the organization, and examples are set to show what kinds of virtues are appreciated in the leadership of ANCWL. The second passage describes what has taken place during the conference, and the dynamic between the leaders and the members of ANCWL. The third passage describes the connection between ANCWL and the surrounding world and other women, not members. It determines co-agents and counter-agents, and sets up demands for what ANCWL should work for in the future. The last and fourth part is further exploring the future role for ANCWL and makes a statement about the conference and the gains made to shape togetherness within the organization.

In the analysis of the speech, both terms of vertical and horizontal type were found, which suggests that Nqakula is influenced both by hierarchic and egalitarian ideas. She has thus got a mixed attitude to the listeners at the ANCWL conference. On the one hand, she wants to give the listeners an embracing welcome into the organization, and show them that every woman counts. On the other hand she stresses authoritative leadership within a clear hierarchy.

An example of this relationship is mentioning of the scene *political home* and the agency of the *vehicle*. The *home* could be seen as a horizontal concept. It is a space where women together can form a common identity and be cared for by the leader. The repeated use of the phrase *political home* leads us to think that she is using these words deliberately to attract women who consider the home as a natural arena for leadership and engagement. The underlying hierarchy in the idea of a *political home* suggests a female role of strong authority and responsibility, a unifying spirit and a fostering role model. When Nqakula is referring to the former leaders with the terms such as *humble*, *ordinary*, *unselfish*, and *virtue of*

⁷⁷ Gusfield (1989) p. 145, Mahan-Hays & Aden (2003) pp. 34

forgiveness, we can make associations with religious connections, but also with the image of a caring head of the family.

The *vehicle* is an agency determined by vertical relations between agents of leadership and authority and other women that should be led. A vehicle can only be steered by a limited amount of persons; there are differences between the people that control the steering mechanism and the other people that are utilizing it. Someone has got to read the map. But the words used to describe the agency in the second passage of the speech are showing a mixed attitude. Words as *united force, togetherness, dialogue and cooperation* gives signs of the horizontal perspective. Words as *programmatically road map* in the second passage, *catalyst* in the description of the third passage, followed by the image of the *line of march* in the last passage is enforcing the hierarchical perspective of the vehicle.

There is an obvious hierarchy among the agents in the text. The former leaders of the ANCWL are at the top, they are celebrated in an early passage in the speech and uplifted as role models. At the bottom are the suffering women of Africa, they are described in passive terms and described as a group that needs to be saved. In the middle are the women that engage in the party. The speech shows signs of a horizontal attitude as the importance of the members is emphasised by Nqakula, the leadership should be listening to their views in the political home. Nqakula is in this respect using a traditional horizontal rhetorical strategy: the inclusion of every woman in the group, to define the aim for the future when speaking about the need for ANCWL to reach out to different scenes where ordinary women are to be found. ANCWL's will to reach out to all layers of society is a traditional concept in the political strategy of ANC. But it is also a typical mode of reaching out to others through inclusion, associated with the rhetoric of motherhood. As much as motherhood has enforced the patriarchal image of the women, it has created legitimacy for female political participation in ANC.

Overall in the speech, Nqakula is setting focus on how *leadership* could give certain possibilities. Leadership is a type of agency that emphasises individuals, but can also be seen as a form of organizational instrument, with closer references to structure than individuality. Seen in the context of the rest of the speech, as Nqakula stresses the importance to have strong individuals in the organization, we can assume that she means strong individual leaders when speaking of the potential of that agency. So how is this leadership defined, with

reference to vertical or horizontal terms? In the first passage, leadership is described as something that others depend on, and focus lies on what qualities are important for a leader within ANCWL. It is important to be strong (*resilience, lack of fear, great in stature, take the baton, stalwarts*) but still modest (*humble, ordinary, shared her work, unselfish actions, forgiveness*). She is also putting the same weight on both heart and mind with reference to the good leader. In the second passage, Nqakula is moving on to what role the leadership has played during the conference. The focus lies on *listening* and to stand as a *united force*. She also says that the characteristics of leadership are *selflessness* and *dedication to the cause of those you serve*. In this part of the speech, we can see that the horizontal side of leadership is enforced. Focus lies on the members and how the leaders should act in their service. This attitude continues partly in the third passage, when Nqakula says that leadership is about integrating members in all places where women are. We can also note that an important aspect of providing leadership to society, according to Nqakula, is to work *together with others in organizations in a National Women's Movement*.

But she also introduces a more independent side of the leadership. It is *about providing direction, ensuring hegemony and occupying the moral high ground*, as well as a line of march and the developing of a *programmatically road map*. We can also note that the ANCWL *are calling upon the leadership of AU*, just as the members of ANCWL are raising its voice to the leaders of the organization. And Nqakula says that the country provides leadership through the government and ANC. The association is that there is an underlying hierarchy in the speech: the suffering women of the world have expectations on the organization of ANCWL, the members of ANCWL are calling upon their leaders, and the leaders of ANCWL call upon the leaders of the country and the African Union.

There seems to be two parallel concepts concerning leadership, forwarded by Nqakula. On the one hand a hierarchical relation, especially regarding the relation between the members of ANCWL and other women of Africa and the world, but also with reference to how leaders should act within the organization. But on the other hand there is a vertical notion, a kind of circular authority such as described in the second passage of the speech:

It has been an overwhelming call in unison that the ANCWL should [be] a united force that is capable of leading the women of our country as we advance the gains made by our struggles for a better future./../ The women have spoken and they have unequivocally reaffirmed the urgency

with which we need to move to establish the National Women's Movement of our country to provide a common platform for women to operate and function as a cohesive force in addressing issues affecting them and our country in general. And yes the women have spoken here in one voice and this leadership that has emerged from this Conference has listened.

Women should be led by ANCWL, the executive council should be guided by women's demands in a situation that is guided by listening from the leaders on the one hand and voicing from the members on the other hand. There is no over all leading idea, no ideology which has consequences for how the leaders interpret the demands of the organization. There is only listening. There is emphasis on every member's individual importance.

This notion of parallel concepts which shows traces of both vertical and horizontal attitudes is also noticed in the analysis of the purposes mentioned in the speech. When taking the central actions presented in the speech into account, we can see that both *moving forward* and *being at the centre* are purposes for the organization. This goes in line with other words used to describe the organization and its members, but the two concepts are hard to understand in relation to each other. It seems like Nqakula wants to develop these terms in equal relation, and we thus have two concepts that can be seen as purposes of action. When looking at the terms that create the scene of the situations, we can note that they follow the notion of moving forward and being at the centre, and the most frequent purpose mentioned in relation to the scenes (political home, common platform, centre of peoples development, political corner etc.) is to be where other people are. The aims seem to be to gather people in a central place of unity, or as Nqakula say: to *disperse into all arenas* of ordinary people.

Conclusion

Female political leadership in ANC is a complex matter; not only because of class and race related problems or religious believes, but also with reference to the male political culture within the organization. These different influences have consequences for the rhetoric used by women engaged in the top of the party structure, and this article has made an attempt to shed light on some of the key terms in that context, with focus on gender and the cult of motherhood as presented in the ideas of black feminism.

There are mainly two conclusions drawn from the analysis. Firstly, the concept of motherhood gives a possible explanation to why the acceptance speech by Nqakula includes both the

horizontal attitude towards the audience and a more vertical attitude with distinct hierarchical notions. Secondly, as ANCWL is an exclusive female organization in a country where the right to gender equality is included as a demand in the constitution, the use of the motherhood topic should perhaps not be seen as a traditional way to build female ethos, which Mral describes as an indirect strategy from a position of powerlessness. Instead, the motherhood identity can be regarded as a direct symbol of authority, which differs somewhat from the western understanding of female emancipation. As we see in the examples of F! and the grass root organization, women in Sweden have developed their rhetoric to a large part in a feministic context with roots in the struggle for the brakeage with traditional female roles. That is generally not the case for black women in South Africa. Instead, while the female identity with connection to women's roles as mothers has been strongly attacked by feminists in Sweden, it has been actively used within the African National Congress (ANC), both as a tool to engage women and as a force to build a strong ethos in the struggle for black liberation.⁷⁸

The possibility of the connection between the motherhood topic and vertical rhetoric means that we ought to consider the hierarchical potential within female discourse, with female symbols of hierarchical power. What kind of protagonists does for example emerge through the concept of ANCWL as a political home? Is the hierarchy constructed with a patriarchal image or a matriarchate? It seems like the agents should act both in military ways, with unambiguous structures of vertical leadership, and in more egalitarian ways with horizontal relations between leaders and members. Many of Nqakula's women comrades share a mixed experience of militancy and strong unity in the organization of ANC. But this mix of perspectives is also strikingly similar to the concept of motherhood in the context of black womanism. However, there are only few explicit references to motherhood in the speech, which suggests that the particular concept of motherhood has little importance for the speech. Or is it an underlying common identity, an attitude that forms the rhetorical choices made by the speaker in the invention process?

As gender equality is of growing importance in public life, there is potential for women to engage in political rhetoric without the reference to indirect building of ethos. Their authority in politics is possibly already established, and they may not need symbols with roots in

⁷⁸ Walker (1982)

patriarchy to heighten their status. The feminine culture could possibly act out on its own terms, with its own status, its own power structures. What becomes of motherhood when it no longer only can be seen as a pragmatic tool to adjust to a patriarchal culture, but a source to create hierarchy between women as a symbolic source of power?

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When the Story of Women Public Figures is Relayed

An analysis of the Media Representation of three South African women in the Public Sphere: Helen Zille, Bulelwa Qupe and Nadine Gordimer

Adit Hunma

For centuries now, the conception of women as ‘symbol of all that every culture defines as being of a lower order of existence than itself’⁷⁹ has prevailed in the public psyche. Women’s biology and their traditional role to rear ‘unsocial zed infants, raw materials’ has been at the basis of the belief that they are inherently closer to nature. Also known as the foundation in nature, this argument has been continually used to validate on one hand the *pater familias* structure of the family and on the other, the patriarchal social set-up itself.

The emancipation of women however brought in its trail, new opportunities, allowing women to hold public office and enjoy financial independence. Women became agents of change in socio-political institutions, even if it took much longer for them to gain the same remuneration and opportunities for promotion as men.

In South Africa, as the President, Thabo Mbeki stated in his August 9, 2007 Address to Commemorate the Women’s Day Celebrations:

We would be able to say women live in conditions of emancipation, empowerment, equality and eradication of poverty when indeed we have made greater progress towards realizing the goal of a better life for all, and when we have made greater progress in the struggle to end the depraved acts of rape, physical abuse and violence against women our country continues to experience⁸⁰.

He stressed the view that an improvement of women’s conditions was central to achieving true national liberation, hence the integration of women’s programs into initiatives such as the ‘Expanded Public Works Programme, the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA)’.

Still, it should be admitted that as South African women figures step into the public domain and exercise their authority as drivers of change, they still face some hurdles. In fact, they are not in much control of their public ethos. Much of what they say or do is relayed by the

⁷⁹ Ortner:1972.’Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture’, p12

⁸⁰ <http://www.dfa.gov.za/docs/speeches/2007/mbek0809.htm>

media, spun into new ideologies so that the story breathes a life of its own. It can be argued that responsible media agencies aim at objectivity and accounts of truth, yet what they foreground and what they leave out, involves an ideological choice itself.

This is what we wish to assess in the case of Helen Zille, Bulelwa Qupe and Nadine Gordimer. Since it cannot be denied that media representations are at a remove from truth, it would be useful to examine what they emphasise in the case of these three well-established South African women public figures. Do they judge the women's capacity to deliver, and if yes, do they find the women's gender as enhancing or incapacitating their public role?

In the first instance, the report assesses the three women as rhetorical agents, using public argumentation to justify past actions, to persuade public stakeholders to act and to construct a positive face. In the second instance, it assesses how the media constructs the women's image, and the significance they place particularly on gender. It is hoped by the end, that much will be gathered on the mindset that prevails vis-à-vis women in public.

Helen Zille as a rhetorical agent

Helen Zille, mayor of Cape Town and recently, national leader of the Democratic Alliance has been the object of much media attention, especially with the announcement of the holding of the 2010 Soccer World Cup in Cape Town. Helen Zille, as a rhetorical agent makes use both of her ethos as a disciplined and committed hard worker to win hearts, and of logos to set projects into motion.

