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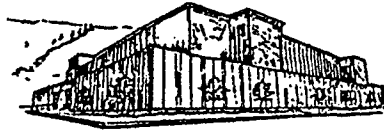
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TRANSCENDING FROM THE RACE FOR FIRST LADY
TO
THE RACE FOR FIRST LADY PRESIDENT
A RHETORICAL CRITICISM OF ELIZABETH DOLE

By

Kimberly Sue Flansburg

B.A. Carroll College, Helena, MT 1994

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

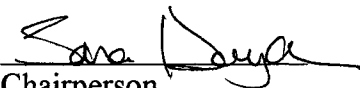
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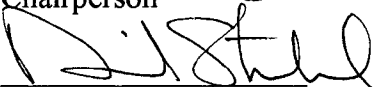
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Department of Communication Studies

December 2000

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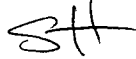
ABSTRACT

Flansburg, Kimberly S., M. A., December 2000

Communication Studies

Transcending from the Race for First Lady to the Race for First Lady President: A Rhetorical Criticism of Elizabeth Dole

Advisor: Dr. Sara E. Hayden



Each year the public has the opportunity to view, and sometimes hear, the rhetoric of our nation's first lady. However, we have yet to hear the rhetoric of our first lady president. The success of Elizabeth Dole's 1999 presidential campaign shows us that the day those words are spoken may not be too far into the future. Dole dropped out of the 2000 presidential race prior to the primary election. Nevertheless, she had greater success in her presidential campaign than either of the two women previously seeking their party's presidential nomination, Senator Margaret Chase Smith in 1964 and Representative Shirley Chisholm in 1972. Dole's unprecedented campaign success and her ultimate campaign failure provide us with a wonderful opportunity to take a glimpse at rhetoric that may or may not work for women vying for the presidency. In addition, much of Dole's publicity originally arose out of her past campaigns with her husband, as a first lady candidate running beside a potential president of the United States. Therefore, Dole's presidential campaign provides us with an opportunity to analyze how a woman shifts from a role of a possible first lady to a role of a possible first lady president. In the following rhetorical criticism, the author analyzes how Dole's use of feminine style provided a wonderful bridge between her 1996 first lady candidacy and her 1999 presidential candidacy, but conflicted with the genre of presidential rhetoric. The author also investigates how certain public expectations (i.e. about women in politics, southern women, first ladies and the presidency) create "governing rules" for the type of rhetoric a woman running for the presidency can use. The primary speeches analyzed in this thesis are Elizabeth Dole's 1996 speech on behalf of her husband, before the National Republican Convention, and her 1999 speech to form an exploratory committee for a presidential race.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge my family for their continuous love and support. Specifically, I would like to thank my father and my mother who have done everything possible to give me the extra boosts I needed during graduate school. I couldn't even begin to list the little things they have done to help me along the way. Dad and Mom, I love you very much! In addition, I would like to thank Ray for his love, patience and support over the past couple years. One of the greatest things I found in graduate school was you! I would also like to thank my colleagues (staff and fellow graduate students) in the Communication Studies Department at the University of Montana. I am richer because of your shared wisdom and friendship! To my advisor, Dr. Sara Hayden, you are the reason I am interested in rhetorical criticism and feminine style. You opened up a whole new world of communication to me through your Rhetorical Construct of Women course. I thank you for sharing your wisdom with me! You are a role model to me for the kind of professor I want to be; fair, wise, tough, patient and kind. Also, thank you for your efforts to promptly review each section of my thesis. Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Chuck Braithwaite and Dr. Anya Jabour for serving as members of my thesis committee. I thank you for taking the time to review my thesis and share your insight with me!

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

[Elizabeth] Dole is one of only a handful of politically prominent women who have done more than talk about running for the nation's top elective post—a group that includes former Senator Margaret Chase Smith, Republican of Maine, and former Representative Shirley Chisholm, Democrat of New York, who actually sought their party's nomination in 1964 and 1972, respectively. And former Representative Pat Schroeder, Democrat of Colorado, toyed with running in 1988. But Dole's as yet-unannounced campaign has already gotten further than those of any of her predecessors, with modest fundraising successes, endorsements from key players in early primary and caucus states, and warm press coverage (Nichols, 1999, p. 31).

Elizabeth Dole's recent campaign for the presidency was historical in two respects. First, Dole campaigned for an office that has never been held by a woman. Second, as Berke (1999) writes, "...Never before has a politician won the Republican nomination only to see his spouse seek the same office the next time around" (p. A14). Dole's husband, Bob Dole, was our country's 1996 Republican nominee for the presidential office, running in against Bill Clinton. Therefore, Elizabeth Dole provides us with a rare opportunity to examine the spousal roles within the institutions of the position of the first lady, or the first gentlemen, and the presidency. In addition, by looking at her campaign rhetoric, we can analyze how a female transcends from a symbol of a candidate for first lady to a candidate for first lady president.

Dole's combination of feminine grace and political experience has made her a favorite for president over the last several years. However, in the years surrounding her husband's run for the presidency, Dole denied she had any ambitions of seeking the nation's top elected position. Leiter (1995) writes, "Although McCall's magazine readers in 1992 named her their favorite female presidential candidate, Elizabeth Dole won't acknowledge a desire to seek elected office. 'I have no plans to. It's not something I

think about, very honestly,' she insists in her mellifluous Southern accent" (p. 3). This response may have represented Dole's attempt to maintain the image of "supporter" that is typical of the first lady, due to the fact her husband was seeking the presidency. Nevertheless, her popularity as a presidential candidate has continued. In fact, a 1999 poll taken of over 100,000 voters, from various states across the country, showed that Dole ranked second as the public's vote for a female president; First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton [who was recently elected as a New York senator] ranked first (Ciabattari, 1999). More importantly, an earlier poll taken by this same White House Project of more than 75,000 voters showed that 76% said they would vote for a female president in the 2000 presidential election (Ciabattari, 1999). These statistics reveal an acceptance among American voters of a female in this nation's top executive position. In other words, when Dole announced her presidential campaign in March of 1999, not only was she more willing to publicize a move towards the presidency, but the public was more willing to publicize an inclination to vote for a female with Dole's characteristics as this nation's first lady president. Interestingly, one characteristic of Dole that has been consistently evident throughout her campaigns, for both first lady and the presidency, is her use of a feminine speaking style.

FEMININE STYLE

During the nineteenth century, women adopted a pattern of speaking unique to their backgrounds and experiences (feminine style) to face the social sanctions of their time. The fact that female political candidates, such as Elizabeth Dole, are still using this style of speech shows how slowly gender roles and the behaviors that accompany them change. However, the fact that Dole has received popular support as a presidential

candidate shows how the way in which we perceive gender attributes has changed over the course of time.

In the nineteenth century, one of the primary barriers standing between women in the United States and their place in the public sphere was the belief that it was unsuitable for women to speak in public. Campbell (1989) explains, “Quite simply, in nineteenth-century America, femininity and rhetorical action were seen as mutually exclusive. No ‘true woman’ could be a public persuader” (p. 9, 10). Therefore, women’s push towards equal rights was slow as they did not have a forum to persuade people towards social change. The public believed it was morally, socially and biologically unsuitable for women to speak publicly.¹

Women of the nineteenth century were a symbol of morality. Campbell (1989) writes that a woman “was to remain entirely in the private sphere of the home, eschewing any appearance of individuality, leadership or aggressiveness. Her purity depended on her domesticity” (p. 10). The public used a theological rationale to further substantiate this belief. Biblically, a woman’s role was seen as nurturing and submissive to her husband, father, and even her sons. Therefore, women were the caretakers in the family and not the breadwinners. However, in part due to the industrial revolution, the ills of the public sphere (prostitution, alcohol abuse and slavery) were affecting the home environment. As those people responsible for maintaining morality, women felt the need to correct some of these social ills. For this reason, some of the first topics of women’s public speech were alcohol abuse and slavery. Even though these topics were of a moral

¹ These ideas were most prevalent among white upper-middle class individuals in the northeastern United States.

nature, because of social sanctions against women speaking in public, women faced resistance to their campaign for moral reform (Campbell, 1989).

In addition to facing these moral and social barriers, woman faced biological barriers. There was a belief, at the time, that women were biologically unsuitable to speak in public. Campbell (1989) explains that there was an assumption that women had smaller brains and nerves than men. Campbell writes that “their brains were presumably too small to sustain the rational deliberation required in politics and business” (p. 11). “Moreover, their smaller, and hence more delicate and excitable, nerves could not withstand the pressures of public debate or the marketplace” (p. 11). Because of these firmly held biological, moral, and social beliefs, speakers faced the following reactions: “Ostracism by friends and family, expulsion from religious organizations, and public censure—in addition to physical assaults on woman speakers—were used to enforce conformity to gender norms” (Campbell, 1989, p. 4).

In response to these barriers, woman adopted what Campbell (1989) calls a “feminine style” of speaking. Feminine style arose out of the process of craft learning that took place among women’s circles in the nineteenth century. Campbell describes the style as follows:

Such discourse will be personal in tone (crafts are learned face-to-face from a mentor), rely heavily on personal experiences, anecdotes, and other examples. It will tend to be structured inductively (crafts are learned bit by bit, instance by instance, from which generalizations emerge). It will invite audience participation, including the process of testing generalizations or principles against the experiences of the audience. Audience members will be addressed as peers,

with recognition of authority based on experience (more skilled craftspeople are more experienced), and efforts will be made to create identification with the experiences of the audience and those described by the speaker (p. 13).

Feminine style allowed women the opportunity to reshape gender norms. In other words, women could challenge injunctions against speaking in public by taking on a speaking style that was consistent with their femininity.

Although the feminine style arose out of nineteenth-century women's experiences, it is a pattern of public speaking that has been repeated over time. Dow and Tonn (1993) explain that feminine style's recurrence may be due to the fact that although "historical conditions" for women have changed, "social roles have not" (p. 288). They explain that women are still expected to be nurturing, emotionally supportive and empathic. In addition, they write that "current research indicates that these specific skills, as well as the way they are learned, may continue to foster development of specific communicative strategies for women" (p. 287, 288). Due to these factors, women have incorporated feminine style into their rhetoric over the past century.

Researchers have modified some of the defined characteristics of feminine style as they have seen it appear in more recent political discourse. For instance, in her 1998 analysis of Hillary Rodham Clinton, Campbell writes that feminine style avoids "such 'macho' strategies as tough language, confrontation or direct refutation, and any appearance of debating one's opponents" (p. 5). In other words, feminine style will appear less combative than other styles of communication. Jamieson (1988) agrees with this characteristic of cooperation versus competition. She writes, "Whether in public or private communication, men are more comfortable than women in a combative 'debate'

style” (p. 82). In addition, she proports, “Consistent with social sanctions against aggressive speech by women, they are also less likely than men to speak on controversial topics” (p. 84).

Through their study of public discourse, Blankenship and Robson (1995) identify five characteristics of feminine style that are similar to Campbell’s (1989), but show modifications. They are:

1. Basing political judgments on concrete, lived experience.
2. Valuing inclusivity and the relational nature of being.
3. Conceptualizing the power of public office as a capacity to “get things done” and to empower others.
4. Approaching policy formation holistically.
5. Moving women’s issues to the forefront of the public arena (Blankenship & Robson, 1995, p. 359).

I have chosen to analyze Dole’s use of feminine speaking style according to the characteristics defined by Campbell (1989, 1998), Jamieson (1988), and Blankenship & Robson (1995). I find it interesting that Dole’s use of a nurturing speaking style in her 1996 campaign for the first lady not only made her a favorite for that position, but a favorite for the presidency. Leiter (1995) writes that supporters suggested that she was “the Dole destined for the Oval office” (p. 1).

Blankenship and Robson (1995), Campbell (1989), and Jamieson (1988) emphasize that feminine style, although prominent in female speech, is not exclusive to women. It is a strategy that is also accessible to men. In fact, Jamieson (1988) writes that the public is beginning to favor a feminine style of speaking over a masculine style

of speaking by their politicians. This is due to the fact that feminine style is a more appropriate style for the medium of television (Jamieson, 1988). Jamieson (1988) writes, “Television invites a personal, self-disclosing style that draws public discourse out of a private self and comfortably reduces the complex world to dramatic narratives” (p. 84). However, this creates somewhat of a roadblock for women. Traditionally, feminine style has been perceived as “weaker” than a more traditional, masculine style of speaking. Only a person with perceived credibility can adopt a style traditionally perceived as weak without risk (Jamieson, 1988). Therefore, if a woman wants to be perceived as credible, she can only adopt a masculine style of communication, which may appear socially inappropriate and will not be favored over television. This puts female political candidates at a disadvantage.

However, Jamieson (1988) predicts that through Ronald Reagan’s and other credible male leaders’ use of feminine style, female candidates will be able to use the style without risk. In other words, male politicians have the ability to reshape the public perception of political institutions through the use of feminine speaking styles. In fact, Elizabeth Dole’s success may in part be attributed to Ronald Reagan’s use of feminine style during his presidency. Jamieson (1988) writes, “Ironically, the ‘Great Communicator’s’ effectiveness resided in his use of a style once condemned as rhetorically effeminate” (p. 244). Reagan’s use of drama, emotions and narratives to present his speeches reshaped how we saw the presidency. Reagan was not above us, instead he was one of us. He enacted a peer-like communication style much like that of the craft circles of the nineteenth century.

Parry-Giles and Parry-Giles (1996) warn us about seeing only the positive effects of the use of feminine style among male politicians. They write that “to assume that the presence of a ‘feminine’ style is reflective of political feminization is to ignore the potentially reactionary influence of such a style. The use of a ‘feminine’ style may signal not the feminization of political discourse, but simply a shift in the expression of traditional, patriarchal political images” (p. 348). Therefore, Parry-Giles and Parry-Giles emphasize that feminine style can perpetuate hegemony in that it has the power to mask political patriarchy, thereby securing “the consent of the powerless” (p. 348).

Parry-Giles and Parry-Giles (1996) also write that feminine style can mask stereotypes about women’s roles. In their review of presidential campaign films, Parry-Giles and Parry-Giles find that “...women are constructed as supportive wives (or cousins) who offer testimony of their husband’s strength of character, whereas other women are portrayed as weak and in need of protection” (p. 346). Therefore, these images invite us to see the country’s role of first lady in a certain way. However, Parry-Giles and Parry-Giles (1996) write that these films not only provide a symbolic representation of women in presidential campaigns, but also “of women in the American political system” (p. 348). They write, “Within the rubric of hegemonic masculinity, women in our political system are supportive, nurturing and honest about personal ‘character’ issues” (p. 348).

