

APPEALING TO WOMEN:
A RHETORIC ANALYSIS OF MITT ROMNEY'S
AND BARACK OBAMA'S ELECTION DEBATES IN
THE 2012 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

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Tutkielman tarkoituksena on selvittää, kuinka Yhdysvaltojen vuoden 2012 presidentinvaalien ehdokkaat Barack Obama ja Mitt Romney pyrkivät vetoamaan naisyleisöön. Tarkoituksena on pystyä nimeämään kommunikaatiostrategioita, joita presidenttiehdokkaat käyttävät puheissaan. Tutkimuksen aineisto koostuu kahdesta ensimmäisestä väittelystä, joihin kandidaatit osallistuivat vuoden 2012 lopulla. Aineisto on rajattu naisia koskeviin puheenvuoroihin.

Presidentinvaaleja edeltäviin väittelyihin liittyvät läheisesti vetoamisen ja väittelyiden käsitteet, sekä lisäksi tutkimuksen kohteena oleva käsite yleisö. Väittelytilanne noudattaa kysymys-vastaus -kaavaa, mutta antaa mahdollisuuden presidenttiehdokkaille käyttää puheenvuoroissansa jo ennalta mietittyjä vastauksia sekä argumentaatiostrategioita. Tämä antaa mielenkiintoisen lähtökohdan analyysiin. Analyysini perustuu van Eemerenin kehittelemään argumentaatioanalyysiin sekä Windtin kriittiseen näkemykseen presidentillisestä retoriikasta.

Tutkimuksessa ilmeni, että presidenttiehdokkaat kohdensivat argumentaatiotansa naisyleisöihin suoralla tavalla. Ilmeni myös, että presidenttiehdokkaat käyttivät hieman toisistaan poikkeavia argumentaatiostrategioita. Obama käytti erilaisia argumentaatiostrategioita laajemmin kuin Romney. Myös ehdokkaiden roolit olivat väittelyssä esillä. Obama argumentoi keskustelua johtaen, ja Romney joutui väittelyn edetessä altavastaajan asemaan.

Tutkimuksessa selvisi myös, että presidenttiehdokkaat esittivät naiset positiivisessa valossa ja liittivät naisiin positiivisia adjektiiveja. Toisaalta taas puheenvuoroissa kuvastuivat stereotyyppiset naisroolit. Van Eemerenin kehittelemän metodin näkemyksen mukaan monet presidenttiehdokkaiden argumentaatiotavoista kuuluivat argumentaatiovirheiden kategoriaan.

Asiasanat: debate, president, election, appeal, women, rhetoric analysis

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1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I will clarify the research questions of this study and give reasons to why it was conducted, as well as give an overview of the current study of rhetorics.

During the autumn 2012, there was a great deal of speculation especially in the American media about the possible outcome of the presidential election. Some of the political commentaries at the time seemed to be suggesting that the outcome of the 2012 election would be decided with women's votes. For example, *Time* magazine's Michael Scherer wrote in an article called "Women Voters Won the Second Presidential Debate" on Oct. 18 2012 that "both candidates lurched onto the campaign trail with new appeals to shore up support among a key demographic that may decide the outcome in key swing states". The article discussed the topic choices that the candidates made during the debate, suggesting they were directed to women.

Even after the election was over, many agreed with this view. *The Guardian* featured an article called "Why Obama won the women's vote" on 7 Nov. 2012. The article suggested that Obama's campaign, which focused on the weaknesses of the opposing side, i.e. "Roe v Wade, abortion under any circumstance and insurance coverage for contraception" was successful, because it was directed to women and focused on the issues that women supposedly found interesting. The discussion of the topic was also widely represented on the Internet, including blogs such as the Presidential Debate Blog, in which university professors of political sciences and communication studies share their views on the topic. The topic was also widely discussed on social media, including Twitter where the public had their say about the campaigns, the latest news from the campaign trails and the personalities of the two presidential candidates.

The trends in the traditional media as well as social media suggested that the candidates tried to appeal to women in their debate arguments. The purpose of this study is to discover whether there is factual evidence in the 2012 Barack Obama - Mitt Romney presidential debates about the economy and internal affairs that would support the claim that some arguments were directed to female audiences. In particular, I am interested in

discovering whether the candidates appeal to women, and if so, what kinds of appeals they use.