The *Capeinfo* of April 2006 qualifies her as the 'Best Cape Town Mayor in decades'. It brings out many of her virtues namely 'go-getting, demanding and respected', 'a steely resolve to do the right thing, 'much quieter and warmer than expected', someone 'comfortable saying "I don't know, I need to learn more"', 'focused, committed, fiercely bright and incredibly hard-working'⁸¹.

This series of accolades is given alongside her various achievements in office, as former provincial minister of education, DA spokesperson and mayor. The article as a whole is intent on enhancing Zille's political image, even going to the extent of dismissing unconstructive

⁸¹ See appendix, p. 31

remarks made by other papers and political figures: ‘Some media reports have not been accurate and at least one report was written on hearsay’, ‘We believe that the Provincial premier and the President's office were 100% wrong for their public criticisms of her (and others who raise concerns)’ as regards her decision to postpone discussions on Green Point where the World Cup will be held.

Whether or not readers would tag this article as a partisan one, it is noteworthy that it was published only a month prior to Zille’s election as National Leader of the Democratic Alliance on 6 May 2007 and is likely to have impacted on her campaign, more specifically on her ethos as eligible candidate.

Media representation

Values and ethics

It is generally assumed that women politicians would integrate an ethics of care in their approach to politics. The ethics of care focuses on cementing human relationships through commonly held values and morals. In many articles, Zille is shown to cherish the values of truth, integrity and hard work. On *SABC News* of May 25, 2007, Zille announces that her politics will stress on ‘shared values’, not ‘separate identities’⁸².

In *Carte Blanche* dated May 13, 2007, Zille is said to be faithful to ‘a good old fashioned work ethic: what you put in you’ll take out. In Helen’s words: ‘being present, punctual and very prepared’⁸³. No wonder, her day’s schedule begins at four in the morning and ends in the late hours of the night. Zille is also said to have always demonstrated a strong adherence to truth even as a young political correspondent. She fearlessly reported the real cause of Steve Biko’s death in detention, and maintained her statement, even when it led to her being accused of misleading the public.

As a woman politician, she is cast as an upholder of democracy, which does not contradict her liberal views on politics. In mainstream feminist theories, liberalism has, in the past, made great strides in extending the opportunities open to women in the public sphere so that they could match up those of men. It gave rise to laws such as the Equal Rights Amendment in the US and other parts of the globe. Though one could assume that as a woman politician, Zille would lean to the left, her concerns are broader than those of women’s emancipation alone. In *Fairlady*, she defines liberals as those who 'typically develop their opinions by looking for

⁸² See appendix, p.37

⁸³ Ibid, p.37

reasons why they may be wrong, rather than proof that they are right'. They view concepts of nationalism and patriotism with some scepticism because these are often exploited by demagogues 'who appeal to group loyalties and racial prejudices to entrench their own power'. Having the 'culture of scrutiny, questioning and debate' entrenched in her, she goes further to fight for open and fair elections in the name of democracy.

In the November 1, 2006 *IOL* article, Zille is said to take to the streets with her supporters to 'save democracy'. What is at stake here is not only her position as Mayor but the representivity of committees as a whole. Should the executive mayoral system be substituted with an executive committee as proposed by the ruling party, it is likely that the ANC, with its enduring popularity, would eclipse other parties trying to assert themselves in local government. In the process, it would threaten the very understanding of democracy. The vote goes in Zille's favour and the ANC backs off 'from its bid to strip Cape Town mayor Helen Zille of her executive powers'. This decision is quite momentous for it projects Zille as the champion of democratic governance. Her gender does not impede her political path for her image as a liberal woman politician works towards reassuring the electorate that she can tackle issues of the new republic.

The real challenge for Zille is that of gathering enough black votes. On the *SABC News* of April 30, 2007, as Zille seeks the support of the black majority, she observes that the question of race still impinges on voting tendencies. "The single biggest threat to South Africa's democracy is too much power in too few hands that always is a threat to democracy"⁸⁴. Most of the support for the DA comes from the White population which comprises, in terms of the ballot of 12% against the 70% supporting the ANC. Zille links the threat to democracy to 'demagogy', and insists that "We, like many other emerging democracies are far from that point and it is the DA's biggest challenges to show people of all races, of all creeds that we really care about them." As such, she demonstrates that her party believes in providing equal opportunities to all independently of their cultural belonging and beliefs. Besides commending the principles of her party, she is shown to be a woman of resilience and who optimistically awaits the catalytic 'tipping moment' that will enable her party to conquer all voters' hearts and do justice to democratic values.

This unflinching loyalty to the principles of democracy could in fact work in Zille's favour as

⁸⁴ See appendix, p61

a woman politician, if she were not at the same time lambasted for being 'too white liberal' or having a 'power-hungry zeal' in some of the blogs. Still, at no point are these perceived flaws associated to Zille's gender, though this consideration is tacitly implied.

The family woman

Some papers like *Fairlady* shed light on another facet of this woman politician. It presents Zille as the family woman, joking with her sons and commenting on her husband's nickname 'Mayonnaise'. It also gives readers an insight into Johann Maree's first impression of Zille. 'I thought she was a very clever, beautiful woman but I also saw her as a strong and self-assured person who knew exactly who she was and what she was doing'⁸⁵. In presenting this side of the picture, readers can conceive of Zille, as a full-fledged person who also has a private life to attend to. Zille's fulfilment of traditional gender roles does not deflate her image as a woman politician, for in the following lines we are told that Zille spends most of her time in office, which can be read off as a sign that she puts public interest first. As she wears different caps and accomplishes her tasks without fail, she appears in the public eye, as a proficient manager and executive who can juggle multiple responsibilities simultaneously and cope with pressure.

Media and Public relations

In the light of Zille's various domestic and public roles, one can posit that the transition from family ties to public relations itself is likely to be a smooth one. Having elaborated on her image as a family woman, it will be worthwhile to gauge how Zille fares on the public podium. As far as her media image is concerned, Zille is lauded as the 'Media darling'⁸⁶. She never refuses any interview, despite her very busy schedule. She encourages familiarity with journalists by insisting that they address her as 'Helen' and endears herself by admitting her errors rather than resorting to lame excuses. She does not hesitate to acknowledge the good work of her political opponents and is described as having the skill to give a 'positive spin' to any situation. In other words, she has the ability to market any important political situation via the media to communicate with her public, or rather to ensure a 'pragmatic access to hearts and minds'.

⁸⁵ See appendix, p43

⁸⁶ *ibid.* p44

No wonder she is described as the ‘hot favourite’ by the *SABC News* and other papers who followed her very closely prior to the 2007 elections for the leadership of the DA⁸⁷. She is said to have mass support matching that of Mlambo-Ngcuka, and a good lead over the incumbent leader back then, Tony Leon. It is often the case that media representations, while perhaps innocently reporting events also partake in its re-creation or reinforcement. By extension, it would appear that over and above Zille’s public features, her good relations with the media should operate to enhance her image as a public figure and even her likelihood to be liked by the public at large.

However this is not always the case. In the *Cape Argus* of March 26, 2007, Zille’s media influence is seen in a negative light. She is criticized for ‘charm(ing)’ the media ‘with photo opportunities’ rather than ‘delivering tangible results’⁸⁸. In the process, the article comes to confirm, that the misconception that women make use of their charm alone to win the favour of the masses, endures. The association of Zille with womanly charm may prompt readers to question her capacities as an effective mayor.

Competence

Indeed, an article from *SouthAfrica.info* of Dec 22, 2006, raises doubts on Zille’s handling of the World Cup. It states that Zille is in the ‘hotseat’ and also outlines that the stakes are high should Zille fail to deliver⁸⁹. Apparently, Zille’s delay over the construction of the 2.5 billion rand stadium may cost the city the opportunity to host the semi-finals. Grindrod states that "The blame must go squarely on her shoulders for playing politics with this critical issue". Politics in this context is viewed as a vicious game of power, conflicting with the actual delivery of services.

In the ID press release of May 23, 2007, Zille is criticized by the ID Chief Whip Lance Greyling for having double standards. The latter wonders how she could ‘have the audacity’ to propose a 19% increase in water tariffs when she actually opposed the ANC’s ‘hefty’ increase in water tariffs in Durban. He states that ‘Either Zille is hypocritical, or she has no idea of what is happening outside her Mayoral position’⁹⁰. This is an attack firstly on her integrity and secondly on her effectiveness in office.

⁸⁷ See appendix, p46

⁸⁸ *ibid.* p47

⁸⁹ *ibid.* p48

⁹⁰ See appendix, p49

As for the Chaaban case, where Zille accuses Badih Chaaban of the African Muslim Party of corruption, the latter states in defence: "This woman is starting to see ghosts as the cross is starting to loom closer and everyone is thinking what is going to happen to their positions. She is a bit nervous, because her party is in tatters". (*SABC News* of June 13, 2007)⁹¹. As an unfounded assault on Zille's sanity in defence of the accusation, this comment goes further to hint that the perception of women being unfit for politics merely on account of their gender, and the perception that they imagine or inflate scenarios disproportionately, still forms part of the popular mindset.

In the same vein, the *Mail & Guardian* article of May 15, 2007 pits the empty rhetoric that often accompanies one's position as member of the National Assembly against the programme of social delivery that has so far been on the agenda of the DA. As Zille grapples with her dual job as mayor and member of the opposition in the Assembly, the question raised in this article is whether Zille will be able to juggle between mere words and delivery. The author states that Zille should focus on delivery rather than rhetoric, and outlines her innumerable skills as well as some of her weaknesses. Zille is said to have talent as well as integrity, however she still needs to learn to delegate. She also needs to revamp her party to ensure that senior management of the DA is not merely constituted of 'the coterie of white men from privileged backgrounds'. The author sees Zille's office as member of the opposition as an opportunity to make the ideals of 'public ethics', 'the liberal values of tolerance, accountability and constitutionalism' triumph, 're-brand' the opposition and intensify the programme of social delivery at the national level⁹².

Likewise, in *Politics.za* of May 6, 2007, it is said that Zille needs to be more of a 'night watchman' than aspire to be a 'long term leader'⁹³. The night watchman in cricket is normally a non-specialist who does the batting when the batsman loses a wicket near the end of the day. In this manner, he covers up for the next batsman who can begin afresh on the following day. To view Zille in this light would imply that she is merely a makeshift solution until the time is ripe for the designated leader to step on to the political stage.

In the *AfricanCrisis* of May 7, 2007, there are mixed feelings to Zille's appointment as leader

⁹¹ *ibid.* p49

⁹² *ibid.* p50

⁹³ *ibid.* p51

of the DA. Some suspect that she will continue to deliver poorly, and others state that no matter what, the DA would remain a White political party. The author is sceptical of Zille's 'liberal' scheme of ideas. 'Helen wants to love the black's Liberal style. That doesn't work... What the blacks of Africa need is "tough love"'.⁹⁴ Toughness is here not seen as one of a woman politician's inherent qualities.

One is amazed that despite scepticism over Zille's competence as a liberal woman politician, she does not surrender to criticism. Actually, the way Zille handles the Cape protest about poor water and electricity supplies, is worthy of analysis. On the *SABC News* of May 16, 2007, she appears firm and full of conviction, as she shifts the source of the problem, from one of service delivery in the city, to a result of attempts by the ANC to 'destabilise her multiparty government'⁹⁵. Her gender may be viewed as inhibiting her credibility as politician, but her verbal dexterity allows her to surface and prove her competence.

It comes as no wonder then, that some news articles deal extensively with how Zille will accomplish her duties as she takes on different roles in the public domain. Prior to the elections for the leadership of the DA, Zille in the *Cape Times*, is shown to be a good 'strategist' and 'manager' as she anticipates how she will handle her two offices, as mayor and as leader of the DA. Her intention to have a satellite office linking her mayor ship to her position in DA is one of the ways in which she intends to do justice to both jobs.

In the *Cape Argus* of April 11, 2006, Zille is described as having a 'can-do attitude'⁹⁶. The author of the article, T. Johnson, hopes that this attitude is infectious and filters down to the officers at the lower end. He then speaks in defence of Zille and her 'cautious response' to the building of the 1.5 billion stadium for the World Cup 2010. He props his argument with studies showing the choice cities have to make across the globe, between economic infrastructure to attract foreign investors, and development to enhance the lives of local inhabitants. If politicians, like Rassool, criticise Zille's indecision over the construction of the stadium, the author thinks it is because, they are aware of other 'trade-offs' this construction will yield. The author is of the opinion that the stadium is not even of great appeal to investors as much as a 'skilled workforce, effective municipal services and a well-run transport system' are.