As I will demonstrate in my analysis, Elizabeth Dole’s campaign rhetoric provides us with evidence supporting Parry-Giles and Parry-Giles’ theory as well as evidence challenging it. Consequently, Dole’s rhetoric provides us with a unique glimpse at how campaign rhetoric shapes both the institutions of the first lady and the presidency.

“When we say that presidents constitute the people, we mean that all presidents have the opportunity to persuade us to conceive of ourselves in ways compatible with their views of government and our world. At the same time, presidents invite us to see them, the presidency, the country, and the country’s role in specific ways” (Campbell & Jamieson, 1990, p. 5, 6).

THE GENERIC RHETORICAL PERSPECTIVE

One way to examine political campaigns is to analyze their communicative functions, that is, to investigate what functions the various forms or acts of campaign communication provide to the electorate and to the candidates themselves (Trent & Friedenberg, 1983, p. 23). In fact, some of these functions are fairly commonplace to the American public. We expect political campaigns to have certain characteristics. For example, we know that campaigns involve fundraising and primaries. In addition, we expect to see democrat and republican candidates speak at their respective party conventions. This is because campaigns involve certain patterns of rhetoric that have emerged over time.

Generic criticism looks at categories (or genres) of rhetoric; categories which are purposeful and defined by patterns such as those mentioned above. Campbell and Jamieson (1990) write that “a critical use of genre operates pragmatically to consider ends, that is, the functions or purposes of discourse, and means, the strategies of language and argument through which such rhetorical ends can be achieved. In short, generic analysis studies the links between function and form” (p. 8). In other words, we recognize that certain patterns of communicative acts serve specific functions and follow specific forms. For example, eulogies, acceptance speeches and invocations are generally

identifiable. In a eulogy, we can expect to hear an oral response to an individual's death. The goal of this response is usually to honor the person who has died and console the friends and family who have yet to live. Therefore, a eulogy usually includes a recap of the deceased's past life, offering praise for who he or she was. In addition, the eulogy provides words of comfort for the audience, focusing on the present and the future. Although this is usually the purpose, or function, of a eulogy, eulogies may take different forms. For instance, some eulogies are more religious than others. Whereas one may include references to biblical passages to accomplish the aforementioned goals, another may draw from more secular sources of inspiration for these purposes.

Similar to the eulogy, we can identify links between function and form in presidential campaigning. However, what is interesting about presidential campaigns is that they have been developed predominantly by men. Elizabeth Dole allows us an opportunity to see how function and form are modified when a female steps into the position of presidential candidate.

Generic categories and variations from them provide us with insight into human culture. They provide us with an opportunity to see why certain communication forms are repeated in similar rhetorical situations. In addition, an individual's rhetorical variations from a particular genre can reveal to us what strategies one may use to change societal structure. Campbell and Jamieson (1990) write that "a generic perspective facilitates identification of outstanding examples of a given type, messages that not only fulfill generic functions, but do so in innovative and memorable ways, ways that render them unique rhetorical acts with the power to initiate generic change and to facilitate institutional flexibility" (p. 12).

Due to the fact the position of the first lady and the presidency have maintained specific gender roles over time, I am interested in analyzing rhetorical acts Dole uses to facilitate the institutional changes Campbell and Jamieson refer to. Specifically, I want to look at how feminine style, as a form, affects the function of campaigning for these respective positions. Campbell and Jamieson (1990) attest to the value of looking at such links, links between genres and institutions: “The link between generic and institutional analyses elucidates the ways rhetoric can serve institutional ends and enables an evaluation to be made of how well presidents have used rhetoric to sustain the presidency as an institution and to adapt it to changing circumstances” (p. 12, 13).

ELIZABETH DOLE: MERGING FEMININITY AND POLITICS

“I was in six to eight weddings the summer after I finished Duke,” Mrs. Dole recalls. “I don’t know why I was listening to the beat of a different drummer.”

Asked if she considers herself a feminist, she told U.S. News: “I think if it means that you had some sort of prepackaged answers that are handed down by the political correctness club, no. But if it means that you want equal opportunity for women, more freedom for women—absolutely” (Pope and Eddings, 1996, p. 27).

Elizabeth Dole’s experiences fit a non-traditional role. Nevertheless, although this role may at times appear feminist, Dole hesitates labeling herself as such. In fact, her public style embodies rather traditional feminine qualities. It is a style, that for some, might make her non-traditional experience all the more acceptable.

Elizabeth Dole did not choose a life path consistent with many of the women of her generation. Instead of looking towards marriage and motherhood, she sought out experiences that would enhance her career path. Pope and Eddings (1996) write,

“However well it is cloaked in such homey touches, only an iron will could have produced her resume: Duke University, Harvard Law School, two cabinet positions. ‘Not too many of us went to law school,’ says Janet Chase, a fellow Duke student who knew Dole. ‘If you did anything, you became a teacher.’ By marrying at 39 and not having children, she broke with the norms of the day” (p. 26, 27). Dole did not choose this career focus because she was branded an outcast or lacked suitors. In fact, she was popular in both female and male circles. Pope and Eddings (1996) write, “Her zeal might have branded her a heretic, but instead she flourished in the 1950s social whirl of sororities and tea dances. She became Duke’s Campus Leader of the Year for both the women’s and men’s colleges and president of the women’s student body....Dole would often bring work home in the evenings, but that didn’t stop her suitors” (p. 27).

Dole’s resume reflects numerous non-traditional work experiences in politics. This feminine feminist has participated in politics for over 30 years and served in the White House for over 15, a number most male politicians, including our current President of the United States, are still working towards. Leiter (1995) recaps this experience:

Her public-service career started in Lyndon Johnson’s White House Office of Consumer Affairs in 1968 and has included a five-year stint as a federal trade commissioner, a position she resigned in 1979 when her husband launched his first bid for the presidency. She served as one of the directors of President-elect Ronald Reagan’s transition team and head of his White House public-liason office in 1981-83. Reagan appointed her to be secretary of transportation, a post she held for four years until resigning in 1987 to help her husband make his second run for the presidency. Following the election of President Bush, she was

appointed secretary of labor. Since 1991, she has served as president of the American Red Cross, an organization that supplies half the nation's blood (p. 1,2).

However, Dole refrained from discussing her own political experiences during her husband's runs for the presidency. Campbell (1998) writes that what made Elizabeth Dole well-received in her 1996 Republican National Convention speech (a speech introducing her husband's campaign) was the fact that she enacted femininity. Campbell (1998) describes Dole's speech as "intensely personal and self-disclosing; it developed through anecdotes about her husband's life; as his wife, not as a former cabinet member or as head of the Red Cross, she praised him, showed her love for him, and asked us to make an emotional decision to trust him" (p. 5). Campbell (1998) writes, "Not only did she speak in the distinctly female role of wife, but she assumed a persona with a long history of women, unselfishly acting on behalf of someone else" (p. 5).

In her 1999 campaign for the presidency, Dole did not shy away from citing her experiences in public. " 'I think you do have to run on your record,' Dole said. 'You've got to let people know what it is you've done and what prepares you for a position such as this, so your experience is a very major part of it'" (Balz, 1999, p. 3). However, Dole often described her experiences in feminine ways. For example, in a June third Greensboro North Carolina presidential campaign fundraiser speech, "Dole described the Red Cross as leading a large, humanitarian 'business.' And she pointed to a record of national service dating back to advisory jobs in the Nixon White House" (Andron, 1999, p. 2). Therefore, keeping in line with her femininity, she emphasized that the job in which she held a presidential title was humanitarian in nature. In addition, Dole uses

various forms of the word “service” to identify the political jobs she has held (Road to the, 1999).

Dole’s use of femininity to describe her leadership experiences reflects characteristics of feminine style as defined by Campbell (1989, 1998), Jamieson (1988), and Blankenship & Robson (1995). In her most recent campaign, Dole set a tone for cooperation, versus competition. She did this by avoiding negative politics, or political jabs; employing a peer-like leadership style; and campaigning for common sense, non-partisan approaches to politics. In addition, her style seemed to move not just women’s issues to the forefront, as Blankenship & Robson mention, but women themselves to the forefront.

Although Dole’s feminine style has at times been noted as part of her appeal, it may not be perceived as combative enough to win a presidential election. Dole makes a practice of avoiding negative politics. However, this negative politics may be a necessary part of the game. Balz (1999) writes, “After watching her campaign here this week, Tom Gorman, publisher of the *Madisonian* newspaper and former GOP chairman in Madison County, said Dole must begin to challenge Bush more directly if she hopes to become a serious contender for the nomination” (p. 3). George Bush Jr., Texas governor, who has been leading in the race for the republican nomination for president (Balz, 1999; Berke, 1999) holds views very similar to Elizabeth Dole. Balz (1999) writes, “On most issues other than gun control, where she is less conservative than Bush, Dole and the Texas governor are not in sharp disagreement. Nor does she seem eager to begin to challenge Bush directly on issues. But obliquely at least, she suggested that she has far better credentials than Bush to step into the presidency” (p. 3). This illustrates Dole’s use

of proactive, non-combative, approaches to presidential campaigning. Dole's strategy entailed citing personal experiences, versus feeding into what she has called the "ugly politics" of today (Road to the, 1999; Balz, 1999; Andron, 1999). However, this strategy may have actually worked to her disadvantage. Balz (1999) quotes Tom Gorman: "Women are drawn to her...and she's got more hard support than the polls give her credit for....But she's going to have to get a little tougher and focused. She's still pretty chit-chatty. She'll have to start swinging some" (p. 3).

In her 1999 speech announcing the formation of an exploratory committee for her campaign for the presidency, Dole emphasizes the importance of a peer-like leadership style (Road to the, 1999). She describes the importance of having good people working with you to get jobs done. She attributes her success with the Department of Transportation to the fact that she had exactly that. However, some people scowl at this leadership style. For example, Pope and Eddings (1996) write, "Some colleagues at the Department of Transportation describe her as an empty suit. 'She acted more as a caretaker than as a reformer or visionary,' says one, allowing that 'she did surround herself with good managers'" (p. 27). However, Jamieson (1988) writes, "Not only are the messages of women less verbally aggressive but they tend to be more pro-social, particularly in their stress on relationships rather than on autonomous action" (p. 82). Therefore, Dole's popularity may come from the same place her non-acceptance does. She has a cooperative feminine appeal, but some have perceived her to be lacking in the autonomy and combativeness necessary to win an election.

Another feminine characteristic of Dole's recent campaign was her appeal to non-partisan audiences. In reference to a "thousand-dollar-a-couple fund-raiser" speech, held

June third in Greensboro North Carolina, Scott Andron (1999) writes, “It was not your standard Republican stump speech. There were no personal jabs at President Clinton. Abortion was never mentioned. The candidate even came out in favor of gun control. And many in the audience were Democrats” (p. 1). Former Greensboro mayor Jim Melvin, a Democrat, said he figured half of the audience were Democrats (Andron, 1999). “ ‘She crosses the lines,’ Melvin said of Dole” (Andron, 1999, p. 2). All of these characteristics reflect Dole’s cooperative approach to politics. It is non-combative, and encourages audiences to work together across party lines.

Dole’s style not only targets audiences across party lines, but it has an interesting appeal for women. An interesting characteristic of most of Dole’s audiences in her recent campaign was that they were primarily female. Women, in general, seem to be drawn to Dole, especially women involving themselves in politics for the first time. “[Bonnie] Curzio, 40, didn’t know much about Dole, but she was drawn to the event in part because Dole is a woman—the first viable female presidential candidate in American history. ‘I guess that does make a difference to me, though I don’t consider myself a feminist,’ Curzio said as she and 700 others waited in a jammed auditorium for Dole to arrive. ‘It would be historic if she won.’” (Carney, 1999, p. 54). “We’ve got the enthusiasm of these new participants in presidential politics,” she said in an interview before a town meeting in Ames [Iowa] on Monday evening. “I think this will be extremely important because of the passion they have, the enthusiasm, the excitement, the energy they bring to it is really impressive” (Balz, 1999, p. 1, 2).

The idea of being “historic,” as Ms. Curzio describes above, is an appeal that was a consistent part of the Dole campaign. Balz (1999) writes, “As the first serious female

candidate for president, Dole hopes to capture some of the same kind of support and enthusiasm the public showed for the women [U.S. soccer team] athletes, and as she campaigned through Iowa this week, there was evidence that the history-making aspect of her campaign was her strongest appeal” (p. 1). “ ‘Be a part of history,’ says the sign Dole held up at campaign events this week” (Balz, 1999, p. 1). “The message is similar to one she put on an airplane that flew over the Rose Bowl last Saturday, when the U.S. women’s soccer team won the World Cup” (Balz, 1999, p. 1).

In a lot of ways, Dole appears to be empowering women to get out and involve themselves in the political process. Balz (1999) writes, “The uniqueness of Elizabeth Dole’s presidential candidacy is instantly obvious wherever she campaigns. The audiences are overwhelmingly female: younger women, older women, women with babies, women with husbands, women who are Republican Party veterans and women who have never participated in the political process before” (p. 1). Andron (1999) writes, “She said she was excited about the number of people who were joining her campaign even though they had never been in politics before. By way of example, Thursday’s [a June third Greensboro North Carolina speech] event was organized by Bonnie McElveen-Hunter, a Greensboro businesswoman and community volunteer who said it was her first venture into politics” (p. 1, 2).

Even though the fact that Dole embodies a feminine speaking style and is a woman herself has its audience appeals, her gender appeared to be a roadblock in her recent campaign fundraising. The problem is described in a May 31st, 1999 issue of Newsweek:

the fat-cat fund-raisers who bankrolled his [Bob Dole's] three presidential runs haven't come through for Elizabeth. "This is the boy's club, her damn husband included," says adviser to Mrs. Dole. "They're standing at the door saying, 'We don't want her'." The Dole camp is turning to nontraditional ways to raise money, particularly among women. They're buying subscriber lists from women's mags, booking Mrs. Dole on the "Rosie O'Donnell Show" and searching for "common-sense" positions on issues like guns and abortion. Meanwhile, "there'll be a lot of casseroles in the deep freezer for Bob," says the adviser ("Deep freeze," 1999, p. 4).

The disparity between frontrunner George Bush Jr.'s funds and her own, seemed to have an influence over people's support. For instance, Balz (1999) explains:

Dole's campaign started last winter with enormous promise but sputtered through the spring. Despite the advantage of one of the best-known names in Republican politics and the visibility gained from serving in the Cabinets of two GOP presidents, Dole has been no match for Bush in fund-raising or in gathering endorsements of party leaders. The disparity between her campaign and Bush's makes some Republicans who otherwise like her message, admire her personally and say she has the qualifications to serve as president more inclined to support front-runner Bush. When Dole visited the Madison County Historical Society here this week, Jane Wiggins brought some of her summer campers to see the Republican candidate. 'I thought it would be exciting for Winterset kids to see a presidential candidate,' she said. But when asked whether she would be supporting Dole's candidacy, Wiggins said she doubted it—

even though she was delighted with what she heard and believes Dole is as qualified as any of the other candidates to hold the presidency. ‘I would like to see George W. Bush as president and Elizabeth Dole as vice president,’ she said. Given how impressed she was with Dole, why not a Dole-Bush ticket, Wiggins was asked? ‘It seems that George W. Bush has the momentum,’ she replied (p. 2).