This study is relevant because firstly, it is of current interest. The United States presidential debates are widely discussed in the society and media, and the outcome of the election has an effect on hundreds of millions of people worldwide. The issues discussed in the debates might reflect the public opinion as well. Secondly, the results of the study broaden the understanding of appealing to an audience in political contexts. The study of specific audiences is a new approach to research on influencing. Audiences have been studied extensively ever since the study of rhetorics evolved, but the study of targeting argumentation to specific audiences is a new trend in research, which still needs more focus. Discovering the audiences of arguments is also key in discovering the overall trends in the society. While the presidential candidates might have an effect on the public opinion, they also reflect the public opinion themselves. The candidates discuss issues that can achieve the largest possible adherence among the audience. If the candidates choose to discuss equal pay, it is symptomatic of the discussions in the media and in social environments, such as homes and workplaces. Thirdly, this study, and further studies on appealing to specific audiences can help politicians make more effective speeches. The audiences can also benefit from these studies, as they can gain an understanding of the appeals and become more aware of the whole influencing process.

The present study relates to the themes of televised presidential debate, audience and appealing. It is also related to the feminist views of addressing women and new research on race-based appealing. Race-based appealing is in some ways a similar topic to the present study, even though the audience is different. The present study is also closely linked to the study of rhetoric and the rhetoric analysis of appeals, especially to the pragma-dialectical concept of audience adaptation presented by van Eemeren (2010).

The present study aims at filling an apparent gap in research of rhetoric appeals to women in presidential candidates' debate speeches. Furthermore, this study discusses the present methodological dilemmas of analysing and categorising appeals.

In the second and third chapters, I will present key concepts of this study as well as present some of the most interesting studies on appealing to a specific audience. In the fourth chapter I will discuss the aims and research questions and describe the data. I will also discuss the method of analysis. In the fifth chapter, I will analyse my data using the pragma-dialectical approach by van Eemeren and Grootendorst and some aspects of presidential rhetoric analysis by Windt. In the sixth chapter, I will compare the results of the analysis on the two presidential candidates and present the similarities in their rhetoric as well as some differences. In the seventh chapter, I will discuss the overall results of this study and view them in the light of what is already known of the subject. I will especially discuss the studies I presented in the third chapter. I will also attempt to view the results of this study in a broader context and discuss their importance in the research of political rhetoric and appealing to a specific audience.

2. TELEVISED DEBATE AS A MEDIUM

This chapter will outline the nature of televised presidential debates, discuss the rules of the debate and the change in the audiences and argumentation, which has occurred along with the technological advancements. Some research on televised presidential debates is presented as well.

The 2012 presidential debates were broadcasted live to television audiences in the United States. 67 million Americans viewed the first presidential debate at home (Shapiro, 2012). Hellweg et al. (1992:xxi) argue that broadcasted presidential debates are not simply communication events, but uniquely television events. Similarly, Drucker and Hunold (1987:202) argue that these televised debates are a “new form of debate”. Drucker and Hunold have studied and discovered similarities between the televised presidential debates and television game shows (1987:202). Although the comparison between the two might seem unexpected, there are similar emotions at play, such as excitement, suspense, tension and amusement (1987:202).

Hellweg et al. (1992:xxi) argue that communication specialists have overlooked the importance of television in the presidential debates and often merely analysed the content. According to Hellweg et al. (1992:xxii) television “exercises influence in a manner that is more similar to interpersonal communication than to radio, print or traditional public address communication.” This is an interesting standpoint, and while I agree with the first two comparisons, radio and print media, I am not convinced that television debates necessarily differ from traditional address communication as much as Hellweg et al. (1992) present. The comparison between televised debates and interpersonal communication is not necessarily successful, as televised events lack the aspect of responding in mutual interaction. Televised debates include a communicator and an audience while interpersonal communication situations include two communicators.

Traditional debates consist of five elements: 1) a confrontation 2) in equal and adequate time 3) of matched contestants 4) on a stated proposition and 5) to gain an audience decision (Auer 1977: 142). Hellweg et al. argue that televised presidential debates do

not necessarily measure to these conditions (1992:22). Rather than describing them as debates Hellweg et al. argue that they often are “joint television appearances” that do not necessarily state propositions or engage in confrontational argumentation (1992:22). They argue that the television public is accustomed to brief presentations that contain entertainment value, and that the presidential candidates are more comfortable with the press conference format. According to the view, this has led to the current format of presidential debates, that shares only few similarities with the traditional debate (Hellweg et al. 1992:22-23).