⁹⁴ See appendix, p52

⁹⁵ *ibid.* p54

⁹⁶ *ibid.* p55

What matters as well, is the competence of political leaders to drive change. With the election of Sandra Botha as leader of the opposition on May 24, 2007, Zille states in *AllAfrica.com* on the following day, that with two women in ‘high-profile positions’, there is no doubt that what matters for supporters is not gender but ‘competence’⁹⁷. The article, as such, defies the flawed assumption that the nation can be run by men and men alone.

The victim

Even so, readers may witness Zille in countless situations as a victim of plots allegedly hatched by the ruling party to clip her wings and strip her of her power as Mayor. Readers may consider Zille’s vulnerability especially as a woman politician, jeopardises her power in office. On September 22, 2006 *SABC News*, Zille is cast as victim of an ‘undemocratic plan’, involving not only the substitution of the executive mayoral system with an executive committee, but also her consequent removal from power as parties get to be represented proportionally⁹⁸. Likewise, on *SABC News* June 30, 2007, Zille is seen as victim of plots by ANC members, and in *The Rapport* among other newspapers, victim of conspiracies by De Lille, the DA provincial leadership, and ‘Botha and his cronies’⁹⁹. Though, these statements are not backed by concrete evidence, they suffice to weaken Zille’s case as a politician.

One ‘*qforum*’ blog states on May 8, 2007 that the DA does not have a leader with charisma. It admits that Zille is ‘tenacious and extremely talented’ but that she lacks something ‘the likes of Eva Peron had’. As it stands, Zille may well become ‘victim of a plot similar to that which got rid of Benhazir Bhuto’¹⁰⁰. The author of the blog states that Bhuto was not as ‘dodge’ as she had been depicted, and that if a man had been in the same position it would not have created such uproar. Zille's gender here is hence seen to be at odds with the toughness required to survive in politics.

Race or gender?

As much as gender may be shown to inhibit Zille’s delivery as Mayor and leader of DA, her race also plays a fair part. It appears that Zille is unable to garner enough Black votes because she is ‘White’ and her party is primarily constituted of ‘White members’ at its head. In the *Mail & Guardian* of Dec 10, 2006, Zille and Athol Trollip are said to have a history of

⁹⁷ See appendix, p56

⁹⁸ *ibid.* p57

⁹⁹ *ibid.* p57

¹⁰⁰ See appendix, p63

'beating farm workers, oppressing domestic workers' according to the *Cape Argus*. They are scorned as Fauxhosa speakers, using without success, their knowledge of Xhosa to win Black votes¹⁰¹. As such, gender considerations impinge on Zille's public image and questions of race also have some bearing.

Bulelwa Qupe as a rhetorical agent

Qupe as a rhetorical agent uses her ethos as the first black woman entrepreneur and a successful one too in the fisheries, to win the support of government and non-governmental organizations and militate for other women entrepreneurs. Besides her image as the success story, Qupe strikes readers as someone who is eloquent in public address. In *The Herald* for instance, she is said to address a 'rapt audience'. Her verbal skills enable her to stand as a spokesperson for other women who seek to engage in business activities like her. She becomes the role-model, the epideictic personified. In the TV series, 'Salute to Success' where she is to be interviewed, she is said to adopt one of 'the different routes hardworking and talented South Africans have explored to make their dreams come true'¹⁰². Her mastery over words also makes her stand out as an uncompromising negotiator in business. In *The Herald* of November 15, 2002, Qupe appears at the fore, in the case of a major disagreement between her enterprise, the Mazidlekaya and the Lusitania Company, in which she holds 5% of shares¹⁰³. She uses a firm tone when she states that the agreement between the two companies has not been respected. She notes that though the quota requirements were met, the deal was not merely a 'paper quota' one, but one that stipulated that skills would also be transferred. This part of the agreement was however not implemented. The fact that the settlement was actually reached out of court and that Lusitania agreed to pay all legal costs incurred, comes eventually to project Qupe as a good negotiator. Also, in her speeches, one often spots narrations of her struggles as a businesswoman. The use of the forensic arguments here serves to highlight her achievements and helps other businesswomen in coping with day to day problems.

Media representation

Values and morals

In *The Herald* of October 15, 2002, Qupe is caught lying when asked whether she owns 50 %

¹⁰¹ *ibid.* p63

¹⁰² *ibid.* p65

¹⁰³ See appendix, p65

of shares in the Mazidlekhaya¹⁰⁴. This puts a blot on Qupe's ethos as a praiseworthy businesswoman. However one of the priorities of Qupe is undoubtedly customer care. *The City Press* article of June 18, 2005, quotes a part of her address as Chairperson of the South African Women Entrepreneurs' Network where she advises other businesswomen to "Have passion for what you do, respect your clients, deliver a good product on time, accept criticism and persevere - these are the secrets of the game"¹⁰⁵. If Bulelwa Qupe's business prospers it is perhaps due to the value of care she embraces.

Family woman

It is not surprising that many articles have devoted their pages to outline Qupe's success story. *The City Press* article of June 18, 2005, for instance relates her heroic journey, this time though, giving it a more human touch. Qupe is projected as the family woman, 'mother of four', who runs her business with her husband Don, who spends her Sundays home and can afford an annual holiday in January with her family. *The Herald* of October 9, 2002, likewise, ends with a note of gratitude, "I would never have made it without my family," says Bulelwa, with her husband, Don, and four children, she feels she can still conquer the world'¹⁰⁶. Here again, Qupe's gender is seen not as a disadvantage to her business. Instead, her family support is what helps sustain her in the corporate world.

Competence

As for Qupe's competence, it is signalled by the different awards she has received and by the various women entrepreneur organizations in which she is actively involved. *The City Press* article of June 18, 2005, extols Qupe's qualities as a 'shrewd businesswoman' who carefully observes market trends and leaves no stone unturned to realise her dreams¹⁰⁷. Besides being cunning, she is shown to have perseverance. She states that there were major challenges but that she turned them into her 'propeller to success'. We also come to see her as a 'forward-looking' woman. She is said to travel abroad on repeated occasions to keep up with the technological innovations in other countries. Thus even if it is commonly held that women are less experienced than men in business, Qupe overcomes this shortcoming by going on the quest for new knowledge .

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.* p66

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.* p67

¹⁰⁶ See appendix, p68

¹⁰⁷ *ibid.* p67

A fighter

Many articles actually praise Qupe's efforts to enter the corporate world. It is pointed out in many instances that opportunities are scarce for women entrepreneurs to engage in business. As such, we often find Qupe being sketched as a fighter. *The Herald* of March 28, 2002, highlights some major challenges facing local suppliers of fish, and consumers alike, as local shops in the Eastern Cape announce a shortage of Hake and Maasbanker. Qupe, in this article, becomes one of the main spokespersons, speaking on behalf of local suppliers and consumers. "It seems the suppliers are focusing more on exporting than servicing people locally. Some people are so desperate that they are going to the sea to catch the fish themselves," Mrs Qupe said. She is also said to have written to the Environmental Affairs and Tourism Minister Moosa to ask him to "intervene to ensure the local market is looked after"¹⁰⁸. Her gender here does not prevent her from being influential in the local fish supply chain.

A voice for the voiceless

Rather, as shown in the *Weekend Post* of June 4, 2005, Qupe becomes the 'fighter for the economic liberation' of Eastern Cape women. In fact Qupe assumes the status of the voice for the voiceless. She chairs several women organizations that grant financial and other support to budding businesswomen. 'Sisters doing it for themselves', an article in *The Herald*, speak of what Qupe sees as the opportunities and challenges of entrepreneurship for women. She states "Women have been marginalized, her place was in the kitchen, but today we see a lot of women climbing the corporate ladders, not by default, but by design, not as tokens, but as decision makers and opinion leaders". She is presented as a businesswoman familiar with the nuts and bolts of the trade. She states that though attitudes vis-à-vis women have changed since 1994 and banks such as ABSA are cooperating to boost local businesses, there is still a need for 'significant changes in the behaviour, attitude, and perceptions of businessmen towards women'¹⁰⁹. She quotes the success rate of women businesses, stating that 53% of small and medium businesses are owned by women. Despite the fact that men occupy the higher echelons of large businesses, Qupe admits that some women are actually owners of national companies today, and that some of those firms even 'outpace' male-run companies. Looking at the trends, she projects herself as a woman who believes firmly in transformation and likens the wave of entrepreneurship to a revolution that should occupy people's minds

¹⁰⁸ See appendix, p71

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.* p70

and consequently their deliberations.

In *The Herald* article of November 15, 2005, entitled 'Eastern Cape businesswomen put on road to success', Qupe's name figures again, this time as head of the Nelson Mandela Metro Sawen, speaking on how opportunities for budding businesswomen can be enhanced. She states, 'Women are serious about business' and insists that more information seminars be promoted to empower them in the corporate world¹¹⁰. In *The Herald* article of May 13, 2005, Bulelwa's name is at the fore: 'Bulelwa angling to help women get ahead in life'¹¹¹. Her reputation as a fine businesswoman is emphasised in the very first line. She exports fish products to Spain and has recently been elected the vice-chairman of SA Women Entrepreneurs Network. Leading a 94-woman delegation from the Eastern Cape to the inaugural national conference of the SA Women's Entrepreneurs Network, Qupe clearly projects herself as a voice for promising women entrepreneurs. She states that through the entrepreneurs' network, she will go to the extent of lobbying the various government departments to ensure that women have no difficulty in receiving state support for solving their business problems. These various articles on Qupe's efforts and struggle to boost women-led enterprises only evidence the fact that gender is still viewed, and projected as such in the media, to be a hurdle to entrepreneurship and that there is still much ground to be covered.

Nadine Gordimer as a rhetorical agent

Nadine Gordimer is said to be a master at blending literature with politics. Her deep sense of justice and political commitment influence much of her writings. In the *Mail & Guardian* issue of February 4, 2000, Gordimer is described as a 'realistic optimist'. Her collection of essays under the title 'Living in Hope and History: Notes from our Century', is said to speak of 'profound concerns' such as the 'status of the artist', AIDS, religious fanaticism, 'implications of economic and cultural globalisation', 'sexual liberation' among others. As for her style, Gordimer is said to have an eloquent and impassioned rhetoric¹¹².

¹¹⁰ See appendix, p71

¹¹¹ *ibid.* p72

¹¹² *ibid.* p75

Media (re)presentation

The woman writer

Gordimer, the woman writer is described as having a rich vision and a deep insight into human nature and behaviour. Her keen eye for the complexities of human ties can be linked to her experiences as a woman. In fact, when she was robbed in her home in Johannesburg, the *Mail & Guardian* of November 3, 2006 states that she was overcome more by sympathy than by fear. She seemed concerned about the future of the youth and used this incident as a springboard to address issues of crime and employment¹¹³. The ease with which Gordimer transforms her experiences into acts of social reform makes it plausible to suppose that there might be a rapport between many of the emotions that tinge her fictional writings and the incidents in her life or her perception of them. Indeed, in the novel entitled *Pickup and Manu Herbstein's Ama*, for which Gordimer was nominated the 2003 Commonwealth Writers Prize, *SABC News* of March 27, 2002, notes how tangles of love and cultural encounters are rendered through the eyes of the woman character's 'silent and deep understanding of human nature'¹¹⁴. It would not be fallacious to assume that though Gordimer writes realistically about the political situation, her writing bears the influence of her own insight as a woman and is therefore characterised by greater emotional complexity.