Due to this response, one might ask how much of a woman’s success in politics has to do with the ability or lack of ability to obtain financial support from sources that traditionally finance male candidates.

Nevertheless, funds or not, the vice-presidency has not been something Dole has addressed. Andron (1999) writes, “And she sidestepped reporters’ questions about whether she wants to be vice president if she can’t win her party’s presidential nomination” (p. 3). “ ‘This is not about the vice presidency’, Dole said, ‘This is to win’” (Andron, 1999, p. 3). However, those same feminine qualities that worked for Elizabeth Dole may have worked against her. In October of 1999, Elizabeth Dole stepped out of the presidential race.

OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

In chapter 1 I have shown how the uniqueness of Elizabeth Dole’s role in her 1999 presidential campaign, as a former first lady candidate vying for the presidency, provides us with an opportunity to examine how an individual might balance these competing public roles. As I have illustrated, throughout Dole’s career, her press and her public have defined her as uniquely feminine. Throughout my thesis I examine how Dole’s use of a feminine style formed a bridge, as well as a road block, between her role as a potential first lady and her role as a potential first lady president. To conduct my

analysis, I combine feminine style with the genres of first lady rhetoric and presidential campaign rhetoric.

I begin my analysis, in chapter 2 with an exploration of how some of our nation's first ladies have defined and challenged the first ladyship. I argue that the role of First Lady is more ceremonial than it is political, and that the public has come to expect that a first lady balance any politics she involves herself in with feminine graces. In the second half of this chapter, I conduct an analysis of Elizabeth Dole's 1996 speech to the Republican National Convention. Through my analysis, I show that Elizabeth Dole defined herself as a traditional first lady, presenting her rhetoric in an apolitical and feminine fashion. What is most interesting about this speech is that Dole's manner of performing it increased her popularity as a potential presidential candidate.

In chapter 3, I explore how Elizabeth Dole transformed from a role as a potential first lady to a role as a potential first lady president. I start my exploration by examining the public's expectations for the presidency and women in politics. I then continue with an analysis of pre-primary presidential campaign rhetoric. In the final portion of this chapter, I analyze how Elizabeth Dole fulfilled the functions of pre-primary campaign rhetoric in the form of feminine style in her 1999 speech to form an exploratory committee. I also explore other roles that may have influenced Elizabeth Dole in this speech.

In the fourth chapter, my conclusion, I explore the rhetorical and societal factors that may have influenced Dole's end to her 1999 presidential campaign. Dole's unprecedented success as a woman running for the presidency has a great deal to show us about what the public would like to see in future presidents. However, what made Dole

successful as a female presidential candidate may have also been what eventually led to the conclusion of her campaign.

CHAPTER 2 THE FIRST LADYSHIP

Although President Washington's wife was referred to as "Lady Washington," due to the public's familiarity with British royalty, it was not common for the public to address early presidential spouses as "First Lady" (Caroli, 1995). This was due to the fact that the first presidential campaigns in our country focused on the common person, "boasting candidates' humble origins" (Caroli, 1995, p. xv). Therefore, presidential spouses were more appropriately "addressed as 'Presidentress' or 'Mrs. President' or, as was frequently the case, not mentioned at all outside Washington" (Caroli, 1995, p. xv). However, as poverty became less valuable and presidential wives started traveling with their husbands, the wives received their own level of popularity—it was at this point, in the late 1800s, that the term "First Lady" began cropping up (Caroli, 1995). Caroli (1995) writes:

The title seemed, in part, to reflect a continuing infatuation in the United States with royalty. Even after insisting they had rejected all the trappings of a monarchy, Americans continued to adopt royal terms, referring in the early decades of the republic to the president as "His majesty," his residence as "the Palace," and his parties as "holding court." When such references disappeared from coverage of the president, they continued to be used for the women at the White House (p. xvi).

If rhetoric is epistemic, then our continued reference to our presidents' wives in terms of royalty may in many ways shape how we view this spousal role. In fact, because of the high profile of the role, "First Lady" may even shape how we view women in politics. The fact that the public has continued using a royal term for the president's

spouse reveals the public's continued desire to see this role in a ceremonial way. With this desire, comes rigid expectations as to how a first lady, and possibly a female politician, should appear, act, and speak.

The role of First Lady, over the years, has become a fundamentally visual symbol. Caroli (1995) writes that the assignment of the presidency, as established in the Constitutional Convention in 1787, is unique in the following way:

[It] includes two jobs that are performed by separate individuals in other types of representative governments: a head of state who presides over ceremonial functions, and a head of government who makes major appointments and takes a decisive role in legislation. The American president, charged with both tasks, frequently resorted to sending substitutes on ceremonial and other occasions when a mere physical presence was required (p. xviii).

This substitute has oftentimes been the first lady (Caroli, 1995). As noted in the quotation above, the first lady has stepped in “when a mere physical presence was required.” Throughout history, this enactment of a ceremonial figurehead has created the expectation that a first lady should be seen more than she is heard. And with each election year, the public anticipates what trends and styles the first lady will bring to her public. For instance, during Kennedy's first year as the president, “two networks produced documentaries, showing how she [Jackie] had popularized the pillbox hat, bouffant hairstyles, and the name ‘Jacqueline’ for baby girls” (Caroli, 1995, p. 224). A first lady's appearance influences culture and reflects culture. Therefore, the public can be rather critical of how their first lady cloaks herself. Nancy Reagan provided us with a clear example of how strict the public's expectations are for first lady attire. Nancy

Reagan became famous for her designer dresses. However, to some, her choice of dress made her appear elitist (Caroli, 1995). To temper this image, “her secretary announced that the designer clothes received as gifts would be donated to museums” (Caroli, 1995, p. 276). We can view this effort, by Nancy Reagan’s secretary, as an attempt to modify Nancy Reagan’s image to one that was more feminine in style. As noted in chapter 1, a person using feminine style treats his or her audience as peers. Nancy Reagan’s “elitist” appearance treated her audience as subordinates. This example provides a clear illustration of how feminine style is nonverbal as well as verbal. Jamieson (1988) writes that feminine discourse is as ornamental as women have traditionally been expected to be. Jamieson (1988) writes, “Both are expected to please and sooth but not engage in the rigors of vigorous public debate. Both are soft and ornamental. Both flourish when their freedom is circumscribed. To prevent them from veering into excesses of one sort or another, both require control by men. In both, ambition and a desire for power are vices” (p. 80). Basically, feminine style is a balancing act. It allows its users to balance or soften the content of their words. In the public’s eye, when a woman balances politics with femininity she can enter the public sphere without tarnishing her image.

THE BALANCING ACT CEREMONIAL AND FEMININE VS. POLITICAL

Women in politics are held to much scrutiny because of traditional feminine expectations. However, first ladies are held to greater scrutiny. This is due to the fact that a first lady has entered the political arena by way of marriage. History has shown us that a president’s wife can only engage in politics so long as she maintains a ceremonial and feminine image. Furthermore, due to the spousal nature of her role, a first lady is part of the presidential package. One of her ceremonial roles is to balance the presidency

by fulfilling traditionally feminine roles that the President may not have the time or the capability to fulfill.

Caroli (1995) writes that the Washingtons set the precedence for enlisting the First Lady's help in the ceremonial role of the presidency, but enlisting only covert help, if any, in the government role. Caroli defines the goal of the ceremonial role: "Since the ceremonial side of the job required presenting a democratic image but also including enough formality to retain respect, a wife who was willing to do so could maintain a balance. When her husband appeared pompous, she might stress humility; if he chose to move casually among guests, she could hold court in queenly fashion. Her calls at people's homes substituted for contacts that her husband's schedule did not permit" (p. 7). Martha Washington fulfilled these goals. For instance, many people visited the new president's house out of curiosity. Although George Washington set firm boundaries for himself, Martha Washington made a commitment to return each visit "within three days of the original call" (Caroli, 1995, p. 6). "Custom dictated that a gracious lady, no matter what her husband's title, returned the calls of all women who had come to her door and left their calling cards" (Caroli, 1995, p. 6). By continuing custom, Martha Washington made needed contacts with the populace, contacts her husband did not have time to make. Basically, the ceremonial role of the first lady required her to follow her husband's lead, striking a balance where she could. The first lady was overtly the president's ceremonial helpmate. The first lady was not overtly the president's political helpmate.

History has shown that first ladies receive criticism for overtly overstepping political boundaries. For instance, although Abigail Adams was Martha Washington's successor, she brought very different characteristics to the role of First Lady. "From very

early in her husband's administration, Abigail Adams was accused of playing politics. When she spoke out on the split developing between Jeffersonian Republicans and Federalists, she had, in the opinion of many political figures, stepped beyond the proper bounds for her sex" (Caroli, 1995, p. 8). In addition, the Adamses received criticism for their political partnership. It became evident that John Adams sought counsel from Abigail Adams on important problems (Caroli, 1995). There have most certainly been other presidents who have received counsel from their wives, although their efforts to keep their discourse private has shielded them from criticism.

Eleanor Roosevelt also received her share of criticism for political involvement. However, in the long run, her ability to balance her politics with femininity made her one of the most popular first ladies in our history. One of Eleanor Roosevelt's first political platforms was that of allowing a wife the freedom to work. In fact, Eleanor Roosevelt surprised the public by announcing during her husband's presidential campaign that she planned to keep her job teaching should her husband win the election (Caroli, 1995). It is interesting that over 60 years later, the public is still surprised to hear that a first lady will be keeping her job outside the home once her husband takes office. In Bob Dole's 1996 presidential campaign, Elizabeth Dole's announcement that she would keep her job as President of the Red Cross should her husband win was major news. However, Elizabeth Dole, much like Eleanor Roosevelt, cloaked her independence with femininity.

Eleanor Roosevelt, although political, was not overtly political. Eleanor Roosevelt managed to present many of her politics in feminine ways. For example, during her husband's presidency, Eleanor Roosevelt earned income. However, Caroli (1995) writes, "To counter criticism that the president's wife had no right to a profitable

career of her own, she donated much of her income to organizations such as the Women's Trade Union League and the Red Cross" (p. 190). Nevertheless, at the same time, Eleanor Roosevelt put much effort towards fighting prejudice against working wives. For instance, she used her voice as First Lady to fight state legislation that permitted the firing of working wives (Caroli, 1995). Caroli (1995) writes, "[Eleanor Roosevelt] broke precedent in putting the power of First Ladyship to work on the side of women—both married and single" (p. 190). Looking back on Eleanor Roosevelt's efforts for women, it would be easy to call her a feminist. However, Eleanor Roosevelt shied away from such a label. Roosevelt referred to herself as a humanist rather than a feminist. Ware (1981) writes that when asked about sex solidarity Eleanor Roosevelt replied, "It is the person and not the sex which counts" (p. 15). This public persona is a reflection of feminine style. Eleanor Roosevelt fought on behalf of women, but she presented her viewpoints as that of a peer of all Americans. In addition, this image of a humanist, rather than a feminist, is less combative, more cooperative in tone. She was a "human being" and that first and foremost was what she presented as important.

Prior to the 1940 presidential election, the public began to question whether or not Eleanor Roosevelt might like a political office for herself. However, keeping in line with a noncombative and apolitical image, "[Eleanor Roosevelt] insisted, 'Nothing under heaven could ever persuade [me to run]'" (Caroli, 1995, p. 196). Nevertheless, Eleanor Roosevelt was clear about the necessity of women holding prominent professions. Eleanor Roosevelt wrote a three-part piece in Good Housekeeping noting that we would never have a female president "until women had first established themselves in prominent business and government positions" (Caroli, 1995, p. 196). As mentioned in Chapter 1,

Elizabeth Dole similarly said during her husband's 1996 presidential campaign that she would not be interested in the presidency. However, in 1999 she began her own presidential campaign. Thus, both Eleanor Roosevelt and Elizabeth Dole provided the media with responses that publicly supported their role of supportive spouses, regardless of their political intentions.

Another means by which Eleanor Roosevelt engaged in politics, while maintaining femininity, was through humanitarian projects. Caroli (1995) cites a journalist who gave Eleanor Roosevelt credit for balancing the Roosevelt Administration with humanitarian projects, such as the National Youth Administration, nursery schools and slum clearance. He writes, "For eight years she had been the traveling ears and eyes of the President" (p. 196). The fact that Eleanor Roosevelt's projects were humanitarian helped her maintain a traditionally feminine role in politics. Therefore, Eleanor Roosevelt's political involvement did not overshadow her public display of femininity. Eleanor Roosevelt's ladylike method of involving herself in politics helped her achieve great popularity as a first lady. After her husband's death, Eleanor Roosevelt "achieved recognition as 'First Lady of the World' (Caroli, 1995, p. 200).

More recent first ladies have followed this lead. Their political involvement has consisted of "projects" that remain close to issues traditionally considered feminine (e.g. education, children and health care). For example, Jackie Kennedy developed a White House Restoration project, which included securing legislation protecting the new furnishings of the property (Caroli, 1995). Nancy Reagan developed an anti-drug campaign and Barbara Bush devoted a great deal of effort towards promoting family literacy (Caroli, 1995).

The political projects of our history's first ladies have greatly shaped our nation. However, prior to Hillary Rodham Clinton, these women did not receive job titles for their "political positions" nor did they hold offices in the West Wing (the government domain of the White House). Upon President Clinton's election to office, Hillary Rodham Clinton was given "an office in the West Wing of the White House; she became head of the task force of health care reform; she met with members of Congress, testified before congressional committees, and spoke before audiences all around the country seeking agreement about the goals that a health care plan should meet" (Campbell, 1998, p. 1). These actions, unusual for a first lady, were responded to negatively by many United States citizens. The Doles, in the 1996 presidential campaign, made an attempt to avoid similar negative reactions. Gibbs and Duffy (1996) write that the Dole camp "is eager to argue that this is a marriage, not a political partnership. [Bob] Dole has called Elizabeth [Dole] his 'secret weapon' his 'Southern strategy,' all the while making it clear that he is old-fashioned about the East Wing, that Elizabeth won't be sitting in on cabinet meetings and serving as the unofficial Minister of Health Care" (p. 2). What is interesting about this statement is the fact that Elizabeth Dole has more Cabinet experience than her husband or President Clinton (Gibbs & Duffy, 1996). Therefore, she is a qualified candidate for a West Wing office or a Cabinet position. Nevertheless, the Doles were maintaining this image of the first lady as a ceremonial figurehead.