Censorship

Still, even in the post-apartheid era, there are continued constraints on the literary activities. The *SABC News* of April 16, 2001, outlines the controversy surrounding Nadine Gordimer's novel 'July's People'. It is claimed that the novel is 'racist' and should be dropped from the school curriculum¹¹⁵. Geldenhuys, education spokesperson of DA, disproves of this censorship, arguing that it could bring an end to literature and turn South Africa into a laughing stock in the eyes of the international literary community because the state is confusing what is politically appropriate with what is appropriate in the realm of education. On the *SABC News* of April 22, 2001, Gordimer deplores the 'incredibly low level of assessment' and 'abysmal ignorance' that led her novel 'July's people' to be tagged as 'deeply racist, superior and patronising'¹¹⁶. She is glad that the Gauteng government is not eager to remove the text from the school curriculum. Similarly, in *News24.com* of April 15, 2001, Gordimer states that the report that her novel is 'racist', does not encourage good grammatical

¹¹³ See appendix, p77

¹¹⁴ *ibid.* p78

¹¹⁵ *ibid.* p79

¹¹⁶ *ibid.* p80

practices, and that it is anachronistic just because it speaks of an unseen future, "echo amazingly, exactly, the language and attitudes of the old apartheid censorship board"¹¹⁷. One would wonder whether the limitations would be as strenuous for white male writers. In the *News24* article of October 19, 2006, entitled, 'Whites are finished', the author speaks mostly of male novelists who have put their foot down and denounced the 'inexorable decline towards corruption and lawlessness'. Some have already left South Africa, like Coetzee, and some like Hope live in 'self-imposed exile'¹¹⁸. Perhaps, it is this geographical distance that allows them to engage liberally in such bold statements. Gordimer, as an inhabitant of South Africa can only be cautious. She seems to be less prompt to reject the new South African political dispensation and acknowledges that some things are 'remarkably good' while others 'very, very worrying'. Nonetheless, she remains vague in her comments stating they are too complex and need to be written down. In juxtaposing Gordimer's statement to those of exiled male writers, the article is perhaps making a parallel point about mobility more than about gender. It seems to suggest that contemporary writers who are less mobile, like Gordimer, have a writing path fraught with more obstacles.

Socio-political engagement

It is noteworthy still, that local censor does not prevent Gordimer from gaining recognition abroad for the socio-political commitment conspicuous in her writings. The *IOL* of April 2, 2007, speaks of Gordimer's achievements as she receives the 'Legion d'Honneur'. Previously, she had been awarded the Nobel Prize for her writings on the 'inhumanity of apartheid'¹¹⁹. She is quoted stating, 'I accept with great gratitude and humility'. She here pays due respect to the social decorum, prescribing deference on the part of women. Pietton, the French Ambassador, believes that she is a 'great writer' and that her "work shines throughout the world". For Serote, she is the pride of South Africa and as far as her writing talent is concerned "She keeps a sharp focus on human relations in her writing that makes her work timeless". Apart from her writing, her effort to boost the publication of novels in African mother tongues has also received much attention. Her 'Nadine Gordimer Short Story Award for Writing in African Languages' is a laudable one for it is also intent on providing financial support to budding local novelists. This is a way perhaps to openly express her concerns for the local population and in a sense, gain acceptance by the masses as an active public figure

¹¹⁷ See appendix, p81

¹¹⁸ *ibid.* p82

¹¹⁹ *ibid.* p84

despite her race and gender.

Victim

However, this image of activism has recently been marred by that of victimisation. Gordimer has received much attention as victim of defamation. In the *IOL* article of Dec 5, 2006, it appears that Suresh Roberts has not only written a controversial biography about her but leaked 'embarrassing tit-bits' about her in the media¹²⁰. He has also ridiculed the status of William Gumede calling him 'Livingstone's servant', and Tony Leon's father calling him a 'hanging judge'. However, the paper prefers to give prominence to Gordimer's case with its obvious title: 'Author's defamation case: judgment reserved'. In *News24.com* of June 28, 2007, the author of the article shows her reservations regarding the basis of this controversy¹²¹. She states that Gordimer's biography is 'highly readable' and that Roberts has a good grasp of his subject. It would almost seem as though she were dismissing Gordimer's case of defamation, hinting that Gordimer was actually being unfair towards Roberts. As such, the article seems to twist Gordimer's status from that of victim to that of perpetrator. The fact remains nevertheless that Gordimer, the woman writer is a victim of untoward articles about her, and that in both of the above-mentioned articles she seems to be given no opportunity to state her own opinion. Are we witnessing an instance of the perpetuation of women silenced in the public sphere? Perhaps.

A Common Ground

As we have seen, Zille, Qupe and Gordimer, are all three cast as apt rhetorical agents who make use of their verbal dexterity to address pressing socio-political matters in their surroundings. Even if their sphere of involvement differs, they are shown to have common interests that extend beyond themselves and their kin. Their voice is the collective voice of the people and a plea on behalf of the voiceless. Despite challenges, cases of victimisation, often due to their gender, Zille, Qupe and Gordimer all three remain etched in our minds as fighters. They militate to revolutionise what they perceive to be a deplorable status quo and use their experiences and ethos to uplift the lives of the less privileged. In a sense, they clear the ground for transformation; they are the pioneers, the trend setters. It is true that, at times, the media presents them as transgressors who need to be silenced and at other times, as heroes with vision and determination. At times, their gender may well be viewed as incapacitating,

¹²⁰ See appendix, p85

¹²¹ *ibid.* p87

but their bold acts constantly come to the fore to debunk age-old myths about women. Also, irrespective of the nature of the media coverage, its significance remains paramount with hindsight, since it tacitly participates in securing women's foothold in the public domain by recording their history as it unfolds.

Conclusion

To conclude, the report sheds light on how the story of three South African women is relayed in the public sphere. They are often regarded as competent rhetorical agents, managing their ethos as public agents and drivers of change with great care. However the media has another story to tell. At times it lauds the women, at times it projects their gender as incapacitating. Even so, the women show resilience by utilizing PR strategies or by enhancing visibility through participation in social activist movements. By this move it is hoped that media renditions of them would correspond to the positive face they strive to construct. As the women public figures struggle to gain recognition by media structures in place, and as their ethos continues to be circumscribed by negative publicity, it could be suggested that alternative modes be explored to relay their stories. Magazines such as *Speak* and *Fairlady* are already plausible options. The proposal is to turn women into agents of communication, so that they need not rely on news brokers and can narrate themselves into being.

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Part II

A Grass Root Perspective

Combating Violence with Words

The Rhetorical Strategies of a South African NGO

Nicole Borg

This article focuses on the rhetorical strategies employed by the Gender Advocacy Programme (GAP) in the municipality of Saldanha Bay located in the Western Cape. GAP is a Non Governmental Organization functioning as an independent lobby organization aiming to bridge the gap that exists between women in civil society and structures of governance. The organizational strive is to increase women's participation in policy formulation and decision-making forums by empowering them to lobby for equity between genders in all spheres of South African society.¹²² Within one of its larger projects GAP searches for effective rhetorical strategies to spread light and direct political attention towards domestic violence, a problem which still is viewed as a private family matter not to be handled by official parties.

Being a small women's organization with thirteen employees, GAP faces multiple rhetorical challenges when addressing a social issue as expanding and complex as gender based violence. Not only is it imperative for the organization to create awareness and debate within the community where the efforts are concentrated, it is also crucial to reach the political agenda and create sustainable policy implementations, which in turn, can lead to societal transformation. To gain attention, on the public as well as the political arena, an organization needs to be rhetorically creative on numerous levels and this is where the interesting work of strategic planning comes in. With limited influence and funding organizations need to use various rhetorical strategies to effectuate sustainable change and this will be the focus of the article.

The project material for the main study¹²³ was collected at GAP's headquarters¹²⁴ in Cape Town in the spring of 2006 and consists in part of posters, pamphlets and newsletters. The principal focus of study was a project evaluation report¹²⁵ written by the organization as a means to present the work undertaken in Saldanha Bay and also to use for lobbying purposes.

¹²² <http://www.gender.co.za> (2007-03-23)

¹²³ Rhetoric D level: "Women's Organisations Rhetorical Strategies in South Africa – A study of the rhetorical strategies used by the Gender Advocacy Programme in the Violence Against Women Project"

¹²⁴ GAP, 7th Floor, Ruskin House, 2 Roeland Street, Cape Town, 8001 South Africa

¹²⁵ "Intimate Experiences of Domestic Violence among women in the Saldanha Bay Municipality" written by Faeza Khan, 2004

The document contains details regarding the project and the rhetorical strategies adopted in the Violence against Women Project. A qualitative interview¹²⁶ was conducted with Head Manager Renée Jeftha to obtain additional information regarding GAP and the employed strategies.¹²⁷

The strength of a collective voice

In the post industrial society a collective voice, brought forward by an organization, has a greater chance to reach out and have impact than individual endeavours. Even though individuals are the producers of rhetorical messages, it is the collective group they are created for, representing the organization's interests. The organization is the orator, which means it has to become rhetorical and that in turn, inevitably, makes rhetoric organizational, as George Cheney describes it.¹²⁸ An organization is a communicative body that enables its members, or employees, to speak via it. The sense of identification brings people together within one body and makes it possible for the individual to raise her/his voice while still remaining anonymous.¹²⁹ Yet communication, in the form of organized persuasion, cannot be viewed in the same way as when one individual addresses another since it is a message being sent from one group of people to another.¹³⁰ The changing ways of communication have drastically altered the traditional conditions for rhetoric, which means we can no longer interpret the phenomenon as one rhetor delivering one message to one specific audience. Multiple senders increase the demands to adopt messages to a wider audience and this has transformed the very foundation on which traditional rhetoric is built. We find ourselves living and functioning in a new society with "organizational rhetoric" taking over more and more of traditional communication.

Rhetorical strategies

According to Charles Morris and Stephen Brown there are three main rhetorical strategies for social protest. The moderate, the militant and the intermediate strategy. An organization

¹²⁶ To access the empirical material please contact the author.

¹²⁷ The interview was conducted in the spring of 2006 at the organization's office. The limited number of interviews is due to the fact that GAP is a small women's organization, thus confining the information gathering possibilities. Only two people were involved in the project, Renée Jeftha, functioning as a trainer and Faeza Khan operating as the co-ordinator. Unfortunately Khan, who is the author of the evaluation document, ended her employment in 2005. Hence, this limited the possibilities for interviews to the one employee remaining in the project.

¹²⁸ Cheney (1991) p. 2

¹²⁹ Ibid. p. 4

¹³⁰ Ibid. p. 3

relying on moderate rhetorical strategies fights for or against conditions, a set of behaviours, or an outcast group unable to fend for itself. The strategy focuses on engaging friends in the right places, creating a strong base of relationships so that influence can be directed towards people in control of possible change. With moderate tactics anger is something felt, not expressed, it is all about issuing “pamphlets but never manifestos” as explained by Morris and Brown. A strong ethos is important when using moderate tactics since appearance and credibility are keys to gaining entry into decision making centres.¹³¹ An organization depends on a strong, reliable ethos as much as a sole rhetorical actor. Building trust and realizing expectations by professionalism are critical factors for future influence, in public as well as political settings.

If the moderate strategy puts the executor in a dependent relationship to those in power and exerts high demands on the establishment of a steadfast ethos, the opposite is true for the militant strategy since it does not seek friendships or allies. An unwavering ethos is still vital but in a different way. Change, may it be political or social, is created by means of pressure tactics and verbal polemics, militant threats, harassment, disruption of order, provocation and intimidation. Hostility can also be expressed in terms of dress codes, manners, gestures, in-group slogans, and ceremonies. The aim of the pressure tactic is to punish directly with means such as strikes or boycotts. It is a form of “body rhetoric”, designed to create drama around issues, and hence enlist additional sympathisers, and de-legitimise the established order. The targets, toward which these oppositional activities are aimed, find themselves in a difficult position when dealing with militant strategies. If rejecting militant demands, disciplinary countermeasures may be needed, which can act in favour for the group/organization behind the strategy since it helps to complete the rhetorical act. The strategists become the victims in the public eye and the ones in power become the demons.

The final strategy available to an organization is the intermediate strategy. It makes use of both the moderate and militant strategies obtaining the advantages of each while at the same time avoiding their respective disadvantages. In other words an organization can choose to use both carrot and stick strategies. This is however a dangerous game. If employed carelessly, or utilized haphazardly, the mixture of strategies can end up antagonising all involved parties. Varying strategies can send mixed signals and in the end people may not

¹³¹ Morris & Browne (2001) p. 39

know what to expect, which can easily deteriorate the ethos of the rhetor. Still, some strategists manage to work successfully in this manner, applying the stick and carrot manoeuvre with great precision. The key seems to lie in the rhetors' ability to embody a powerful ethos, which, of course, is true for all successful rhetorical acts.¹³²

Adapting the rhetorical strategies to the situation at hand

The assumption that certain situations generate similar needs and expectations among audiences is one that generates interesting questions regarding the rhetorical strategies chosen by GAP. Differing needs call for differing rhetorical strategies and to discover the possible relationships among these, generic descriptions has been chosen as method to test the empirical material. The method helps determine whether a genre exists among the rhetorical artefacts, which, enables the formulation of theoretical approaches about characteristics. It becomes possible to consider the rhetorical strategies adopted by GAP as results of the society it is trying to influence and change. It is also interesting to explore which kind of strategies the organization uses among the ones available and if this is a choice depending on the fact that it is a lobby organization. However, one cannot rule out the possibility that the chosen strategies are based on other unforeseen factors.¹³³

Generic description involves four steps:

- Observing that similar situations seem to generate similar rhetorical responses, which entails that a specific genre exists in the artefact.
- The identification of rhetorical acts which appear similar compared to other acts, historical or current.
- Analysing the rhetorical artefacts to discover if there are substantive or stylistic features among them. This step enables a search for commonalities in how the rhetor dealt with perceived problems in the situation.
- To formulate the organizing principle that captures the essence of the strategies to the collected sample.

The methodological steps do not need to come in any specific order, which makes it easy to use them in an analysis. The following questions help determine whether the characteristics of adopted rhetorical strategies contribute to the discovery of a distinct genre:

¹³² Morris & Browne (2001) p. 42

¹³³ Foss (1996) p. 227

- *Is GAP forced, by the situation, to use a distinct set of strategies and is it possible to distinguish a genre in the restricted options?*¹³⁴
- *Are the similarities in the rhetorical strategies clearly rooted in the situation in which they were generated?*
- *Would the absence of the rhetorical characteristic (such as the fact that GAP is a lobbying organization) alter the nature of the rhetorical artefact (the rhetorical strategies)?*
- *Does the characteristic contribute to insight about a type of rhetoric?*¹³⁵

The first question will help analyse the societal impact that may or may not affect GAP in its decision to adopt a certain rhetorical strategy. The answer to the second question establishes if there actually is a correlation between the rhetorical strategy and the situation it appears in. The third question opens up for a discussion regarding what impact GAP's status as a lobby organization has on its choices of rhetorical strategies. Finally we have the fourth question which summarises if the organizational characteristics¹³⁶ contribute to an understanding of the type of rhetoric used within the project.

The rhetorical strategies of GAP

What made the Domestic Violence Project interesting to explore from a rhetorical viewpoint was the wide range of strategies applied and documented in the organizational report.¹³⁷ The supplementary interview with Head Manager Renée Jeftha presented an additional opportunity to investigate why certain rhetorical choices were made to employ or discard strategies. The overall objective of GAP was to create sustainable change for the victimized women of Saldanha Bay, which in turn would be used to direct organizational pressure on policy formulation regarding gender based violence.

As stated in the *Intimate Experiences of Domestic Violence Report* GAP ultimately decided to use four key rhetorical strategies in the project. The first line of action was to establish contact with local authorities and the second to distribute information about the project in the municipality. GAP then arranged women's focus groups as a means to collect cohesive information on domestic violence. The fourth strategy was the creation of an Annual Football Tournament. The four strategies were analysed in the mentioned order.

¹³⁴ Foss (1996) p. 231

¹³⁵ Ibid. p. 232

¹³⁶ As being an independent women's lobby organization.

¹³⁷ Khan, Faeza (2004) *Intimate Experiences of Domestic Violence Among the Women in the Saldanha Bay Municipality*

Establishing organizational ethos

Before initiating the project, in the invention stage, GAP identified which central actors who needed to be addressed to commence the venture. A first line of action was to establish an organizational ethos among those managing cases of domestic violence. Interviews with the local police became an introductory opportunity for GAP to demonstrate awareness of the police's important role in the process. It was also regarded as an opportunity to further present the specific intentions of the organization and to ascertain the scientific value of the project. GAP representatives were, according to Jeftha, aware of the necessity to establish a well functioning work relation with the police and to clarify the intention to not override any guidelines given by them. The purpose was to establish goodwill and display respect for the highly patriarchal institution. By directing attention towards the legal authorities GAP demonstrated a will to engage in cooperation, not intimidation. It is a strategy that creates an initial base of relationship, seeing that the police are in direct control of change in the area. The strategic manoeuvre can be placed within the category of moderate tactics, which, as discussed earlier, is a key to gain entry to decision-making centres.

After approaching the police GAP conducted interviews with doctors and nurses at local hospitals. The in depth experience of the medical establishments handling of cases of domestic abuse was of great value to the representatives. The hope was to gather as much information as possible from the staff and also to be granted the possibility to organise focus group meetings at the hospitals. It was considered to be the most appropriate setting for the meetings. GAP identified the hospitals' cooperation as peril for the project to be successful. They needed to establish a credible and lasting ethos with the hospital staff in order to reach out to abused women and make a positive impact in their lives. GAP was at the start of the project highly dependent on well functioning local relationships to undertake the endeavours of the project. The introductory rhetorical strategies clearly reflect the awareness of that dependency.

Posters and pamphlets

The distribution of posters and pamphlets had a two fold rhetorical purpose. They were primarily intended for mere distribution of information, although it was also a way for GAP to establish organizational ethos amongst the people in the community. They needed to create awareness of the organizations presence to targeted groups.

Posters and pamphlets were distributed in clinics, hospitals and at local schools. The distribution locations were chosen in consideration of the nature of the project and it was considered important to address women in the correct settings. Two posters were incorporated in the study. The first poster was hung in clinics and hospitals and it is a photo of a young black couple sitting next to each other. The message reads:

*“Equality begins at home.
Take Responsibility!
Stop Domestic Violence!”*

The second poster was directed at teenagers informing them about the importance to respect each other and oneself. It highlights the rights of young women and the obligations of young men. The poster was designed to address a younger audience; it consists of several teenagers drawn as cartoons exclaiming messages:

“I have a right to make choices about my life.”
“I have a right to be whom and what I want to be irrespective of whether I am a girl or boy.”
“I have a right to be in a relationship, or to leave and change a bad relationship.”
“I have a right to say NO to sex until I am ready.”

By using fictive teenagers as ambassadors for the cause, GAP places ethos within the targeted group. The children are empowered and become role models stating their own strong sense of moral integrity. GAP’s logo was clearly visible on both posters.

Focus groups

According to GAP representatives the focus groups were a means to target women and gain greater understanding of their situation. The participants were divided into small groups and accompanied by a therapist who led the discussions. The initiative behind the strategy was to encourage women to talk about abusive situations and their different experiences and help them find solace. Yet it was quickly observed that the groups were not functioning rhetorically and rendering the anticipated results. Women hesitated to share experiences within the group and many remained silent during the sessions. The representatives discussed the situation and found it meaningless to continue with the focus groups. To find a solution to the problem the women were asked how they experienced the discussions and a large number

of them stated that it was uncomfortable discussing such a “private matter” with others. The response from these interviews highlights the way in which domestic violence is kept in a hidden part of what is known as “private life”. Women are not given the rhetorical possibility and confidence to share experiences of abuse. To be able to counter the silence the organizational representatives decided to try a different approach. The focus groups were replaced by one on one consultation to establish a non threatening environment where privacy and the need for anonymity could be fulfilled. This strategy can on the one hand be seen as a re-establishing of patriarchal structures. But on the other hand it can also be viewed as a step toward women’s possibility of opening the private door that has been closed to the public stage, even though it is done within the frames of a one on one therapeutic conversation. The focus groups were unsuccessful because GAP did not manage to create a sense of trust, *pistis*, within the group, a crucial rhetorical feature. *Pistis* could not be generated within the groups for the reason that individual participants did not know whom they could trust.

Focus groups were also established with men. These groups had a strictly informative purpose, not a therapeutic one. Men were not encouraged to talk about own experiences on the subject. Jeftha clarified that this was a strategy aiming to encourage a productive debate among men. The hope was to increase awareness regarding the fact that physical abuse towards ones wife, girlfriend, mother etc. is a criminal offence and will be treated as all other cases of violence. GAP argued that the male focus groups probably would loose rhetorical effect if the tone of the meetings were accusatory, thus explaining why they did not encourage men to talk about personal experiences. If men were blamed for abusive actions, they would probably be forced into a rhetorical state of mind which is referred to as *refutatio*, a position of pointing fingers and placing blame. The rhetorical strategy would loose purpose and the organizational ethos could be damage by using hard-line tactics.

The Football Tournament

The football tournament aimed at drawing further attention to the cause of domestic violence among men. The discussions within the organization in the invention process as how to do so were numerous and complicated, as explained by Jeftha. Domestic violence is a sensitive issue. Not all men abuse their wives or girlfriends. In fact most men do not. A strategy needed to be initiated that would not position the target group in a defensive rhetorical state, *refutatio*. Another dilemma was to reach men from all spectres of society, rich, poor, old, young, married and single. To effectuate sustainable change there must be a change in attitude in the

society as a whole, not only among certain individuals. The organization sought to target an entire group, guilty or not guilty. The choice to approach the issue among men landed on arranging an Annual Football Tournament in Saldanha Bay. It was considered that by linking the issue of domestic violence to a popular sport activity it could create a unity among the two, thus neutralising the issue in a positive way. The main attraction was the matches but the audience attention would, in a way, be forced to focus on the subject of domestic violence as well. The football players were assigned to give speeches on the subject thus turning them into rhetorical ambassadors and role models for the cause. Linking football with gender-based violence may seem unorthodox but it proved to be a well functioning strategy that directed attention on the issue. It needs to be said that this particular manoeuvre can be hazardous. Mixing entertainment with a serious political endeavour might ring falsely in many people's ears and collective critique can complicate future lobbying functions. Yet, the strategy did not fail; in fact, it was a success that gained nation wide interest towards the cause, the event and GAP as an organization. The football tournament is now an annual event and is still an ongoing project arranged by GAP.

Concluding remarks

The rhetorical strategies adopted by GAP in the violence against women project had several tactical aims. The opening strategy, aimed at local governmental institutions such as the Saldanha Police and hospitals was, first and foremost, meant to assemble information regarding the eminence of the problem and strengthen the organizational logos. It was also an apt opportunity to introduce the overall goals and seriousness of the project. Establishing a primary organizational ethos is a critical rhetorical enterprise as well as persuading the right individuals, with a great deal of pathos, of the significance of the task.¹³⁸ By addressing the police first the organization displayed both respect and awareness of the roll that the institution plays in combating domestic violence. It also demonstrates confidence in the institutional ethos and ability to contribute with expertise, knowledge and in depth information. The introductory strategy links the police with the organization; they become colleagues, which in turn can help create a functional work environment for GAP. It is in ways a flattering strategy, the rhetorical delectare, seeing that it deliberately situates the police in the authoritative role. But the organization also displays own in-depth knowledge when elucidating the extent of the problem, movere. During the interview Jefta portrayed a

¹³⁸ Cheney (1991)

sustained lack of national action on the matter of gender based violence, political as well as institutional. The problem lay not in specific districts but in the national unawareness. To create a positive rhetorical atmosphere was most obviously vital for the projects survival. Highlighting wrongdoing and stressing inadequate institutional measures does not make friends. Friendships and relationships are made by displays of pathos, by respect and by the conception of mutual interests. The opening moderate strategies that were used in the project seek allies and responsive relations to create a base for organizational work. Reputable networking can further be used as references in later cases of ethos establishment when lobbying to make policy implementations at higher political levels.

An equivalent moderate strategy was used at local hospitals since the primary goal was to attain information concerning the hospitals approach towards cases of domestic abuse. By the establishment of a solid ethos it was possible to organise focus groups within the walls of the care facilities. The hospitals were identified as being the most proper settings since women seeking medical attention could easily get in touch with GAP. By attaining a “go ahead” and support from the hospitals the organizational ethos was further strengthened and linked with the medical establishment, giving them legitimacy in the eyes of the targeted women.