Throughout Bill Clinton's presidential campaigns and presidency, Hillary Rodham Clinton struggled to maintain a "style" that would balance her political involvement. Rodham Clinton, as a former practicing attorney, brought with her to the position of First Lady many controversial experiences (Caroli, 1995). To begin with, the

career of lawyer is non-traditional not only for a first lady, but for women in general. Second, although an attorney acts as an advocate for his or her client, there are opposing parties (both in the court and in public) who come away from the trial angry about the outcomes. This was particularly true for Rodham Clinton because during her career, she had involved herself in controversial cases. One of Hillary Rodham Clinton's areas of interest was children's rights. She tried cases in this area and eventually became involved with the Children's Defense Fund. Even though attention to children is a traditionally feminine behavior, to defend a child in court, a lawyer oftentimes must attack a patriarchal structure. Many of Rodham Clinton's arguments for children were taken out of context to insinuate that she believed that "children should be able to sue their parents over insignificant matters and that youngsters understood their welfare better than their elders" (Caroli, 1995, p. 300). In addition, during her career, Hillary Rodham Clinton was involved in organizations that came under attack for their support of controversial populations. For example, in 1978, President Jimmy Carter named Hillary Rodham Clinton to the Legal Services Corporation's board of directors, where she served for the next two year (Caroli, 1995). Conservatives criticized the board when stories unfolded about friends going through the corporation to defend requests for transexual surgery and Native Americans' claims to ownership of a large area of Maine (Caroli, 1995). Hillary Rodham Clinton's experiences brought unprecedented characteristics to the public image of First Lady. "Candidates' wives in the past had typically worked for their own causes and projects, but they had done so as committed volunteers and thus were less threatening" (Caroli, 1995, p. 299). In fact, Bill Clinton's claim, in his 1992 presidential campaign, that voters could "buy one, get one free" perpetuated some of the

public's fears (Anderson, 1999, p. 605). This fear, Anderson (1999) writes, stems from the violation of the traditional norm that there is a separation between men's and women's domains. The former rests in the public sphere, the latter in the private sphere (Anderson, 1999).

The public's view of Hillary Rodham Clinton's non-traditional experiences were compounded by the fact that she was challenged in her enactment of a feminine visual symbol of First Lady. Caroli (1995) writes that to counter the public's image of her and enact femininity, in early 1992, Hillary did the following:

She spoke out less, and at the Democratic convention, she gamely participated in a cookie bake-off, sponsored by Family Circle, that pitted her recipe for chocolate chip cookies against that of incumbent Barbara Bush. Then, as though to emphasize her domesticity, she permitted her twelve-year-old daughter, who had been shielded from public scrutiny, to appear before cameras and be featured in People magazine, thus underscoring Hillary's role as mother. The woman who aspired to First Ladyship chose softer 'more feminine' clothing and smiled a lot, so that when television cameras focused on her during her husband's acceptance speech at the convention, she appeared as fondly and demurely supportive as Nancy Reagan ever had (p. 302).

Upon entering the presidency, newspapers picked up on these domestic themes, carrying "articles on how she had banned smoking in the executive mansion and encouraged the serving of wholesome foods, including broccoli, a vegetable that George Bush reportedly detested" (Caroli, 1995, p. 303). However, this did not change the public's perception of Hillary Rodham Clinton during her husband's first term.

Anderson (1999) writes that, starting with the “buy one, get one free” campaign of 1992, the public began to see Rodham Clinton as a “bitch”. Anderson writes that other episodes, such as Rodham Clinton’s position on the Task Force on Health-Care Reform fed this “narrative” to the point that behaviors she displayed that countered this image were forgotten.

What was remembered, however, was Rodham Clinton’s departure from a feminine speaking style. Campbell (1998) writes:

Her tone is usually impersonal, disclosing minimal information about herself; her ideas unfold deductively in the fashion of a lawyer’s brief; all kinds of evidence are used, but personal examples rarely, if ever, appear, although she incorporates stories she has been told by others. She is impassioned but very rarely emotional (p. 6).

Campbell writes that Rodham Clinton’s style is more like that of a lawyer; it is confrontational and forceful. Anderson (1999) writes that she found this to be particularly true in her review of Hillary’s health-care reform speeches, which revealed metaphors of confrontation and control. The public negatively reacted to Hillary’s departure from the traditional ceremonial and feminine rhetoric of U. S. first ladies.

However, in the last couple years of Clinton’s presidency, Hillary Rodham Clinton has seemed to rise above the public’s earlier negative impression of her. Anderson (1999) writes that the turning point for Rodham Clinton can be marked by her husband’s impeachment trial, which was preceded by an admittance that he had an “improper relationship” with a White House intern. Anderson explains, “Rodham Clinton seemed to rise above the fray through her stoic support of the president and

commitment to her family. Words such as ‘grace’ and ‘dignity’ were used in connection with the first lady, standing in marked contrast to epithets such as ‘shrill’ and ‘bossy’, terms more likely to be used to describe her early in the Clinton presidency” (p. 600).

Hillary Rodham Clinton recently won the race for a New York state senate seat. However, her senatorial campaign was much different from her previous two “first lady campaigns.” For example, the beginning of Rodham Clinton’s senatorial campaign was marked by a “listening tour” (“Hillary and Liddy,” 1999), where her objective was to get a feel for the concerns of her possible constituents, versus spell out her personal agendas. Therefore, although Rodham Clinton was in a non-traditional political race, as an unprecedented first lady running for her own political office, her rhetoric was more traditionally feminine in this campaign than it had been in the previous eight years. Hillary Rodham Clinton struck out on her own. However, this political race was preceded by marital infidelity, which seems to help the public accept the “branching out” of first ladies. Caroli (1995) speculates that the reported infidelity of President Roosevelt and President Kennedy may have assisted in the public’s acceptance of Eleanor Roosevelt’s personal political agendas and Jackie Kennedy’s personal social circles. In other words, Bill Clinton’s immorality created an opening for Hillary Rodham Clinton to move from a private to a public sphere, so long as she maintained her role as a supportive spouse. The public seems to praise first ladies for “standing by their men.” Hillary Rodham Clinton, has not publicly spoken a great deal about her husband’s extramarital affairs. Rodham Clinton’s silent support, as previously explained, has transformed her from a “shrill” and “bossy” woman to a “graceful” and “dignified” woman. Rodham

Clinton's spousal supportiveness, sadly enough, has assisted in her popularity. I believe this is due, in part, to the fact that the public has spousal expectations for the presidency.

The presidency is a "package", and as mentioned previously, the first lady balances the presidency with ceremonial feminine behaviors. The criticism provided James Buchanan and Grover Cleveland (this nation's only two bachelor presidents elected to office) shows that the American citizens expect "their chief executives to come in pairs" (Caroli, 1995, p. 336). Caroli (1995) writes that the press blamed Buchanan's unmarried state for many of his perceived flaws (e.g. treachery and indecisiveness), at times calling him "feminine". The media response to Grover Cleveland was that he needed a woman to soften him (Caroli, 1995). Caroli (1995) writes:

The *New York Star* complained that it had been almost five years since a First Lady had graced the capital (the predecessor, Chester Arthur, was a widower), but "the pleasant traditions connected with the home of the Grants and the Garfields will not soon be forgotten. The hard and practical side of the Presidency will be softened and made graceful by the womanly influences of a young bride....[If the President marries] he will be a better chief magistrate for he will be a happier man when he shall have done what society requires for the complete fulfillment of a man's destiny" (p. 338).

The public has revealed a desire to have a first lady who will balance the presidency with feminine qualities. First ladies are part of the presidential package. And it was Elizabeth Dole's ability to balance this package in her husband's presidential campaign that increased her popularity. Elizabeth Dole's 1996 speech to the National

Republican Convention provides a wonderful example of how Dole's rhetoric was the means with which she maintained this "balancing act."

ELIZABETH DOLE'S 1996 REPUBLICAN CONVENTION SPEECH

Her speech received rave reviews from the public and the press. It was a paradigmatic performance of rhetorical femininity. Jean Baker Miller, a psychiatrist and authority on sex roles commented: "Somehow Elizabeth Dole is able to convey that more traditional role. . . She's able to appear as if she's not rocking any boats." Similarly, in 1987, when she was campaigning for her husband, who was seeking the Republican presidential nomination, a Washington Post reporter commented in terms that perfectly describe feminine rhetorical style: "She mixes femininity—in her case, a Southern-belle graciousness and an almost girlish charm—with her Ivy League professional credentials more successfully than perhaps any woman in public life today" (Campbell, 1998, p. 5, 6).

As Campbell writes, Elizabeth Dole's 1996 Republican National Convention speech received rave reviews. Elizabeth Dole, unlike her democratic opponent (Hillary Rodham Clinton), avoided "rocking any boats." In other words, her rhetoric fulfilled the functions that the public had come to expect of the first ladyship. In fact, Dole's speaking style, in her 1996 convention speech, was so well-received that, as noted previously, it made her the Dole favored for the presidency. Von Drehle (1999) writes that Dole was mentioned as a possible North Carolina congressional candidate in the '70s, and a possible presidential candidate in the '80s. However, Von Drehle (1999) identifies Dole's 1996 Republican convention speech as a defining moment for her politically. "By 1996, after she wowed the convention in San Diego by making the case

for her husband with far more polish and conviction than he could ever muster, people were saying openly that she was the better candidate of the two” (Von Drehle, 1999, p. 7). Nichols (1999) writes that it was the presentational style of her 1996 speech that assisted in her popularity. He explains:

Dole got far better grades [in her husband’s 1996 presidential campaign, than she did in her management at the American Red Cross], as the friendly face of husband Bob’s unsuccessful 1996 Presidential campaign. At the Republican National Convention, she stole the show with what has come to be known as “the Liddy stroll,” a down-with-the audience Oprah-style performance that traded substance for Southern charm, family lore, and nostalgia for an America that sounds a lot like Salisbury in the 1950s” (Nichols, 1999, p. 33).

It is for these reasons, that I have chosen to analyze Elizabeth Dole’s 1996 speech before the Republican National Convention. The fact that this speech caused the public response that it did, gives us insight into the kind of rhetoric the public not only wants to hear from American first ladies, but from American presidents. What is most striking about Elizabeth Dole’s convention speech is the manner in which she conforms to the belief that a first lady should be more ceremonial than political. Throughout her speech, Elizabeth Dole discusses more ceremonial than political topics, and she discussed these topics in the persona of a traditional spouse. In addition, Dole’s rhetoric is a clear example of feminine style. These elements of Dole’s speech work together to help her balance, rather than rock, the boat.

STORIES FROM A LOVING SPOUSE

One of the first ceremonial duties Elizabeth Dole performs in her convention speech is to play the role of loving spouse. Dole's rhetoric functions to show her audience a different side to her husband, an apolitical side. Elizabeth Dole talks about Bob Dole, the man, versus Bob Dole, the politician. This framework allows Elizabeth Dole to campaign on behalf of her husband in a nonpolitical way. Furthermore, this framework allows Elizabeth Dole to balance the image of Bob Dole as president, by showing her husband's more feminine side.

For this reason, this speech attempts not only to advertise Bob Dole as a good choice for President, but the two of them as a good choice for a nationally elected pair—with Elizabeth Dole balancing the presidency with “feminine graces.” Dole states the premise for her 1996 Republican National Convention speech as follows: “This election is about the vision and the values that will shape America as we move into the next century. It's about the character of the man who will lead us there” (“Elizabeth Dole Speaking,” 1996, p. 1). And her speech continues to illustrate just that, the values and character of her husband, Bob Dole. She talks about how Bob grew up in a family “poor in material things”, but “rich in values. Values like honesty, decency, personal responsibility, hard work, love of God, love of family, patriotism...” (“Elizabeth Dole Speaking,” 1996, p. 1). Elizabeth Dole was a perfect candidate for painting a moral image of her husband not only because, as Bob Dole's wife, she knows him well, but because morality falls within the traditional feminine domain.

It is also interesting that in the above quotation, Elizabeth Dole does not just come out and say that Bob Dole is honest, decent, etc. Rather, Elizabeth Dole illustrates her

husband's values through a story. She explains that her husband grew up in a family that was rich in these values. In fact, narratives are the basis of her speech. For example, at another point in the speech Dole tells a story about a birthday party she and Bob had. Dole explains that her birthday and her husband's birthday are seven days apart. She says that 10 years ago, Bob suggested having a reverse birthday. She explains:

He said, "Elizabeth, let's go to Sarah's Circle," which is a very special place in inner-city Washington that houses and ministers to elderly poor. And he said "let's find out what the 35 or 40 residents most need and want and we'll give them the gifts, give them the party." And so that's what we did, and we've had many wonderful visits there since with cherished friends ("Elizabeth Dole Speaking," 1996, p. 3).

Dole's recitation of personal lived experiences is an example of how she uses feminine style to address her audience.

FEMININE STYLE

Another element of feminine style Dole incorporates into her speech is the use of a personal tone. She develops a personal tone by treating the audience as peers, even friends, yet another element of feminine style. She does this nonverbally and verbally. Also, she creates a dialogue with her speech, rather than a monologue, so the audience can become part of the stories she is narrating—this provides evidence of a fourth element of feminine style, inclusivity.

Elizabeth Dole's first step in treating the audience as peers is nonverbal. Dole does something unprecedented. She steps out from behind the podium, which she calls "imposing" and walks amongst her audience, as an equal. Her reasons, she says, are as

follows: “One, I’m going to be speaking to friends and secondly I’m going to be speaking about the man I love and it’s just a lot more comfortable for me to do that down here with you” (“Elizabeth Dole Speaking,” 1996, p. 1). In addition, in the body of the speech, Dole takes this rhetorical device a step further. She treats her audience as friends worthy of sharing secrets. For instance, as she begins her illustration of Bob Dole, the person, Dole says, “And Bob Dole, if you’re watching, let me just warn you, I may be saying some things that you in your modesty would never be willing to talk about” (“Elizabeth Dole Speaking,” 1996, p. 1). One of these stories is about a Thanksgiving dinner Bob arranged he and Elizabeth to have with a group of 35 young people from some rough parts in Washington. After reciting the story, she says that the audience didn’t read about this Thanksgiving in the news, “because Bob Dole never told anybody about it. He did it from his heart” (“Elizabeth Dole Speaking,” 1996, p. 4). By sharing this “secret” Dole indirectly attests to her husband’s modesty and reinforces the sense that her audience members are close peers, even friends. One of the advantages of Dole treating the audience as peers, is that she avoids being labeled “too much of a politician”; she breaks the barrier between the politician and the public, sticking to the tradition of former first ladies.