The poster and pamphlet strategy aimed at creating awareness of the organizations presence in the municipality and also to function as a primary introduction for the work that was to be conducted. Public awareness regarding domestic violence and women’s rights in the aftermath of physical exploitation needed to be heavily improved as well. The posters had first and foremost, informational value. The primary function of the posters was to get the message out there and also to introduce the project. This strategy can also be compartmentalised within the moderate genre of rhetorical tactics.

The focus group strategy could not be initiated without an existing preliminary organizational ethos. Women were introduced to the organization by the medical institution. GAP’s critical work with the groups started from the point where the discussions began. This is also where they experienced a rhetorical bump in the road in view of the fact that a group ethos was not easily ascertained. The sense of security and trust could not be guaranteed since the participants could spread information from the group meetings. Reliability became the key to gain access to women’s experiences of domestic abuse, which would provide the organization with the logos needed to strategically plan a continued line of action to combat gender based

violence. This strategy can also be positioned within the family of moderate tactics seeing that its purpose was to create an environment where experiences could be shared and trust built. The reason that the strategy failed might have been that the representatives overlooked the doxa women have lived in for the last centuries. Since women do not have a long history of public speaking it cannot be viewed as uncharacteristic to be met by a state of silence.¹³⁹ Abuse has not been openly discussed in any rhetorical forums and addressing it is undoubtedly a delicate endeavour. Approaching victims who are silenced both privately and ignored politically is clearly a rhetorical minefield even in South Africa where women have been strong contributors to the apartheid freedom movement.

The football tournament is somewhat ambiguous in character. The purpose of the strategy was to awaken the male public to the issue of gender based violence and it was thought that the best way to address them would be in a leisurely surrounding. Football players were given parts to function as role models by delivering speeches on gender based violence and stating the need for it to be properly addressed and acknowledged. The ethos of the football players did not lay in their commitment for the issue but in the simple fact that they were there. It can be compared to the increased popularity among organizations to use celebrities from the music or film industry to work as spokespersons for benevolent causes. Political parties also take advantage of high profile individuals as highlighted by Maja von Stedingk Wigren in her article about the Swedish feminist party F!. The newly started political party managed to convince Jane Fonda to function as a spokesperson at a political rally campaign in Stockholm. Her ethos was used to strengthen their message and political reputation. The football tournament is in theory doing the same thing, using the ethos of athletes to increase attention for an organizational cause.

The ambiguity of this particular strategy, as mentioned earlier, can be found in the fact that the rhetorical message might be interpreted as a lack of trust in men's willingness to acknowledge the importance of the issue in a more traditional rhetorical fashion. To combine a serious social issue with leisurely amusement could be perilous. The interview with Jeftha elucidated that the strategy was born out of the understanding that it would not be enough to have public debates lead by women or posters hanging on every streetlight in the municipality. The male population needed to be addressed by men in a rhetorically

¹³⁹ Campbell (1990) p. 398

provocative and yet socially attractive way, hence the idea of the tournament. It may seem defeatist that men pay more attention to each other than to women, but since the goal was to reach out it must be seen as rhetorical success since the tournament and organization gained much positive attention from it. The strategy in itself can be categorised as a carrot- and stick strategy, an intermediate strategy, since it is a message delivered under certain conditions. It can however also be viewed as a moderate strategy since it does not seek direct punitive countermeasures.¹⁴⁰

Over all the strategies described above appear to be rhetorically modest, humble and almost pleading. Why is that? Well first of all GAP needs to consider its status as a lobby unit which means that the job does not end in Saldanha Bay. The venture began there and will continue to demand a strong organizational ethos when approaching the political arena to direct influence and hopefully create policy implementations. The organization becomes locked in a rhetorical genre of moderate and intermediate strategies because it is heavily dependent on the outcome of its work on grass root level. The rhetorical strategies become a reflection of the norms prescribing its role in the public eye. If GAP was not a lobby organization the rhetorical artefacts might be of a different nature. However the characteristics of the chosen rhetoric give us an understanding of the delicate balance of decorum that needs to be upheld by lobbying units working on both grass root- and political level. To mix both moderate and militant strategies would most likely deteriorate the organizational ethos and leave little credibility to function in either sphere.

¹⁴⁰ Morris & Browne (2001) p. 42

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The Struggle of Generations

The Rhetorical Strategies of a Swedish Feminist Grass root Organization

Gunilla Malm

When you have the desire to take part in and have access to a democratic process and participate in politic – How do you proceed if you belong to a subordinate and low- status group in society? How does one persuade others from that position and access the public arena? According to the rhetoric of antiquity the rhetor was a man, a *vir bonus dicendi peritus*, a good man and a competent speaker. He had access to the public sphere, he was allowed to speak for him self and participate in democratic processes and politics.¹⁴¹ Women were denied the right to partake and it has taken centuries to access this privilege. During the end of the 19th century women in Sweden started to claim rights, demanding access to politics, the right to vote in Parliament and to speak in public. The context for these women was to a certain extent consistent with the context of today where women in general are considered a low status group. Even if they now can vote in Parliament and have access to the public sphere, gender inequality withholds them in second place in the societal hierarchy¹⁴².

Contextual consequences

The circumstances mentioned above uncover the situation of women's low ethos in speech situations, which is a result of overall low status in society. Mral describes how women, or in this case a low status group, needs to adjust their strategies in order to be listened to at all. Women establish ethos and manages logos and pathos in quite different ways then men. Mral writes that female speakers have a lower primary ethos to consider when addressing an audience. It is possible that they enter a speech situation with a low primary ethos and during their speech need to strengthen their secondary ethos to be able to convince the audience. These conditions are also valid for other subordinate groups in society who need to create and strengthen ethos in speech situations.¹⁴³ Mral brings forward that women in all times have chosen different strategies to make it possible for them to participate in argumentations and other rhetorical situations.

¹⁴¹ Hellspong (2004) p. 47

¹⁴² Mral (2003) p. 38

¹⁴³ Ibid p. 38

The “female way” of argumentation (non-aggressive) is nothing but a (successful) rhetorical strategy for a low status group. From an inferior position you develop a sensibility for the appropriate which is the only available strategy if you want to successfully persuade your audience.¹⁴⁴ Campbell adds to this when writing:

“In fact, insofar as the role of rhetor entails qualities of self reliance, self confidence, and independence, its very assumption is a violation of the female role.”¹⁴⁵

Campbell argues that women who step out of their traditional roles in society and achieve independence and active striving (the usual male character) will pay the price of being “unsexed”. Men who fail to be independent and achievement orientated will also be “unsexed” but for the opposite reason. In other words; women who maintain a traditional male character, will be regarded as less female and men who do not succeed to achieve the same male character will be consider less manly.¹⁴⁶ These aspects conclude an essential part of the (rhetorical) context for women to act within and upon. Campbell sums up by saying:

“/.../when women become part of an audience for liberation rhetoric, they violate the norms governing sex appropriate behaviour”.¹⁴⁷

Investigating a Grass root Organization

The main purpose has been to uncover and investigate the rhetorical strategies and methods used by a feminist student grass root organization. Given the circumstances discussed above it is easy to acknowledge the difficulties facing a group of this nature when bringing forward their argumentation. How do they handle their subordinate position when striving for equality between women and men, and how do they persuade? To accomplish the investigation two research questions were asked: Is it at all possible to call a non hierarchic flat structure of communication rhetorical? What is rhetoric or rhetorical regarding the organization and the work they perform? In order to conduct the investigation an ethnographic method of observation was used along with an interview with the chair women of the organization.

¹⁴⁴ Mral (2003) p. 47

¹⁴⁵ Campbell (1973) p. 19-20

¹⁴⁶ Campbell (1973) p. 21-22, Mral (2003) p. 47

¹⁴⁷ Campbell (1973) p. 23

Feminist Grass Root Organizations

The egalitarian work to achieve equality between women and men in Sweden has been ongoing at grass root level since the end of the 19th century. During that time the primary goal for the feminists was to achieve the right for women to vote in Parliament elections. Women also fought for their right to speak for themselves, instead of always having a husband, father or a brother speaking for them in public arenas. Women were not allowed limitless participation or to speak freely in public environments. To be able to have influence in decisions made women claimed the right to participate in political and democratic procedures.¹⁴⁸ This episode of feminist work in Sweden is called the “First Wave Feminism”. In 1921 the feminist organizations finally succeeded and achieved the right for women to vote. To some extent they started the process where women (as well as men) could participate in, if not in all public arenas, so at least in some, to raise their voices and speak for themselves.

To successfully be able to persuade an audience (the members in LKPR¹⁴⁹) one of the Swedish organizations at that time carried through their work in five steps. First of all they needed to organize themselves. In a conscious way LKPR and their leading members gathered women over the whole country in a “feminist movement”, attacking men’s privileges in society with extensive grass root work. At this time women had lower social status and position than today, and that is one of the reasons why they also needed to create a certain atmosphere to strengthen and encourage the participants in the struggle. It was necessary for the activists to motivate themselves to attain the courage the work demanded. They used verbal communication (language) and all different types of publicity and media available at that time such as public speeches, posters and discussion forums. Education was the fourth important step in LKPR. Women were educated in politics and laws creating a political awareness among the participants and women in general which led to consciousness rising among women and many women began to question men’s privileges in society.¹⁵⁰

The Second Wave of feminism in Sweden started some decades after the Second World War, in the beginning of 1960. It is sometimes called the “New Feminism” in Sweden. This period of feminist work at a grass root level arose in the dissatisfaction among women. The issues at

¹⁴⁸ Schmitz (2002) p.15

¹⁴⁹ Landsföreningen för kvinnans politiska rösträtt, *The country organization for women’s rights to vote in politics*

¹⁵⁰ Florin & Rönnbäck (2001) p.15-17

this time were connected to the new circumstances women had to live in, particular after the World War. Many women had begun working outside their homes earning a low salary, still having the main responsibility for household and children.

The most well known feminist Swedish group at that time was Group 8. This group was first started by eight women, on the 8th of May in 1968. Their main goal was to increase the consciousness among people about the inequality between women and men.¹⁵¹ Significant for this group's way of working and organizing them selves, was the non-hierarchic structure. By using this type of structure in the organization they wanted to achieve an environment where all members were given the space to speak freely and to take action. No one should be some one else's leader. They should all lead and equally participate in decision making, in other words; a non-hierarchic organization with a flat structure. One of the main goals for the Second Wave was education and discussions to increase awareness of gender inequality as it had been for the women in the First Wave organizations.¹⁵² In the mid seventies (1974 – 75), several new feminist groups had started in Sweden. Some of the issues they worked with were was a woman's right to her own body in the aspects of receiving pain-relieving when giving birth, and the right to free legal abortion. The fact that women were underpaid was another issue for the second wave feminists to include in their struggle for gender equality.¹⁵³

Third wave organization

The Third Feminist Wave in Sweden is the one presently ongoing. Some of the goals the First- and Second Wave worked for are more or less achieved today. What does the third wave want to achieve and how do they execute their work rhetorically? In which ways are they presenting arguments?

Members and structure of the group

The group observed in this study was committed to working as a flat organization. Everyone was given the opportunity to present their ideas and thoughts freely and no one dominated as a leader. This should be recognized as the primary goal and remaining result from the second wave's way of working within feminist organizations. It is explicitly stated in the organizational documents that the group shall work to achieve gender equality in every aspect

¹⁵¹ Schmitz (2002) p.16

¹⁵² Ibid. p.14-17

¹⁵³ Ibid. p.22

that is necessary and the ambition to work as a flat organization cohere with their regulations. But even so, they are, as an organization, required to have a formal chair woman/man with a secretary, treasurer amongst other official regulations. These stipulations have to do with receiving income to the organization, which in this case comes from their university.

Observing meetings

To be able to attend their meetings as an observer I had to get the members permission. The group works as a flat organization and all members are part of the decisions made. When attending the first meeting the study was introduced along with myself and the project the research was part of.¹⁵⁴ The members voted to see if they could allow me and my presence at their meetings. They accepted with the addition of anonymity for themselves and their organization. All names and other details have therefore consequently been left out.

The meetings were usually attended by ten to fifteen members in the ages between 18 and 25. The majority of members were students or people who just had finished their education. The group contained of both female and male students. The number of members varies each semester when the students move to different universities. Usually they meet at someone's home or at their favourite coffee shop in town. Meetings were held every fortnight, or at least once a month throughout the time the study took place which was from January till June 2005. Four meetings were attended along with the manifestation on International Women's Day the 8th of March.

At each meeting one person was elected to act as a "meeting simplifier" (mötesunderlättare). That is a role where a person keeps an eye on the speakers' time and distributes time to all the present members. No one should be neglected or in any other way overlooked. In order to let everybody get an opportunity, and feel comfortable to say something, they started most of their meetings with "a round". At every round all members got the opportunity to say something about their studies or any thing at all really.

When carrying through these rounds they usually passed an item around to each member. It could be a teddy bear, a t-shirt or anything that the speaker held in her (or his) hand while talking. According to the chair woman this procedure was an attempt to give people, who

¹⁵⁴ Women's Rhetorics in South Africa and Sweden. A Comparative Study in Democratic Deliberation. University of Cape Town and Örebro universitet 2004-2006

normally hesitate to speak in public, a possibility to speak out in a “safe” environment with a sense of security which hopefully, holding on to an item helped create. When the speaking round was completed the issues for the actual meeting were discussed. During the discussion the “meeting simplifier” gave the members the opportunity to speak, and made sure that everyone had the chance to take part in the democratic work. Usually the meetings took two to three hours.

Non traditional rhetorical theories

Traditional rhetorical analysis and theories foremost include one speaker addressing one distinct audience. In this specific case there is an entire organization with members performing work inside the group such as consciousness rising and education.¹⁵⁵ In addition to this demonstrations and protest marches were performed outside the group. The organization consists of individuals who normally have a subordinate position in society and low credibility (ethos). All circumstances mentioned above made clear that the use of traditional rhetorical theories were not enough to make such an investigation possible.

The rhetoric of organizations

Here the organization is the rhetor and the observation covers a longer period of time than just one event. An organization is always to be categorized as rhetorical according to Cheney’s theory. He supports that by continue that an organization will always include persuasion (persuasio) of both individuals and groups.¹⁵⁶ In order to make an organization function, at least one person inside the group will in some way, persuade the other members of how to get the work done. Cheney reflects on this particular rhetorical situation from three aspects. First the entire message it self. One voice - one message. From a collective voice it is really impossible to know who the sender is, unless it is said explicitly. Secondly, who is addressed by these messages? Today audiences are multiple and Cheney means that all organizations must work to adjust their messages to diverse environments. This aspect makes rhetoric of organizations about managing a multiple audience. Finally Cheney talks about the source of the message which is this collective rhetor who creates values, questions and identity for the whole organization. The grass root organization establishes their collective voice through continuous discussions were all members has the opportunity to participate and argue their

¹⁵⁵ Campbell (1973) p. 23

¹⁵⁶ Cheney (1991) p. ix

point of view until they can agree on collective values.

Feminist rhetoric

Some feminist researchers are of the opinion that traditional classic rhetoric concentrates on persuasion at any cost, almost like a battle. They argue that this specific type of persuasion is of the kind that women in general don't use, or are uncomfortable to use.¹⁵⁷ Other researchers mean that traditional rhetoric excludes women rhetoricians along with their experiences. Foss, Foss and Griffin added a feminist view to their rhetorical theories and by doing so they developed rhetoric with a broader perspective. All human symbols can be appropriate in any area combined with a rhetor that not necessarily has high social status or power. With a broader perspective of rhetoric Foss, Foss and Griffin conclude that rhetoric is not merely the art of persuasion, but rather “/.../to understand how people construct the worlds in which they live and how those worlds make sense to them”¹⁵⁸. In the case of the Swedish feminist organization the members view the world as a place of inequality between women and men, acting as one (group) to create egalitarianism. The group constructs reality through education and discussions amongst themselves and by doing so merge as one organizational rhetor in accordance with Cheney's theories.

Campbell argues in her essay regarding the rhetoric of feminism that feminism and women's liberation movements are a genre of its own because “//...it evinces unique rhetorical qualities that are a fusion of substantive and stylistic features”.¹⁵⁹The most evident stylistic features, according to Campbell, for women's liberation movements are how certain traditional concepts of rhetoric are rejected, such as the structure of one rhetor or expert persuading an audience and the need to adjust to the norms of that audience. This particular aspect of traditional rhetoric is rejected because it demands a certain amount of submissiveness and passivity amongst the audience. That is in direct opposite to the feminist movements fundamental goal; self – determination.¹⁶⁰ Most significant for women's liberation movements is the stylistic feature of “consciousness raising”. Campbell writes that women to some extent lack a mutual public experience and when making the private political you will establish and create a sisterhood among women. Usually that is accomplished in small groups where

¹⁵⁷ Mral (2003) p. 39

¹⁵⁸ Foss, Foss and Griffin (1999) p. 7

¹⁵⁹ Campbell (1973) p. 19

¹⁶⁰ Ibid. p. 22-23

everyone will have the opportunity to participate and lead. Through shared experiences women become more aware and will be encouraged to create their own truth.

The other distinct stylistic feature is the use of confrontational and challenging strategies that are designed to “violate the reality structure”.¹⁶¹ Not only do they violate reality structures but also the receiver/audience norm for decorum regarding suitable behaviour for women. Two distinct linguistic techniques are mentioned. First she describes “attack metaphors”, designed to shock through a *perspective incongruity* and also reveal the non conscious ideology of sexism in language. In order to illustrate this attack metaphor Campbell refers to a drawing of Rodin’s “Thinker” as a female. “Trust in God. She will provide”.¹⁶² The second technique is symbolic reversals. This reversal is transforming words and terms usually used in society to demonize women and turning those expressions into a source of power and strength instead. For instance using the word “bitch” – usually used as a negative description of women – and turn that into a positive description by using the power behind the word. To conclude Campbell’s theory about women’s liberation movements and their rhetoric; It is a genre of its own without a rhetor, a rhetoric that seeks its audience, transforming traditional argumentation to confrontation and persuades by violating the reality structure, “/.../ but that presumes consubstantiality so radical that it permits the most intimate of identifications.”¹⁶³

Egalitarian work

The rhetorical theories mentioned above constituted the frame for the observations made of the egalitarian work this grass root organization performed. At each meeting different subjects according to their efforts were discussed. The group members discussed and argued whether or not they should act in a specific area and a few of the issues will be presented here.

Internal Work

One of the first meetings I attended was a meeting to recruit new members to the organization. At this occasion a number of male students came to find out more about the feminist grass root organization and the kind of work they perform. Before the organization allowed men to participate there had been discussions about whether or not they could accept it. Some female members said no to male members and their argument was that the usual that

¹⁶¹ Campbell (1973) p. 26

¹⁶² Ibid. p. 27

¹⁶³ Ibid. p. 31

male dominance might develop and increase and a few members were unwilling to be exposed to that. Other female members argued that according to their regulations they had to include each person (even men) in the egalitarian work. This final argument won and made possible to include male members in the organization.

According to the chair women no conflicts had occurred in the organization because of male participation. The motive for these men to join a feminist group was that they looked for a context where they could participate and take action in egalitarian work and they sought men sharing the same concept of gender equality.

Regarding the rhetoric of this condition; allowing men in the group, can be considered as adding to the ethos of the organization. (Are men participating in feminist organization lowering their ethos and becoming unsexed by acting in a non traditional masculine way as according to Campbell's theory?) The decision to allow male members in the group is another example of the wish to keep the organization flat and democratic.

Consciousness raising is the most frequent and obvious rhetorical stylistic process this group performs. Examples of that are the regular meetings and the rounds where every subject from daily life can arise. The members watched films: "Thelma & Louise" and "If these walls could talk II" and after the film a discussion would follow regarding different issues the film enlightened. Here these kinds of discussions are interpreted as a form of consciousness raising among members and they voted to decide which films to see. At a meeting one member suggested that they should arrange a "Drag King"-evening for the members. The principle with an event like this is to dress and act as the opposite sex. There are some members saying no to participate and no one makes any attempt to persuade those members. A discussion develops concerning the reason for arranging and participating in a "Drag-King" event. They explain that it is a "queer feminist thing with a theory behind" and they also discuss appropriate body language and how to dress properly when performing this drag-evening.

The chair woman explained the main aspect of drag with ".../ it is a way to take command over the different roles we have been assigned, so that we then can discover to what extent they are social constructions rather than biological." The analysis of this event is that it is a kind of "performed consciousness raising", and also a way for the group to violate the reality structures in their own environment by using challenging and confrontational strategies. As

Campbell writes in her theory on women's movements rhetoric, it is the most significant characteristic of this specific genre. Campbell remarks that these kinds of events not only "attack" cultural reality but also break the audience's norm for decorum according to women (and men's) behaviour.

External Work

The group and its members performed external work to a various extent all through the observation. Among them was the idea to report commercials that in different ways sexually discriminated women (and men) to the authority ERK¹⁶⁴. In this case the members made individual decisions and reported directly to ERK and informed the other members at the subsequent meeting. When adding a feminist perspective to classic rhetoric as Foss, Foss and Griffin made, these actions can be regarded as a response or reaction to the reality the members has shaped for themselves according to gender inequality and egalitarian work and then acting on that.

During the period of observation the group preformed a manifestation at International Women's Day. Their participation was preceded by rigorous (rhetorical) planning in the group. From the end of January and the whole February the event was discussed at each regular meeting and at the end of February meetings were arranged specifically for the upcoming event. The organization worked on a theme which was; "Against Men's Violence against Women". The idea formed of cooperating with Amnesty International who had the same theme. Yet Amnesty International turned out to be uninterested to collaborate so they kept looking for another possible partner for the manifestation.

When the group was looking for a partner it was noticeable that they were most aware of their own group ethos and they would not settle for a low ethos group to cooperate with during the event. The group members were also exceptionally conscious about who to invite as a key speaker. A discussion commences whether it ought to be a woman (preferably high ethos) and if that isn't possible they propose to ask a well known male feminist. The reason to not engage a man is their own credibility amongst women in the audience and (possibly) women who have been exposed to men's violence. Most of the members prefer a female speaker and finally they succeed in inviting a prominent woman to hold the speech. This episode clarifies the group's awareness for the rhetorical situation at hand and also the importance of a high

¹⁶⁴ ERK, Trade and industry's ethical council against sex discriminating commercials

primary ethos to be trustworthy in the eyes of the audience. Working thoroughly with the element of *inventio* is definitely a conscious priority made by the members of the group, were they according to Cheney adjust their rhetoric to the audience.

About one hundred persons had gathered to take part of in the march through town. Banners, slogans and catchphrases had been prepared in advance and some of them are interesting to examine in the aspect of Campbell's theory concerning attack metaphors. All slogans and catchphrases had been created of (all) members in their usual non hierarchic method which fulfils one of Cheney's characteristics for an organization to create themselves as one rhetor, one voice-one message. It is furthermore how they view the world and how they have constructed it that appear in the slogans and finally how they act upon it.¹⁶⁵ One of the catchwords said "No to object – yes to respect" aiming at the objectification of women. "Higher salary – change sex", unfortunately this last slogan does not rhyme in English but this slogan is an attack metaphor when revealing the "nonconscious ideology of sexism in language and belief".¹⁶⁶

The 25th of November is the International Day against Men's Violence against Women and the organization sold designed candles that day in benefit for women's shelters. Outside a well known night club in the home town of the group they conducted a protest against a "Miss Slitz Contest"¹⁶⁷ by handing out leaflets to the guest and engaging in discussions about the sexist objectification the contest expressed. The group acted on circumstances in the world in both these events and did not hesitate to change methods of persuasion.

Conclusion

The article has presented some of the main rhetorical actions performed by the feminist grass root organization. One of the conclusions drawn from the study is the group's continuous non hierarchic actions. They firmly held on to the idea of not having one leader, particularly concerning their internal work. Noticeable is the rhetorical heritage from the first and particularly the second wave in Swedish feminist endeavours.

Initially the underlying dilemma when conducting this research was the inconsistency in investigating a grass root organization, that per definition, is considered non antagonistic in its

¹⁶⁵ Foss, Foss and Griffin (1999) p. 7

¹⁶⁶ Campbell (1973) p.27

¹⁶⁷ "Slitz" is a Men's Magazine in Sweden

rhetorical strategies than what is viewed to be classic rhetorical object of research. Is it even possible to regard the organizational performance as rhetoric? When applying feminist rhetorical theories and rhetorical aspects for organizations persuasive strategies it was an unconventional and broader rhetoric that made the analysis possible.