Dole also includes the audience in her speech by making them a part of her stories with “dialogue.” It is almost as if she is presenting a play, or a third person story with characters presenting dialogue. In this way, the stories become real and the audience becomes a part of them. In the beginning of her speech Dole tells a story about the positive attitude Bob held while sustaining injuries in a veterans hospital for over three years. She says that although she didn’t know Bob at the time, Pat Lynch (one of his

nurses) did. She introduces Pat and calls her up next to her, making one of the characters in this “act” real to the audience. Dole then reiterates some of the positive things Pat has told her about her husband. For example, she says, “Pat’s told me that when Bob was totally paralyzed and people thought he wouldn’t walk again, he literally willed himself to walk” (“Elizabeth Dole Speaking,” 1996, p. 2). At another place in the speech, Dole tells a story of a doctor who could not repair the last of Bob’s injuries, and said, “you’re not going to find a miracle. Now the choice is up to you Bob, you can continue to feel sorry for yourself, or you can get on with your life and make the most of what you do have” (“Elizabeth Dole Speaking,” 1996, p. 2). Through instances such as these, Dole establishes a personal tone by giving a source with a voice to the stories that she presents. She follows the same pattern with the stories she presents of her own experiences with Bob. For example, she tells a story of a conversation she and Bob had sitting in their bedroom. She quotes Bob in first person telling a story about a disabled couple he met in Kansas who wanted help getting to a state that offered services for people with disabilities. The fact that this conversation took place in their bedroom increases the intimacy of this dialogue. In addition, she quotes Bob in introducing her to the Senate as its secretary of transportation by saying, “I regret that I have but one wife to give for my country’s infrastructure” (“Elizabeth Dole Speaking,” 1996, p. 2), to show his good sense of humor. Dole’s use of these specific quotations to tell her stories creates a dialogue much like that which would occur between a husband and a wife. This tone provides an appropriate match for her persona of spouse.

Although there are times when “the dialogue” in Dole’s speech is spousal in nature, when Dole refers to her husband’s political achievements, she goes back to what

other people have told her. For example, for a majority of her discussion on Bob Dole's political achievements, she sets up a framework, or a scene. Dole takes us to her husband's last day as a majority leader of the United States Senate. She says, "I was seated up in the balcony, you know, and I was watching as senator after senator, Democrats and Republicans stood and paid tribute to my husband on the Senate floor" ("Elizabeth Dole Speaking," 1996, p. 4). It is important to note that Dole paints herself as a passive observer in this picture. She then describes how "senator after senator" stood up and described Bob Dole's achievements, such as saving social security and leading the Senate to cut taxes. She even quotes Diane Feinstein, a Democratic senator from California, in saying, "We often disagree on issues, but even when we disagree, I know where I stand with Bob Dole and I know I can trust his word. I can trust his word" ("Elizabeth Dole Speaking," 1996, p. 4). The fact that Dole quotes a female Democrat senator's respect for Bob Dole adds to the "cooperative" nature of her speech. Everything about Dole's speech is cooperative in nature, a fourth element of feminine style. She speaks amongst her audience, rather than down to them. She illustrates her points through stories, rather than a lecture format, thus avoiding a challenging or combative tone. In addition, Elizabeth Dole maintains a cooperative, rather than a combative, tone by speaking only on non-controversial topics and speaking of Bob Dole's political achievements as simply a passive observer. In other words, when Elizabeth Dole speaks politics, she does so in a nonpolitical manner. This is consistent with traditional first lady rhetoric because as Caroli (1995) writes, when first ladies involve themselves in politics it is usually through non-controversial projects (e.g. literacy or childcare). History has shown that it is not always best for the first ladyship to

be synonymous with politician. Therefore, it is no surprise that Elizabeth Dole strays from using her convention speech to discuss public policy issues.

CAMPAIGN 2000

The press, in the most recent primary campaign, painted images of potential first ladies that were consistent with this genre of first lady rhetoric. For instance, Lisa Meyers (2000), in an NBC News segment entitled “Running Mates,” described Laura Bush, Republican Candidate for President George Bush’s wife, as follows: She doesn’t seek the spotlight, often stays a step removed. She is as reserved as her husband is gregarious, as modest as he is cocky.” In fact, in her interview with Lisa Meyers, Laura Bush attested to this balance. She said, “Our personalities really compliment each other a lot. I think he gives me a lot of excitement and then I think at the same time I probably calm him a little bit” (Meyers, 2000). There is no threat in balance. History has shown that a first lady’s unique qualities are accepted so long as they don’t overshadow her husband. And Laura Bush’s public personality does not overshadow. Even when pushed with questions as to how she would feel about being called a “throwback” (due to the new images Hillary Clinton has presented us for the first lady), Laura Bush responds with, “I am at peace with who I am. I am lucky to have had the kind of life I’ve had, and what people call me or what people might say, I can’t help” (Meyers, 2000).

In a similar later NBC News segment, also part of the “Running Mates” series, Cindy McCain (Republican Primary Candidate John McCain’s wife) was painted in a similar light (O’Neill, 2000). Within this segment, Cindy McCain agreed with Correspondent Roger O’Neill that her list of priorities were “Mom first, politicians wife second, possible first lady third.”

Both Laura Bush and Cindy McCain had traditional backgrounds. Laura Bush was a librarian and schoolteacher. Cindy McCain, a full-time mother. Here is where Elizabeth Dole differs. As illustrated in chapter 1, Dole has a non-traditional background, a background that has provided quite suitable experiences for a president of our nation. However, in her 1999 campaign for the same presidential primaries the aforementioned women's husbands campaigned for, Dole was challenged by transforming from the role of first lady (a role that is cooperative, feminine and non-political) to a role of a first lady president.

CHAPTER 3 VYING FOR THE FIRST LADY PRESIDENCY

What we know about the first ladyship, the presidency and women in politics constructs our views of presidential campaigns. Relying on the works of Just, Crigler, Agler, Cook, Kern, and West, Richard Perloff (1998), in his book Political Communication: Politics, Press and Public in America, defines the presidential election campaign process as constructive. In other words, Perloff agrees with Just et al. that potential voters construct views about candidates and their campaigns in light of their personal frame of reference, or what they have come to know and what they value. Therefore, although campaigns are developed to win influence and obtain power, they do not have complete control over potential voters. The public plays its own role in constructing the campaign. Perloff writes that it is important to remember “that campaigns are also national conversations—discussions among leaders, the media and the public” (p. 128). How well the conversation went, Perloff writes, “depends on the attitudes of the communication and the rules of the system set up for conducting the conversation” (p. 281). Therefore, when analyzing a presidential campaign speech, it becomes important to use a framework that takes into consideration the public’s expectations of the presidency as well as the function and form of the campaign speech under analysis. Furthermore, in the case of Elizabeth Dole, we must not lose sight of the public’s expectation of women in politics. All of these elements are part of the “conversation.”

PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS OF THE PRESIDENCY AND WOMEN IN POLITICS

Trent and Friedenber (1983) write that “when we speak of the presidency, we are dealing with the myth of the office, the image we have possessed since childhood of the

one institution that stands for truth, honor, justice, and integrity” (p. 85). The challenge facing female presidential candidates is that the public has ingrained ideals about what the presidency should be—this image has been defined by over a century of presidents, all male. Female candidates are clearly not the incumbents in this race, as they are inherently challenging a role that has been defined by the opposite gender. To define the presidency, and identify the challenges a female candidate might face, we must look at symbolic characteristics of presidential incumbency campaigns. Trent and Friedenbergs (1983) define such characteristics. They write, “The presidency stands for power, and therefore incumbents take on the persona of the powerful” (p. 86). This presents a challenge for those who have not previously held the presidency, especially those coming from traditionally supportive roles. For example, this becomes a challenge for most vice-presidential candidates for the presidency. The vice-presidency, much like the first ladyship, is seen as a supportive position, or ceremonial position more so than a political one. Therefore, vice-presidential candidates are challenged in taking on a powerful persona in presidential campaigns. A second characteristic Trent and Friedenbergs (1983) list is that incumbents have a “sociopolitical legitimacy, a public trust” (p. 87). They have held office before, therefore they are legitimate candidates for the job. Finally, Trent and Friedenbergs (1983) write that these candidates play off of their competency and their charisma with the office. Basically, audience members can easily see an incumbent as competent because they ponder why they would have elected him if he wasn’t capable of this job. Furthermore, the charisma of the office of the presidency holds a level of patriotism with it that has the potential to influence votes. Traditional views of women are not parallel to these presidential images that Trent and Friedenbergs

describe. For example, women are not traditionally seen as powerful or competent (Jamieson, 1995). Furthermore, they don't have the privilege of using the previously held office of the presidency to show legitimacy or excite crowds with the charisma of the office.

As illustrated in chapter 2, the public also has a spousal expectation of the presidency—the expectation is that it will be represented by two, a man and his wife. Representative Lynn Rivers (“Hillary and Liddy,” 1999) explains that these spousal expectations are seen throughout United States politics. To illustrate, she describes an orientation event she and her husband went to in Washington D. C. when she was first elected to office. Rivers explains that at the event, the congressional officers went one direction and their spouses another. When they reunited, Rivers says, her husband had in his possession “a bag of goodies that he had been given as a congressional spouse—Clinique facial products, a Betty Crocker chicken cookbook, and a 14 point guide to accessorizing.” Rivers explains, “The point is it is funny, but it is terrifying because at the highest levels of decision making in this country our expectation is that the office holder will be male, the spouse will be female and she will be most interested in looking nice and cooking.” What is remarkable about this incident is that it represents the challenges that a role reversal can bring with it. When a women steps into a political position the public expects her to take on masculine traits that conflict with their expectations for her gender. Furthermore, when her husband steps into the role of political spouse, the public expects him to take on feminine traits that are counter to their expectations of his gender. These conflicts arise because the populace is accustomed to seeing the politician as male and the spouse as female. This expectation may explain

why Bob Dole was not visible during most of Elizabeth Dole's presidential campaign. If Bob Dole had been visible, it would have been easier to label Elizabeth Dole as the spouse, vs. the politician. Berke (1999) writes that in a recent interview Dole established her need to "strike out on her own [saying], 'It's important for me to establish that this is my campaign.... It's important that I go solo here for a while. Bob will certainly be willing to do his share of campaigning—but I'll be making decisions'" (p. A14).

What is most intriguing, however, is the fact that Bob Dole received a great deal of criticism for not sticking to the script of political spouse; this provides evidence, again, of how deeply gendered the presidential roles have become. The public most readily sees the role of political spouse as female, he or she must display feminine traits. Dole's comment that he desired to contribute to the presidential campaign of Senator John McCain (Berke, 1999, p. A1) made big news. The public was not pleased by the fact that Bob Dole did not exhibit the traditionally feminine qualities required of a potential first spouse. Berke (1999) writes:

Three times she stood by his side as he ran for the presidency and lost, and recalling her tireless campaigning, he says, "I'm her biggest fan and supporter and should do for her what she did for me." But in his first extensive interview about the progress of his wife's campaign, Mr. Dole said he wanted to give money to a rival candidate who was fighting for much of her support. He conceded that Mrs. Dole's operation had had growing pains, was slow to raise money early and was only beginning to hit its stride. And while Mr. Dole was hopeful, he allowed that he was by no means certain she would even stay in the race (p. A1).

In a CBS News segment on this same topic, Correspondent Bob Schieffer (1999) says, “So as Mrs. Dole concentrates on improving her fundraising skills, it sounds like her husband may have to concentrate more on being a candidate’s spouse, but he has a good role model close by.”

The aforementioned expectations create a dilemma which Jamieson (1995) would call a “double bind.” The public is more accustomed to viewing a woman as a spouse of a political candidate than the candidate herself. Furthermore, the role of candidate and candidate’s spouse have become so deeply gendered that the participants playing these roles, regardless of their sex, must present themselves in styles traditionally consistent with these positions. A candidate is expected to embody masculine speaking traits and a candidate’s spouse is expected to embody feminine speaking traits. This is precisely what creates a “bind” for women in politics, specifically women vying for the presidency. As chapter 2 illustrated, when a woman uses a masculine style of speaking she runs the risk of being seen as too aggressive for her gender. However, when a female political candidate uses a feminine style of speaking, she may not be perceived as credible. What makes this “bind” particularly challenging for women in presidential politics is that, as Trent and Friedenberg (1983) write, the higher the office at hand, the more judgmental the voters become. They explain, “voters expect those candidates who run for or serve as our chief executive to be of ‘presidential timber. .’” (p. 26). However, as Jamieson (1988) noted, if more highly ranked female politicians use masculine speaking styles and future presidents use feminine style, it will be more feasible for a woman presidential candidate to use either speaking style without losing her credibility. In other words,

rhetoric has the ability to transform how we view the presidency. Rhetoric creates our perception of what is appropriate.

Foucault (as cited by Foss, Foss, and Trapp, 1991) writes that discursive formations carry with them a set of rules. Some rules define the expertise one must have before speaking, other rules create a genre for certain kinds of discourse. For example, pop musicians are expected to perform rhetoric in song. The listening audience expects to hear a rhythm or a continuous flow of words in a musical presentation—otherwise, it is not music. As noted in chapter 1, politicians are expected to perform rhetoric according to standards of political genre. “Other rules define the gestures, behaviors, and circumstances that must accompany speakers as they talk” (Foss, Foss, and Trapp, 1991, p. 219). The history of politics and gender have created rhetorical rules much like these described by Foucault.

These “governing rules” create a barrier for female presidential candidates. Trent and Friedenberg (1983) identify two styles political candidates use to campaign: an incumbency style and a challenger style. Women seeking the presidency are challengers, as a woman has never held this office. The core strategy of a challenger is to attack the record of the incumbent (Trent & Friedenberg, 1983). “Yet women who initiate aggressive and forceful attacks may be viewed as unfeminine, shrill, vicious, nagging, ...and therefore dismissed as abnormal” (Trent & Friedenberg, 1983, p. 115). A woman’s political style must be feminine, a challenger style is not. Therefore, the simple role of political challenger presents rules that a candidate must follow.