Whether or not you can call a non hierarchic flat structure of communication rhetoric the conclusion is that yes, you can describe (at least this group) as being rhetorical. The group displayed consequent awareness of differing rhetorical situations. When discussing gender equality with young women and men they adapt the message to the audience and used familiar examples. During the manifestation they adjusted their approach to an audience with a majority of women. There is evidence of awareness of the importance of maintaining credibility for the organization, both when choosing whom to cooperate with and whom to invite as a speaker. Inventio is a rhetorical process they engage in and take seriously.

When applying Campbell's theory concerning the rhetoric of feminist movements it became possible to discover distinctive rhetorical features. One of them is consciousness raising among members, particularly in regards to internal work. A continuous discussion among the members take place at meetings by watching movies, reading and reacting to gender inequality in the surrounding environment. Consciousness raising is also a heritage from the first and second feministic waves in Sweden such as the non hierarchic flat structure for the organization. Instead of using motherhood, or any other traditional female role, as a powerful argument and as well as a way to strengthen ethos for the organization, as discovered by Hansson Nylund in her investigation this grass root organization is almost doing the opposite. By dressing as the opposite sex to explore and understand the role our sex provides for us and to what extent it reduces individual freedom and gender equality, this group does not use traditional female roles in order to strengthen and increase their ethos. The South African politicians draw on their role as mothers while the Swedish group breaks with the traditional role of the female. Even so both groups are creating a collective sisterhood among their members as Campbell describes.

An agonistic argumentation was performed by the group if consider necessary, for example during the manifestation at International Women's Day. As being a subordinate group with relatively low ethos they adjust to the rhetorical situations and change their strategies in order to persuade successfully. Yet in the internal work agonistic argumentation was not common.

A group consisting of several individuals needs to align as one voice. In order to do that discussions and internal work helps to form opinions and values all can accept and argue for as one rhetor. One expert or one rhetor who leads the group is not accepted and the flat structure accomplishes the goal of group leadership.

Both alternate and feminist rhetorical theories were demanded to investigate this movement and helped widen the understanding of rhetorical processes. The aim has been met by the study of a feministic grass root organization in their egalitarian struggle for gender equality in Sweden. Aware of their circumstances they continuously vary their rhetorical strategies in order to persuade successfully in their struggle for gender equality.

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Introducing the documentary

Nathalie Bucher

South African history is filled with a range of illustrious, skilled, versatile, courageous and eloquent women public speakers. These ranges from the feisty Winnie Nomzamo Madikizela-Mandela, to stylish and educated Ruth First, to women such as Lilian Ngoyi, who spearheaded the 1956 Women's March on to Union Building in Pretoria with Helen Joseph and had a natural ability to inspire audiences. Women have been honored for their bravery in the struggle but their speeches by and deliberations are hard to trace. There for example are no speeches by women leaders on the ANC's website, where seminal speeches by stalwart male members can be found.

There is still a lot of work to be done to render tribute to these women of the struggle and those who have raised their voices in the public domain. Hence the significance of this work, in many ways was a pioneering effort.

From the time I was given the brief for the documentary, I searched the newspapers and kept my "ears on the streets" for events that could be of interest for this project. I also used some of my contacts at parliament to find occasions to film women speakers in public. When I called up Dene Smuts, MP for the Democratic Alliance (DA), whom I had interviewed on previous occasions, she invited me to film her end of the year constituency meeting. The event, which had called for early December 2005, effectively became the first of the eight events we filmed.

Given the time constraints we were faced with – I worked with Monique Bermeister and Catherine Morris, who did camera work, editing, and co-production – we decided to broaden the scope. Our decision was also influenced by an ambition to reflect the diversity of the type of events and topics women get to speak at. Hence we filmed events around the 16 Days Against Violence Against Women and Children.

I heard of the ANC Women's League organizing a meeting in a hall in Nyanga, one of Cape Towns Townships, which turned out to be poorly attended but nevertheless provided some invaluable footage and insights into women public speakers. I suspect a lot of the speakers who addressed the loyal crowd, switched into English instead of exclusively speaking Xhosa due to the presence of a camera.

Another event linked to the 16 days of activism was held at the District 6 Café, which is at the fringe of the inner city. It was organized by an array of artists, actors, performers and activists and saw about 15 people, mainly young women, take to the stage on a very windy Cape night.

Introducing the women in the documentary

Nicole Borg

Patricia De Lille - Independent Democrats

Patricia de Lille¹⁶⁸ has been involved in politics for the last quarter of a century and is the party leader of the Independent Democrats (ID) in Cape Town, South Africa. She is a member of both the Global Organization of Parliamentarians against Corruption and the African Parliamentarians Network against Corruption. De Lille was the first politician to expose corruption in the controversial arms deal in South Africa which led to the investigation of government officials. De Lille is furthermore the Chancellor of the Durban Institute of Technology (DIT).

De Lille's election as National Vice-President of The National Council of Trade Unions (NACTU) in 1988 earned her the highest position for a woman in the trade union movement. She was elected onto the National Executive of the Pan African Congress (PAC) in 1990 and she led its delegation in the constitutional negotiations that preceded South Africa's first democratic election in 1994. She was appointed Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Transport from 1994 – 1999. De Lille also served on various portfolio Committees including Health, Mineral and Energies, Trade and Industry, Communications, the rules committee and the code of ethics.¹⁶⁹ She is the first woman to establish and run a party in South Africa and is loved and feared for her sharp and humorous tongue.

Helen Zille - Democratic Alliance

Helen Zille¹⁷⁰ became executive mayor of Cape Town in 2006 and was elected national Leader of the Democratic Alliance (DA), the official opposition, in 2007. She began her successful career as a political journalist for the Rand Daily Mail after obtaining a Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. Zille exposed the violent death of Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) leader Steve Biko in 1976. Prior to that she

¹⁶⁸ To view image please see: <http://www.id.org.za/patricia-de-lille> (2007-09-05)

¹⁶⁹ <http://www.answers.com/topic/patricia-de-lille> (2007-05-27)

¹⁷⁰ To view image please see: <http://www.whoswhosa.co.za/Pages/profilefull.aspx?IndID=3528> (2007-09-05)

was involved in the Black Sash¹⁷¹ movement, the End Conscription Campaign¹⁷², the South Africa Beyond Apartheid Project and the Cape Town Peace Committee. She also gathered evidence for the Goldstone Commission, which investigated attempts to destabilize the Western Cape before the elections in 1994. As head of governing body of Grove Primary School in 1997, Zille led a successful challenge against government policy limiting governing bodies' powers to appoint staff.

Zille was the Provincial Minister (MEC) for the Western Cape and subsequently became a Member of Parliament for the DA. Within the DA she rose to the level of deputy federal chairperson and was the national party spokesperson and spokesperson for education. She was also a finalist in the South African Woman of the Year Award in 2003. Zille reflects the multilingualism of the country and speaks English, Afrikaans, Xhosa and German.¹⁷³

Mudene Smuts - Democratic Alliance

Mudene (Dene) Smuts¹⁷⁴ is a Democratic Alliance MP and the Regional Representative of the Western Cape Province. She also functions as the Spokesperson on Communications and Human Rights in Cape Town, South Africa.¹⁷⁵ She is a Founder Member of the National Coalition of Women as well as for the Western Cape Women's Alliance.

Smuts received a Bachelor of Arts Honors from University of Stellenbosch in English in 1971 and started her career as a reporter for Die Burger in 1972. She was awarded for Enterprising Journalism in 1978 and 1981 by the Stellenbosch Farmer's Winery (SFW).¹⁷⁶ Before venturing into politics full time, she was the editor of the women's magazine Fairlady. She was elected to parliament in late 1989, witnessing De Klerk's famous speech that announced

¹⁷¹ Black Sash is a non-violent white women's resistance organization founded in 1955. The Black Sash initially campaigned against the removal of colored mixed race voters from the voters' roll in the Cape Province by the National Party government. As the apartheid system began to reach into every aspect of South African life, Black Sash members demonstrated against the pass laws and the introduction of other apartheid legislation.

¹⁷² An anti-apartheid organization allied to the United Democratic Front (UDF) and comprised of conscientious objectors and their supporters in South Africa. It was formed in 1983 to oppose the conscription of all white South African men into military service in the South African Defense Force.

¹⁷³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helen_Zille (2007-08-01)

¹⁷⁴ To view image please see: <http://www.whoswhosa.co.za/Pages/profilefull.aspx?IndID=3357> (2007-09-05)

¹⁷⁵ <http://www.itweb.co.za/sections/telecoms/2007/0705231040.asp?S=Cellular&A=CEL&O=FPQQ> (2007-05-29)

¹⁷⁶ <http://www.whoswhosa.co.za/Pages/profilefull.aspx?IndID=3357> (2007-08-01)

the unbanning of the ANC and Pan African Congress (PAC) and the release of Mandela in her first parliamentary session in February 1990.

Smuts subsequently participated in the Council for a Democratic South Africa's (CODESA) negotiations for a new South Africa as well as the constituent assembly and was a member of the draft team for the 1996 constitution. She is one of the longest serving MPs in parliament, and regarded as one of the most skilled speakers.

Elizabeth Petersen - Director of St Anne's Homes Interfaith Prayer Service

Elizabeth Petersen¹⁷⁷ is a social worker and the director of St. Anne's Homes which is a shelter for victims of domestic violence in Cape Town. The shelter also focuses energy on women who are infected with HIV/AIDS. St Anne's conducts works to empower disadvantaged and distressed women and children to find relief, support and a chance to become independent, confident and self-sufficient. Women are encouraged to heal and nurture themselves. They are offered a range of services: individual and group counseling, alcohol rehabilitation, employment readiness, vocational training and after care.

Petersen has always been involved in her community and that was first channeled through St John's Assembly of God Youth. She earned her bachelor's degree in social work from the University of the Western Cape and is currently working toward her master's, studying religious and cultural beliefs and gender-based violence. She is a member of the Interfaith Listening Program sponsored by the Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA). Petersen is well respected on the social as well as political scene in Cape Town and was selected to carry the Olympic torch when it passed through South Africa in June 2004.¹⁷⁸

Maddie Mazaza - Director of City Transport

Maddie Mazaza is the Director of City Transport for the City of Cape Town. In the documentary Mazaza is attending a public meeting at the community hall in Mowbray, a suburb in close proximity to the University of Cape Town, to discuss the City's integrated public transport plan along the Klipfontein Corridor.¹⁷⁹ She was meant to address concerned residents about these transport projects and the meeting changed from being merely informative to slightly confrontational as it was attended by a huge group of taxi drivers who feared losing out on business through the proposed corridor down Klipfontein Road. Mazaza,

¹⁷⁷ To view image please see: http://www.woodstock.org.za/about/profiledetail.asp?art_ID=24 (2007-09-05)

¹⁷⁸ http://www.woodstock.org.za/about/profiledetail.asp?art_ID=24 (2007-06-01)

¹⁷⁹ <http://www.capetown.gov.za/clusters/viewarticle3.asp?conid=12295> (2007-05-30)

her colleague Donald Cupido and councilor Owen Kinahan, did not manage to make themselves heard nor allow for the presentation and a Q&A session for the residents to go ahead. The meeting was a total disaster, taxi drivers outside blocked the Main Road, police was called in to monitor the volatile situation but luckily there were no incidents of violence.

Naima McLean - singer/songwriter

Appearing in the documentary at “Up the sound” at the District 6 Café in early December 2005. Naima Mclean is a student at the University of Cape Town and performed as a singer/songwriter at the event linked to the annual “16 Days of Activism”, organized by an array of young artists, actors, performers and activists.

Mrs. Mtwana - NGO official

Appearing in the documentary speaking at the ANC Women’s League - meeting. Mrs. Mtwana is an NGO worker and was invited to the event to speak on the subject on Violence against Women and Children which is the focus of the 16 Days of Activism. Mrs. Mtwana switched between English and Xhosa and used simple but evocative language to instruct her audience about women’s rights and the physical and psychological effects of violence.

Text for back of book cover

The following collection of articles focuses on women's rhetoric on political and grass root level in Sweden and South Africa. The project in which the articles were written was financed by the National Research Foundation of South Africa (NRF) and the Swedish Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). The aim of the project is to study two spheres of public deliberation from a rhetorical standpoint.