In addition, to some observers, feminine and political are not synonymous. In her 1999 presidential campaign, Elizabeth Dole’s challenges were increased by the fact that

she had previously advertised herself as an ideal first lady. In other words, Elizabeth Dole had to transcend from a visual symbol to a political symbol. She had to persuade people that what she had to say was more important than how she said it or what she was wearing at the time that she said it, a task already challenging for a female politician. Andrea Mitchell, NBC News Correspondent, in a panel aired on C-Span titled “Hillary and Liddy: From Running Mates to Front Runners?” (1999) attested to some of these challenges Elizabeth Dole faced in her 1999 presidential campaign. She cites Maureen Dowd from the St. Petersburg Times, who she says, “refers to Elizabeth Dole as a ‘perfectionist’—talks about her ‘gliding across the floor in her red power suit’, a description never attached to Steve Forbes or George W. Bush or John McCain.” Then, what Mitchell describes as “taking the cake” is Dowd’s description that Dole’s “perfectionism and her legendary focus might be due, in large part, to the fact that she married at 39 and never had children.” Mitchell continues by saying that what is truly amazing about this comment is that it is written by a woman. She says that this tells us how challenging it is for a woman to run nationally without having her attire described. In the same panel, Congresswoman Lynn Rivers from Michigan says that it has always amazed her “that people I don’t even know feel very comfortable writing me notes, calling my office—you should change your glasses, you should lose some weight, this kind of haircut is not good for you honey, I really liked what you had to say, but you should change your haircut.” These comments reveal a public focus on female politicians’ attire. However, the challenge is increased when one must transcend from a uniquely feminine and ceremonial image of a first lady to a primarily masculine and political image of the president of the United States.

However, one rule working in favor of women in politics is the rule that they are called to embody morality and piety in their actions. As mentioned in chapter 1, this rule made it difficult for women to speak in public or work outside of the home in nineteenth century America, as these endeavors were seen as too “worldly” for a lady (Campbell 1989). However, women used their perceived moral natures to provide reason to speak publicly—through their voices, they persuaded, they could put an end to immoral social ills, such as prostitution, child labor, alcohol abuse, and slavery. Today, the public may prefer a choice of a “moral leader” over a “politician”. In other words, the fact that politics has created its own list of social ills, may create a platform for women to modify the discursive formation for the way we view the presidency. Perloff (1998) writes that campaigns of today are much more “public” than they were years ago. Candidates’ dirty laundry is oftentimes aired through the media. Perloff (1998) writes, “While the public nature of today’s campaign is good in that it opens up the process to more people, it also has created a whole new set of problems; foremost among them is the contempt for politics and politicians that has come with increased exposure to our presidential candidates” (p. 282). As I will illustrate, in her 1999 speech to form and exploratory committee, Elizabeth Dole separates herself from the “ugliness” of politics, by defining herself as uniquely feminine and advocating for a new type of leadership. The leadership behaviors Dole advocates bare close resemblance to the type of moral behaviors Carol Gilligan (1993) identifies as unique to women. Carol Gilligan (1993) writes:

Women’s construction of the moral problem as a problem of care and responsibility in relationships rather than as one of rights and rules [men’s construction of the moral problem] ties the development of their moral thinking to

changes in their understanding of responsibility and relationships, just as the conception of morality as justice ties development to the logic of equality and reciprocity” (p. 73).

This logic of relationships, Gilligan explains, creates an ethic of care for women, developing more selfless, rather than assertive, tendencies. As I will illustrate in the latter portion of this chapter, Dole advocates this kind of ethic of care.

People are more aware of corruption in politics than ever before. This, according to Lynn Rivers (“Hillary and Liddy,” 1999), makes gender very relevant in politics. Rivers affirms that women are seen as less corrupt and more honest. However, she explains, this viewpoint is offset by the fact that women are still not always seen as being equally credible to men. This dilemma, Rivers says, makes fundraising difficult for women in early stages of their campaign. Rivers explains that it is all about recruitment; women represent 52% of the population, but only 15% of Congress. She concludes that we need to encourage girls to think of themselves in public office just as we do boys.

THE FUNCTION AND FORM OF ELIZABETH DOLE’S SPEECH TO FORM AN EXPLORATORY COMMITTEE

For the purpose of analyzing Elizabeth Dole’s March 1999 speech announcing her formation of an exploratory committee as her first step for the presidency, I classify this speech as having a “surfacing” purpose. The first stage of political campaigns, according to Trent and Friedenberg (1983) is the surfacing stage. According to Trent and Friedenberg (1983), this stage has seven functions. The first is to provide an account of whether or not a candidate would be suitable, or credible for office. Trent and Friedenberg write that the U. S. public has preconceptions about who should run for office. “Generally, successful candidates will be perceived as trustworthy, intelligent or

competent enough to do the job, compassionate, articulate, poised, honorable, and perhaps male” (p. 26). In addition, these authors note that as the office becomes higher, the voters become more judgmental. This might increase the difficulty of presidential campaigning for a woman. The six remaining functions Trent and Friedenbergr (1983) identify are as follows:

2. The candidate “initiates the ritualistic activities important to our political system” (p. 27). This includes the pre-primary announcement speech; “a press conference is called, the candidate is surrounded by family and friends while announcing the decision to run for office, and then embarks immediately on a campaign swing through the district, state, or nation” (p. 28).
3. The public acquires knowledge about a candidate’s objectives and possible programs.
4. Voter perception about a candidate’s administrative and personal style are established.
5. The rhetorical agenda, or central themes and issues, for the campaign is set.
6. The campaign separates front-runners from the rest of the candidates.
7. The candidate and the media get to know one another.

Throughout my analysis of Elizabeth Dole’s “exploratory committee” speech, I keep these purposes, or functions, in mind. However, following Benoit’s (1999) conclusions that a pure generic analysis can cover up other influencing factors affecting a text, I extend my framework to look at factors beyond this genre that work to shape speeches. In Benoit’s (1999) study of presidential nomination speeches, he found patterns of acclaiming, attacking and defending among certain sub-groups of speakers.

He writes, “Democrats acclaim more than Republicans, while Republicans attack more than Democrats” (p. 247). Another one of Benoit’s findings, similar to Trent and Friedenberg’s (1983) was that challengers attack more than incumbents, while incumbents acclaim more than challengers” (p. 247). Elizabeth Dole’s roles as Woman, Republican, Southerner, Former First Lady and Challenger all played a role in her presidential campaign. In Benoit’s (1999) research he examines the possible influence of purpose (appearing preferable, through acclaims, attacks, and defense), kinds of rhetors (Republican versus Democrat) and situation (incumbent versus challenger party). I consider these influences when I analyze what the function and form of Elizabeth Dole’s March 1999 exploratory committee speech tell us about women’s role in nationally elected politics.

ELIZABETH DOLE’S 1999 EXPLORATORY COMMITTEE SPEECH

Elizabeth Dole’s 1999 speech to form an exploratory committee more closely resembles a formal pre-primary announcement speech, according to Trent and Friedenberg’s (1983) previously cited definition, than any of Dole’s other presidential campaign speeches. As Trent and Friedenberg (1983) write, the pre-primary announcement speech, along with the indication of a candidate’s fitness for office, are the most central and symbolic functions of the surfacing stage. The other functions, according to these authors, are instrumental—they work to affect the outcomes of the campaign. In the following analysis, I will be focusing on Dole’s exploratory committee speech not only because of its symbolism in the first stage of her campaign, but because it introduces agendas for many of Trent and Friedenberg’s (1983) functions of surfacing.

Elizabeth Dole presented her speech to form an exploratory committee on March 10, 1999, in Des Moines, Iowa. As Trent and Friedenber (1983) explain, friends and family are usually present for the pre-primary announcement speech. Dole's audience consisted of friends, and others who she treated as friends. However, her family was not visible during this speech. Bob Dole was not part of Elizabeth Dole's audience, nor did she "refer to him [Bob Dole] directly" in her speech (Associated Press, 1999, p. A5). Nevertheless, Dole's notariety has in part been created by the fact that Dole was a popular first lady candidate during her husband's presidential campaigns. This may have been Dole's reason for presenting her exploratory committee speech in Iowa. The Associated Press (1999) writes, "It's, [Iowa is], a state where she, [Dole], is well known, with a long history of campaigning for her husband" (p. A5). The Associated Press (1999) also quotes Iowa Republican Chairman Kayne Robins who says, "She's a known commodity and starts out with a lot of strength" (p. A5). The fact that Bob Dole was not visible at Elizabeth Dole's exploratory committee speech may have been due to the fact that she wanted this "strength" to be associated with nobody but herself.

Trent and Friedenber (1983) write that presidential candidates will proceed through the surfacing stage at different rates and in different ways. What was most interesting about Elizabeth Dole's speech to form an exploratory committee was that even though this speech did not formally announce Dole's presidential campaign, her presidential campaign had already begun. In the same article that discussed her exploratory committee speech, the Associated Press (1999) wrote, "Early polls have shown Texas Gov. George W. Bush and Dole far ahead of other GOP rivals. And Bush issued a statement welcoming her to the contest" (p. A5). In addition, although this

article was titled “Dole moves closer to presidential campaign”, it discussed how Dole highlighted “her qualifications in the race for the 2000 Republican nomination...” (p. A5). This speech, in its unique way, was simply the symbolic representation of Dole’s start to a presidential race.

The irony behind this speech (one that announces an exploratory committee for a campaign that has already begun) adequately introduces the tone that was carried throughout Dole’s pre-primary campaign. Dole continued her campaign with an indirect tone about her agendas for and her challenges to a role never held by a woman. In addition, it is important to note that many of the themes introduced in this speech became prominent themes throughout Dole’s campaign. In the proceeding analysis, I will focus on the pre-primary, or surfacing, nature of Dole’s speech as Dole withdrew from the campaign halfway into the primary stage. A majority of Dole’s campaign constituted surfacing.

WOMAN AND PUBLIC SERVANT VS. POLITICIAN AND GOVERNOR

As Trent and Friedenberg (1983) write, during the surfacing stage, the central themes and issues for the campaign are set. In her 1999 speech to form an exploratory committee, two central themes Elizabeth Dole introduces are her role as a woman and her role as a public servant. Throughout this speech, Dole illustrates that these roles are mutually exclusive with the roles of politician and governor. As mentioned in chapter 1, these themes become prominent in Dole’s presidential campaign. Dole seeks to “make history” as a uniquely female candidate willing to work for the people and with the people, versus above them.

The theme of “making history” is set forth in the introduction to Dole’s exploratory committee speech (Road to the, 1999). Before Dole starts her speech, Deandra, an adolescent-aged girl of minority descent, introduces Dole. When Dole takes the stage, she calls this young lady forward and says that Deandra some day would like to be President of the United States, continuing with: “And I think that is a wonderful goal” as the audience applauds. “So,” Dole announces, “I wanted Deandra to stand here with me as we make an announcement that may be historic because we want everyone to know that officially I have filed my papers with the FEC to have an Elizabeth Dole Exploratory Committee for the year 2000” (Road to the, 1999). By associating Deandra with her potential decision to run for President, Dole appeals to those who desire for any woman of any race to have the potential to be President of the United States. Through this act, Dole defines herself as a uniquely female candidate who has the potential of moving women to the forefront of politics, a goal Blakenship and Robson (1995) would classify as a characteristic of feminine style.

Dole also uses her role as a woman to show that she is above the evils of politics. In fact, she claims that “woman” and “politician” aren’t even synonymous terms. For example, at one point in her speech, Dole says, “Now what would I, as a woman, offer our country? I am not a politician, and frankly, that is a plus today” (Road to the, 1999). Prior to this statement, Dole sets up a framework with which her audience can view politics, a framework to convince her audience that a woman is a better choice than a politician for President of the United States. Dole explains:

When I entered public service as a young woman, many years ago, it was considered a noble thing to do .it was a noble thing. And today, young people

are turning away from public service and that is because they don't see the wonderful possibilities of public service because of the ugliness of politics...Politics, the politics of governing, has become so negative, so dominated by special interest, that indeed I think what is happening is that we as a people are losing faith in our institutions. The next step is we lose faith in ourselves; and then, we really have lost, haven't we (Road to the, 1999)?

Dole's solution to this "layer, thickening layer, of cynicism and doubt" (Road to the, 1999) is for each person to rekindle a "belief in the individual. Restoring that American sense that one person, no matter how great the challenge can make a real difference" (Road to the, 1999). The difference, she explains, can best be made through public service, an idea that closely resembles Gilligan's (1993) ethics of caring, as previously described.

The goal of convincing the public to see the presidency as a position of public service versus politics was an important one for Elizabeth Dole. First of all Dole was a "challenger," according to Trent and Friedenberg's (1983) definition of this term. Dole was a challenger in that a woman has never held the position of President of the United States. According to Benoit (1999) and Trent and Friedenberg (1983), the most common communication style for a challenger is an attacking style. However, as illustrated in prior chapters, an attacking style is not always an effective style for a woman to use. However, it is less aggressive, or personal, for Dole to attack the role of the presidency than it is for her to attack the president himself—and in essence, it was truly the role that she was challenging. Furthermore, Dole needed to challenge this role or transform the way the public looked at it to make it more suitable, in their eyes, for a woman. Second,

Dole needed to transform the public's image of the presidency to make the position more suitable for a former first lady candidate. As chapter 2 illustrated, the position of first lady is seen as purely apolitical, whereas the presidency is not.

Throughout her exploratory committee speech, Elizabeth Dole paints a picture of herself as a qualified candidate for the role of a public servant. This role does not stray far from that which nineteenth century American women were expected to fill, especially those from the South. Anne Firor Scott (1970) writes that southern women of this time period were depicted as compassionate and self-denying. Scott (1970) quotes Thomas Nelson Page to further describe this selflessness: "Her life was one long act of devotion, devotion to God, devotion to her husband, devotion to her children, devotion to her servants, to the poor, to humanity" (p. 5). Furthermore, this selfless devotion to others fits into Gilligan's (1993) definition of female morality. In her southern style, Elizabeth Dole reveals such devotion—a devotion to living a life of public service to "call America to her better nature" (*Road to the*, 1999). In her exploratory committee speech, Dole explains that her goal over her last "30 plus years in public service" has been to "place service over politics..." (*Road to the*, 1999). Dole proves this inductively, staying true to feminine style, making use of the word "serve" to list her various political experiences. For instance, Dole says that she served as the Federal Trade Commissioner and most recently has been serving as President of the American Red Cross. In addition, Dole says that she served five presidents. What is interesting about this last statement is that she held prominent positions under some of these presidents—Dole, as mentioned previously, was Secretary of Transportation in Reagan's Administration (which she does note toward the end of her speech), and Secretary of Labor in Bush's Administration. Nevertheless,

titles aren't a part of her description of her "public service" experience. As Dole lists her experience, she breaks it into three categories: overseeing the management of material resources with the Department of Transportation, overseeing the management of human resources with the Department of Labor, and overseeing the management of inner resources with the Red Cross (Road to the, 1999). By breaking her experience into these categories, Dole not only shows that she guided versus governed (oversaw management versus managed), but she also shows a devotion to humanitarian agendas (material resources, human resources and inner resources).

Another way in which Dole shows her selfless devotion to humanity is by citing experiences she had with the American Red Cross. She illustrates:

At the American Red Cross, I saw things that will haunt me the rest of my life. Praying with parents at Oklahoma City, hoping their child would still be pulled alive from that rubble. Over in Rwanda. , I was literally stepping over dead bodies after that rush of people, million people, left the country several years ago. And this was a terrible situation where little children were held by the Red Cross there. We were trying to find some extended family. They had nothing. Their parents had been hacked to death with machetes. They had no home, no parents, no food, no clothes, no hope, no future. Nothing but the humanitarian organizations to help them. And you realize as you look at that how often we take all these advantages in our country for granted. How blessed we are to be Americans ladies and gentleman" (Road to the, 1999).

Again, these examples paint an image of Elizabeth Dole as a public servant, reaching out to selflessly help others. In addition, it is important to note that the focus of

these examples is family and children—topics that women were limited to in nineteenth century America. And even in the present day and time, these are topics that many believe fall under the domain of female leadership.

In Dole's 1999 exploratory committee speech the central themes speak loud and clear that as a potential president of the United States, Dole will represent the public as a woman and a public servant, rather than a politician and governor. These roles limit Dole to an administrative and personal style that reflect a woman and a public servant more so than a politician and governor—that style is feminine style.

FEMININE STYLE

Trent and Friedenberg's (1983) fourth function of surfacing is for the candidate to set forth his/her administrative and personal style. In Dole's exploratory committee speech, the predominant administrative and personal style she sets forth is one that is characteristically feminine. Through Dole's description of her political experiences she illustrates that she is, and will continue to be, a feminine leader. Furthermore, Dole's announced goals for America appear to have a spiritual focus, and a moral focus that keeps in line with Gilligan's (1993) definition of female morality. However, most obvious is the personal tone that Dole uses to present this speech.

As noted in chapter 1, in her exploratory committee speech, Dole emphasizes the importance of a peer-like leadership style, attributing some of her political success to working with the best and the brightest people to get jobs done (Road to the, 1999). In fact, one of the overarching messages of Dole's speech is that she could be this same type of leader as President of the United States. Remember that Dole's solution to the public's lost faith in its political institutions, as quoted previously, is for each person to rekindle a

“belief in the individual. Restoring that American sense that one person, no matter how great the challenge, can make a real difference” through public service (Road to the, 1999). In addition, in the closing of her speech, Dole explains that she believes “Americans are calling for leaders who really will help to call America to her better nature” (Road to the, 1999). The subject matter of these two messages is feminine in style. For example, by encouraging each person to restore a “belief in the individual...,” Dole invites audience participation. Furthermore, Dole refrains from placing herself above the audience or saying outright that she is the best leader to restore hope and goodness. In contrast, she talks to her audience as peers. She encourages her audience to engage in public service. By previously listing her experience as a public servant, and discussing “the good” she has done for the nation by working with people to get things done, she leads her audience members to believe that I believe her she is the best person to fill this position.

Through Dole’s explanation of her political experiences, and her call to America for action, she publicly conceptualizes “the power of public office as a capacity to ‘get things done’ and to empower others.”² Again, through her stories of her political experiences, Dole reveals success in working with people to get things done. In addition, as illustrated earlier, Dole describes work she did with the American Red Cross in Oklahoma City and Rwanda. Following this, she explains that we often take advantages in our country for granted, and that we are truly blessed to be Americans. She continues: “And we have been blessed to be a blessing, haven’t we—we’ve received that we might give. And as I saw these things that would haunt me the rest of my life, I also saw the power of the human heart” (Road to the, 1999). She refers here to people who would

travel across the globe to help strangers. “This is what we yearn for. These are the values,” she says, “The fact that the individual can make a difference, every individual can, and certainly honesty and integrity. This is what I think people yearn for. That is neighbor helping neighbor” (Road to the, 1999). Dole empowers her audience, through these stories, to make a difference, to work with her to get things done. Another characteristic of these passages that keeps in line with feminine style is their moral underpinnings. “We’ve received that we might give” is biblical. In Matthew 10:8 (The Holy Bible, 1972), Jesus commands his disciples to go forth and preach. He says, “freely ye have received, freely give.” This message is repeated throughout the bible.

Spiritual language arises at other moments in Dole’s speech. One example is in her use of the word mission to illustrate her past political positions. Dole says that with the department of transportation, her “mission was to oversee the management of material resources” (Road to the, 1999). She also says that her work with the department of labor was a “wonderful missionfield, again, for me.” This creates an image of a type of foreign plain in which spiritual work is carried through, despite the fact she is talking about a branch of the U.S. government. Another example of spiritual language is provided in Dole’s discussion about drugs. She says, we must “use the bully pulpit to preach constantly that drugs are not cool; they kill” (Road to the, 1999). And then continues to say, “Let’s make this a crusade and get rid of this evil on our society.” I find it interesting that in this last statement, Dole is making a plea for a less sinful America. This is an appropriate statement as it fits in with Dole’s call for a “better” America, or to bring “America to her better nature” (Road to the, 1999). And a woman,

² A characteristic of feminine style as defined by Blankenship and Robson (1995, p. 359).

representing a gender traditionally seen as pious, would be an obvious choice for a leader to bring America to this “better” place.

In her exploratory committee speech, Dole leaves no room for any confusion about the fact that she would be a good candidate to fill a moral role in the presidency. This is due to the fact that Dole, through her speaking style, enacts femininity. In addition to the previously mentioned feminine style characteristics Dole incorporates into her speech, Dole’s overall speaking style is overwhelmingly personal and inclusive in its tone.³

Dole creates a personal audience in her 1999 speech to form an exploratory committee. For example, in this speech, Dole repeats her style of breaking from tradition and steps out from behind the podium (Road to the, 1999). She walks down the center aisle of the audience to present her speech. However, she takes this personal style a step further in her exploratory committee speech. She encourages interaction during her presentation. A couple times during the speech, audience members respond to points she has made – her reactions are positive, as she affirms each audience member’s response has been heard by saying their name. In addition, Dole shakes hands and greets audience members during her speech. Not only does Dole treat her audience as equals, but similar to her 1996 convention speech, she classifies her audience as friends. In her introduction, she says that she is pleased to announce the exploratory committee with wonderful friends in Iowa. She explains that due to the fact she has traveled to all 99 counties, she knows the audience very well. She says, “You are almost members of my family.” It is interesting however, that she also uses this statement to establish credibility, citing her travel experiences throughout the state. Thirdly, Dole places herself at an equal level

with her audience by providing her web site: www.edole2000.org and assuring her listeners that she wants to hear interests and concerns. She says, “This is a people to people effort on my part.”

In fact, Dole says that she will wait to fulfill Trent and Friedenbergs (1983) third function of surfacing, setting forth objectives, or laying out positions, until she hears from people. The reason for this, she says, is to set forth policies in “a thoughtful way” (Road to the, 1999). “So,” she says, “I look forward to being in touch with all of you” (Road to the, 1999). These passages of Dole’s speech are reverberations of that peer-like leadership style that comes across in other passages. Through these passages, Dole reveals a desire to work with people, in a personal way, to improve the country.

Another way in which Dole sets up a personal tone in her exploratory committee speech is by sharing stories that illustrate her experience in politics. Remember that Dole chooses in her speech to emphasize that she is a woman rather than a politician. In fact, after making this claim, Dole says, “But I have spent a lifetime in public service, and let me tell you a bit about this.” Therefore, Dole sets up a framework within which she can cite her political experience while avoiding the association of herself with the “evil politician” she alludes to earlier. What follows, however, is not a list of her experiences, but personal stories that illustrate her experiences in government. Dole illustrates, through stories, tasks she has completed in her positions with the department of transportation, the department of labor, and the American Red Cross. For example, one of these stories is about the completion of two national airports with the department of transportation. Dole sets up the story as follows: “We also transferred two airports out of the federal government, where they were on the dole, excuse me the pun, they were in

³ Characteristics of feminine style as defined by Campbell (1989) and Blakenship and Robson (1995).

the federal dole and getting only a few million dollars so they had to be gateways to the nation's capital. Dulles and National, which should be first class facilities." She continues to explain that there had been eight attempts to get this done since 1949, but Dole and her team were able to complete the project. She explains, "Why? Because I had a team of people who were the best and the brightest and I believe that is what you need in every job that you are in; you get the best people working with you, volunteers, staff, people who really understand how to get the job done." In this illustration, Dole provides the audience with an example of her experience in a story format. In addition, as mentioned previously, the story tells the audience that on this job she was working with people rather than above them. Also, in her description of the team that was working with her, Dole creates characteristics for her audience that they themselves can embody, the best and the brightest working with her.

Another example of Dole's use of a story format to share her political experiences is evident in the previously cited concluding descriptions of her work with the American Red Cross. The emotional nature of these stories reveal Dole's love for family and desire to serve others, traits traditionally consistent with the public's expectation of women.

OTHER RHETORICAL INFLUENCES

Public expectations for women and the presidency are important considerations in analyzing Elizabeth Dole's 1999 "exploratory committee" speech. However, I believe there are a couple more roles that play a part in Dole's rhetoric. Dole's role as a Republican and a southerner influenced her exploratory committee speech, as well as the outcome of her 1999 presidential campaign.

The primary political themes Dole discusses in her exploratory committee speech are drugs, education, taxes and defense (Road to the, 1999). In very feminine ways, Dole presents the traditionally Republican messages to “say no to drugs,” localizing education, and lowering taxes. For example, Dole introduces her discussion on drugs as follows: “I’m told by pollsters that drugs is not very high on the priority list for American’s today. My passion does not come from polling. My passion comes from leadership” (Road to the, 1999). As in prior passages, Dole uses this statement to show that she is not a politician; she is a public servant. In her discussion of education, this theme arises again. She not only says that we need to rechannel federal money to local school districts, but that we need to raise the standard of teaching—“teachers,” she says, “are great servants, but some aren’t qualified” (Road to the, 1999). However, she explains, “as we raise the regard for teachers, let’s hope that we can raise the regard for public servants. Because I think whether you are in the classroom, or whether you are in government, or whether you are working at the local Red Cross, public service brings out the best in ourselves” (Road to the, 1999). Again, it all comes back to public service, a theme consistent with the morality of caring. Therefore, although the themes of “saying no to drugs,” and localizing education are traditionally Republican, Dole presents them in a feminine way, appealing to feminine instincts to nurture and care for one another. In Dole’s discussion on education, she also touches on the family, a theme that the public continues to place under women’s domain. Dole says, “We must get parents back into the classroom” (Road to the, 1999). This, according to Dole, would be a step in returning our schools to greatness. The theme of family is repeated when she talks about taxes. Dole explains that taxes need to be decreased because “an average family is paying 40% of their income

in taxes today. In other words, an average family has to work five months for the government” (Road to the, 1999). According to Dole, it is because of this impact on the family that we need tax relief.

The nature of the fourth topic that Dole discusses is different from the other three; it is a topic that is more Republican than it is feminine—it is defense. Dole explains that we need increased military spending. In fact, Dole makes her only real attack, at this point in her speech. She says, “The president recommended in his budget twelve billion dollars [for defense], but only four billion dollars of that is new money. The rest, the eight billion is just moving money around. His joint chiefs, of course, who are his top military advisors, recommended seventeen billion. I say let’s go with the joint chiefs, right? We need more money” (Road to the, 1999). This desire to increase defense spending was repeated in other Dole campaign speeches. For example, Dole spoke on military and foreign policy a week following a speech George W. Bush delivered on the same topics at the citadel, “Charleston’s legendary military academy famous for its efforts to bar women. ” (Schemo, 1999, p. A23). Dole’s audience, also a group of college students in Charleston, South Carolina, was heavily female. Schemo (1999) writes, “Invoking former President Ronald Reagan, whom she credited with bringing down Communism, Mrs. Dole proposed a post-cold-war weapons buildup to reinforce the country’s nuclear arsenal, reminiscent of the Reagan era” (p. A23). In addition, Schemo (1999) writes, “She [Dole] said the current Administration had been taken in by the ‘empty promises’ of weak treaties and by ‘rogue and outlaw nations’ threatening the United States with weapons of mass destruction” (p. A23). However, in her article entitled “Dole Talks Foreign Policy, but Women Want Something Else,” Schemo (1999)

writes that several audience members were apparently disappointed in the content of Dole's speech. Schemo writes, "Sharniqua Austin, a sophomore studying biology, said she wanted to hear Mrs. Dole talk about domestic issues" (p. A23). Schemo explains that several women who came to watch Dole's speech were interested in the fact that she was a woman running for the presidency, but didn't keep up with politics. The fact that Dole's audiences were primarily women, women involving themselves in politics for the first time, limited Dole in her political discussions.

Another role affecting Dole's exploratory committee speech, as well as her campaign, was her role as a southern woman. Throughout her political career, Dole, a North Carolina native, has been characterized as the ideal southern woman. Gutgold (1999) cites newspaper and magazine reports from 1988, 1983, and 1996 that labeled Dole as "southern millionairess," "southern belle graciousness," "cotillion going daughter of the South," and "southern fried kabuki" (p. 42). Von Drehle (1999) describes Dole as follows:

See her on the campaign trail: She has the posture, makeup and well-spoken demeanor of a beauty pageant contestant, which she used to be. No matter how rigorous the campaign schedule, her clothes are immaculate and perfectly coordinated. She favors the peacock palette of the country-club Republican wife – not just Manhattan black and Washington power reds, but also light blues, bright yellows, vibrant greens. Her hair is conservative, her smile is full and even, her manner is earnest. Her cadence and honey accent make instantly clear where she got the nickname Sugarlips. She looks the absolute flower of the Old South (p. A1).

However, Von Drehle writes that “she has the record of a classic Washington rapid riser, and the reputation of a goal-setting, image-conscious, workaholic boss” (p. A1). Again, this is a testament to how successful Dole was in cloaking her politics in feminine graces. Dole was bold, simply by taking on the presidency, “trying to become the first civilian with no elective experience to reach the White House since Herbert Hoover” (Von Drehle, 1999, p. A1). However, her feminine style and southern charm disguised this boldness.

As shown earlier in this chapter, Dole adheres closely to the characteristics of feminine style in her exploratory committee speech, maintaining an appearance of being first and foremost concerned with human relations. Scott (1970) writes that nowhere have women been held so closely to feminine ideals than in the American South. Scott speculates that one reason for this may be that southerners owned slaves, maintaining “a traditional landowning aristocracy...” (p. 16). Therefore, Scott writes, southerners may have “tenaciously held on to the patriarchal family structure” (p. 16). The southern woman, Scott (1970) writes was held to a firm standard of morality and piety. “She was capable of acute perceptions about human relations, and was a creature of tact, discernment, sympathy, and compassion” (p. 4).

Another characteristic of the southern woman is that she will be noncombative, or cooperative, a trait also evident in feminine style. This trait is evident in the nation’s first Women’s Museum, which opened in Dallas, Texas this fall. Aaron Gell (2000) describes the museum as follows:

Heavy on wall text and light on historical artifacts, the exhibits perform a careful two-step around issues like abortion, sexual harassment, rape, domestic violence

and pornography that might be construed as unpleasant or discomfiting. While sepia toned struggles (such as the suffrage movement) get their due, when it comes to present-day battles, the museum is a monument to the adage ‘If you don’t have anything nice to say, don’t say anything at all.’... It also is the manifestation of a mild-mannered brand of feminism that has long flourished in the South, often in direct and slightly miffed opposition to the movement establishment centered in the Northeast. Dedicated to making peace with a man’s world, the women behind the Women’s Museum don’t shrink from the feminist label, but they proudly reject confrontational tactics” (p. 2).

As illustrated throughout this chapter, Elizabeth Dole’s exploratory committee speech was presented in a similar nonconfrontational style. In addition, Dole took moderate, noncontroversial stances, much like the Women’s Museum, throughout her campaign. For example, during her campaign, Dole clarified her position on abortion as follows:

It [the Republican party’s sanctioning of a constitutional amendment banning abortion] is divisive, and it is an irrelevant debate in terms of an amendment... An amendment is not going to pass... People want us to move forward and accomplish some things, not just kind of endlessly debate something that really is not going anywhere (“Dole clarifies,” 1999, p. A7).

In a July 1999 article, John Nichols wrote, “So far, Dole has dealt mostly in generalities” (p. 31). And, as chapter 1 explains, Dole’s middle of the road approach may have affected her success in the presidential primaries. On October 20, 1999, Dole ended her presidential campaign, citing funding as the primary influencing factor. Dole’s

moderate stances may have contributed to her challenges in fundraising. Dole's financial supporters were mostly women. And many of these women, as revealed in this thesis, were women who had never been involved in politics before. Lawrence and Drinkard (1999) write, "Dole's strength lay in her appeal to young women, many of whom had never before participated in politics. Unlike party activists accustomed to giving, these supporters have to be educated to understand that 'in order to vote for her, I have to write a check to her,' McElveen-Hunter [Dole's fundraising chief] says" (Lawrence and Drinkard, 1999, p. 1A). Dole's support, although both Democratic and Republican, did not come from women used to being involved in the political campaign process. Von Drehle (1999) sums it up best when he writes:

The role suits her perfectly, because she is equal parts past and future. She is a medium between them, coaxing the past forward while swaddling the future in a cross-stitched cozy. This is the root of her popularity, and her popularity is the basis of her campaign. It may also be one of her biggest problems. Could it be that the people who love Elizabeth Dole for her traditional qualities aren't yet ready for a female president, while the people who are ready for a woman would prefer someone more overtly modern (p. A1).

CHAPTER 4 CONCLUSION

Imagery plays an important role in the consideration of style. All candidates, whether they campaign using the strategies of incumbency or those of the challenger, must do and say whatever it is that will enhance voter perception of them. They are concerned, in other words, about their image (Trent and Friedenberg, 1983, p. 72).

As Trent and Friedenberg illustrate, the goal first and foremost for a political candidate is to enhance voters' perceptions of him or her. As noted at the start of chapter 3, to fulfill this goal, the candidate must be successful at having a conversation with the voters, taking heed not to violate voter expectations for that candidate or the position being sought. Trent and Friedenberg (1983) write that voters compare their subjective impressions of candidates with those of competing candidates and their overall vision of an "ideal" candidate. Therefore, they explain, "one of the most crucial tasks facing candidates, especially during the surfacing stage, is to determine just what attributes voters believe are ideal for the office sought" (Trent and Friedenberg, 1983, p. 74). The fact that Dole's 1996 Republican National Convention speech received rave reviews showed success on her part in adapting the ideal characteristics her audience envisioned for a first lady. These characteristics, as illustrated through the speech, were ceremonial and feminine in nature. However, these characteristics constrained her in her 1999 presidential campaign. Elizabeth Dole's 1999 presidential campaign became an act of balances. As mentioned in chapter 3, regardless of individual political experience, a great deal of Dole's public notariety came during her campaigns with her husband. Therefore, the public's image of Elizabeth Dole was that of an apolitical, ceremonial and supportive

spouse. Furthermore, this was an image that the public liked—in fact, they liked the way Elizabeth Dole depicted this image so much, that they wanted to see her make a run for the presidency (illustrated in chapters 1 and 2). For this reason, Elizabeth Dole was limited to a presidential campaign image that was similar to her prior campaign images. Elizabeth Dole, as chapter 3 shows, made this link by depicting herself as a public servant, rather than a politician. This role, as a public servant, revealed striking similarities to her previous campaign role as a supportive and apolitical spouse. In addition, she campaigned displaying the same feminine graces she had displayed in previous campaigns. The problem with the style, however, was that it resembled more of an incumbency style than a challenger style.

THE NONCOMBATIVE CHALLENGER

As noted in chapter 3, women vying for the presidency are inherently in the position of challenger, as they have never held this office. This puts women in a difficult position. Trent and Friedenberg (1983) write that “during the twentieth century, only four presidents have lost their reelection bids, and congressional incumbents, especially those in the House of Representatives, almost always defeat their challengers (in some elections, they have won as many as 97 percent of their contests)” (p. 85). Incumbents have the credibility of their record to run on. Elizabeth Dole did incorporate her record into her campaign. However, her record, although impressive, did not include the United States presidency. Furthermore, as illustrated in chapter 3, Dole provided her audience with her political experiences in a feminine style. Therefore, her record failed to challenge her opponents’ records. Trent and Friedenberg (1983) write:

When there is no incumbent, candidates attack the record of the current administration (if they do not represent the same political party) or even an opponent's record in a previous position. Whatever becomes the focus of criticism, the object is to attack—to create doubt in voter's minds regarding the incumbent's/opponent's ability—to stimulate public awareness of any problems that exist, or to foster a sense of dissatisfaction and even unhappiness with the state of affairs generally (p. 107).

The 2000 presidential primaries revealed that the public expects challenger candidates to employ these strategies, even in the early stages of a campaign. Jamieson (2000) explains that in the 2000 presidential campaign, Bradley achieved success in the polls when he “began not only to respond to attack but also to launch contrastive arguments of his own in New Hampshire” (p. 215). She continues, “Bradley's shift raises this question: Had he moved more aggressively sooner to begin contrasting his record and proposals with Gore's, would he have been able to win Iowa or New Hampshire” (Jamieson, 2000, p. 215). Jamieson (2000) answers with this: “There is no way to know the answer to that question, but what intrigues us about Bradley's campaign and Senator John McCain's (R- Arizona) experience when he swore off contrast ads in South Carolina is that in each instance the candidate who held to the supposed ‘high road’ lost ground” (p. 215). In her attempt to maintain a more feminine, and therefore more cooperative speaking style, Dole similarly lost ground. Dole's failure to take on a challenger role may have cost her funds. “Her policy speeches on education and defense came later and were less detailed than Bush's on the same subjects” (Lawrence and Drinkard, 1999, p. 1A). Lawrence and Drinkard (1999) write, “Arizona Sen. John

McCain is only slightly ahead of Dole in fundraising, but he has had no trouble attracting media attention. Several analysts contrast his ability to stay in the news – by publicizing a new memoir, voicing controversial views on the war in Kosovo or fighting for campaign finance reform – with Dole’s caution and inability to build momentum” (p. 1A). However, women presidential candidates are caught in a double-bind as challenging can hinder a woman more than help her. A woman who challenges, rhetorically, may be seen as too forceful for her gender.

MORALITY IN THE PRESIDENCY

Challenging, nevertheless, becomes important when attempting to transform the nature of the presidential role, a task essential for a female presidential candidate. However, the closest that Dole came to challenging the presidency was to encourage the public to see the presidency in a new light. As shown in chapter 3, Dole attempted to create in her audience a desire to see the presidency in a more apolitical and moral way. Dole’s efforts to get her audience to desire a national leader void of “corruptness” and “the ugliness” of politics may have been her way of building a bridge between her former role as a first lady candidate to a possible presidential role. Dole’s popularity in her 1996 Republican convention speech was due to the fact that, unlike her opponent (Hillary Rodham Clinton), she was more feminine than political. Therefore, in her 1999 presidential campaign, it was essential for Dole to create an image of a distinctly feminine presidency. Elizabeth Dole, as illustrated previously, put forth her best effort to show that the best leader for America was one who would serve her people and lead “America to her better nature,” rather than govern her constituents. Dole conveyed a responsibility for caring, which Gilligan describes as a moral focus for women. The

success Elizabeth Dole did have in her campaign may be attributed to this moral focus. Trent and Friedenberg (1983) write that what a populace deems as ideal in a presidential candidate varies from year to year “For example, experience in federal government and national politics was traditionally considered an important quality for a presidential candidate to possess. Yet, in 1976 in the wake of the Watergate scandals, being perceived as an experienced politician, one who knew the ‘ins’ and ‘outs’ of Washington, was a distinct disadvantage” (Trent and Friedenberg, 1983, p. 75). We can compare the 2000 presidential election to the 1976 presidential election. Much of the campaigning for the 2000 presidential election took place during the aftermath of the only presidential impeachment trial since 1974. Therefore, it is possible that the American public was ready to see the presidency in a new light, as an apolitical role void of the corruptness we have grown accustomed to seeing. A role that, as previously noted by Congresswoman Lynn Rivers, is suitably filled by a woman.

STRIKING TOO MUCH OF A BALANCE

Although Dole was clearly feminine in her presentational style, she denied that she was running as a uniquely female candidate. However, as Leonard (1999) writes, “she always ended her stump speech with a reference to how she was ‘making history’” (p. A1). In fact, Dole’s 1999 campaign contained a number of conflicting messages. Leonard (1999) writes, “[Dole] said she was not the women’s candidate. But on a host of issues – gun control, education, school safety, controlling illegal drugs – Dole hit all the hot buttons that pollsters say appeal to women. She was also cautious on what she said about abortion. She insisted she was against abortion but quick to add she would not lead a charge as president to restrict abortion rights” (p. A1).

Dole's attempt to maintain a middle-ground on issues can be linked back to her indirect and noncombative style. Dole defined herself as uniquely feminine, while avoiding any feminist labels. She appealed, in general terms, to the concerns of women. However, Dole avoided taking any direct stances on women's issues. Dole's indirect style, Givhan (1999) contends caused her to fade into the scenery. Givhan writes, "[Dole] was ambivalent about barreling through walls and not inclined to boast about making history. As a result, she robbed herself of a defining image" (p. C1). However, if Dole had enacted the type of campaign style Givhan advocates for, one unlike the feminine style that defined Dole, she may not have seen the success in her recent campaign that she did. As shown previously, it was Dole's style in her 1996 convention speech that defined her as a popular choice for a presidential hopeful. As shown in chapter 3, Dole repeated this style in her presidential campaign, and something about this style worked. Dole progressed farther in her presidential campaign than any women before her. However, her style was not seen as credible enough to win her a spot as a Republican presidential nominee. As noted earlier, Parry-Giles and Parry-Giles (1996) write that feminine style perpetuates societal stereotypes about woman. They contend that society is comfortable with women's use of feminine style because it depicts women in their traditional light. However, these authors write that this style perpetuates the idea that women are to be supportive and nurturing. For this reason, Elizabeth Dole's style, although popular, may have depicted her as more of a political spouse, or possible vice-presidential nominee, than a presidential nominee. However, in contrast to Givhan, and Parry-Giles and Parry-Giles, I would argue that the fact that Dole used a feminine style in her 1999 presidential campaign was more positive than it was negative. Elizabeth Dole's

1999 presidential campaign sent visuals to a large number of individuals. Givhan (1999) quotes Schroeder who says, “Any time there’s a woman running for president, it’s history-making. It’s always very important because of the visuals it sends out to little girls watching TV” (C1). Although some would say that the visuals Dole sent to young girls perpetuated the idea that they must enact femininity to be a presidential hopeful, I would argue that these visuals showed that a woman can enact femininity and still be a presidential hopeful. Hopefully, there will come a day when a woman will not have to “masculinize” herself to win a presidential election, but will be allowed the opportunity to choose a gendered speaking style most suitable to her. Sara Ruddick (1992) argues that women should not be forced to choose feminist thinking over feminine thinking, which she defines as maternal thinking. Ruddick contends that if feminism and maternal thinking are combined, we can view maternal thinking as a powerful, rather than a powerless, mode of thought. Ruddick (1992) writes, “It is the conjunction of feminist and maternal consciousness, of maternal sympathies and feminist solidarity, that might shift the balance with maternal practices from denial to lucid knowledge, from parochialism to awareness of other’s suffering, and from compliance to stubborn, decisive capacities to act” (p. 150).

FUTURE RESEARCH

This idea of combining feminine style with feminist style would be a useful area of future research, as it may benefit women seeking public positions of leadership. Studies in this area may reveal techniques that women could use to transform feminine style into a more credible way of speaking.

Ultimately, however, Dole's end to her political campaign was due to a lack of campaign funds. Therefore, future research on the influence gender has on the political fundraising process would be useful. I find it interesting that Dole's fundraising focused on nontraditional financial sources—subsequent research in the area of nontraditional fundraising would provide interesting insight into the campaign process.

In addition, as more and more women are elected into government positions, we have the opportunity to analyze how the male gender and masculine ways of speaking are influencing the role of political spouse. As chapter 2 illustrated, the role of political spouse has become so deeply gendered that men filling this role may be challenged by traditionally feminine expectations for it. Another similar area of study could be one involving political role reversal. Elizabeth Dole's presidential campaign was unique in that never before had a presidential candidate's spouse sought the same presidential candidacy in a subsequent election. Hillary and Bill Clinton will also provide wonderful opportunities to study role reversal, as never before has a first lady ended her term with a senatorial seat. Bill Clinton's transition from President to political spouse will offer all sorts of insight into the spousal nature of politics.

Finally, I believe further research could be done on public expectations that party affiliation and regional affiliation bring to the campaign process. I believe that, in Dole's case, the fact that she was a southerner and a Republican increased the expectation that her speaking style should be feminine. I am sure that party affiliation and regional affiliation bring their own set of governing rules to the political campaign process.

The various "images" that political candidates bring to the campaign process will continue to shape how we view our nation's political positions. Givhan (1999) writes,

“They saw a host of live images: Dole shaking hands in Iowa and soliciting votes. Dole smiling graciously and nodding empathetically as folks weave their personal tales. The exiting candidate gamely reading her goodbye speech” (p. C1). These images of Elizabeth Dole are now part of the “conversation” we will continue to have in future presidential campaigns.

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