The televised presidential debates are a restricted format. A coin toss before the debate determines the order in which the candidates respond to the questions. After the first turn, the candidates alternate turns. Each candidate receives two minutes to answer each question, after which the opposing candidate can respond in a one-minute turn, to which the moderator can at their discretion add an additional 30 seconds (Commission on presidential debates, 2012).

The time restrictions affect the arguments in the debates, and the candidates often resort to hastily assembled arguments, instead of carefully developed ones (Hellweg et al. 1992:24). Similarly, Meadow has criticised debates of offering the candidates a platform to present their “prepared remarks of the whistle-stop variety under the disguise of a debate” (1983:91). These remarks criticise the quality of the arguments and the overall quality of discussion.

While televised presidential debates are distinctly different from traditional debates, I argue that they have more in common with traditional debates than interpersonal communication, as argued by Hellweg et al. (1992:xxii). The entertainment value that televised presidential debates have does not necessarily diminish the importance of the content. Granted, arguments in the debates might be less carefully developed, as Hellweg et al. argued, or they might be too carefully prepared remarks disguised as debate, as Meadow argued. However, live television adds an element of surprise to the discussion. People’s “short attention span” and their expectations of a clash between the candidates might have changed the genre of the debate to be closer to an entertainment program than a serious political discussion. I argue that this is not necessarily a negative

development. The audience of the debates have grown during the recent years, and while the presidential debates have become popularised, they also have become popular. The 2008 presidential debate had an audience of 52 million, while the 2012 debate reached 67 million viewers (Shapiro, 2012). People's growing interest in politics and the popularisation of the presidential debate format seem to have occurred almost simultaneously.

3. APPEALING TO AN AUDIENCE

In this chapter I will clarify some of the important concepts discussed in this study and present some important and relevant previous studies in appealing to a specific audience and in political rhetoric. The studies that I have chosen reflect the state of research in the field. My study links to these studies, but is also adding to the body of knowledge on presidential rhetoric and audience awareness.

This section begins with the discussion of the term appeal, which is followed by a description of the term audience. At the end of this section, I will present previous studies on appealing, addressing and political rhetoric.

3.1. Appealing

Appealing is one of the key terms of this study. According to Oxford English Dictionary (2012), appealing is trying “to persuade someone to do something by calling on a particular principle or quality : *I appealed to his sense of justice.*”

Appeal is also a term that van Eemeren (2010: 4-5, 11-13) uses interchangeably with the term argument. For example, the argument from authority is also referred to as the appeal to authority (2010:4-5, 202-206).

According to van Eemeren (2010: 202-203) appealing is used in arguing, and not necessarily in persuading the audience. This is a significant difference of opinion between van Eemeren and previous researchers. Winston Brembeck and William Howell (1952:24) described the act of persuasion as a “conscious attempt to modify thought and action by manipulating the motives of men toward predetermined ends”. Van Eemeren (2010) seems to be of the opinion that besides carefully constructed arguments, the audience should not be further persuaded. Appealing, according to van Eemeren arises from the situation that there is a difference of opinion. As people are arguing their case, they are defending a standpoint that they believe is not shared by the addressee (2010: 3). Van Eemeren does make the concession that argumentation, or

appealing, can be also used in “getting certain judgements approved and making certain actions happen.” (2010:3).

Another view on appealing is by Fotheringham (1966:7) , who argued that appealing is “a body of effects in receivers”. This view focuses entirely on the receiver and how the message is received by the audience. According to this view, even unintentional messages that are misunderstood by the receiver can be persuasion.

The different views on appealing that are presented above also reflect the changes in attitudes. Brembeck and Howell’s (1952) view is almost close to manipulation, but was a common perspective at the time. To Brembeck and Howell’s defence, they changed their description in the 1970’s. Van Eemeren’s (2010) view is humane and focuses on argumentation. Fotheringham’s (1966) view is also humane, but focuses entirely on the audience.

3.2. Audiences

Nightingale and Ross (2003:1) argue that audiences are unnatural phenomena. Audiences do not exist in nature, but are the result of civilisation and the development of technology. Technological developments have made it possible to address ever larger mass audiences.

According to Dickinson et al. (1998:xii) audiences can be viewed from three different perspectives: 1) audiences as societies, masses and publics 2) audiences as individuals, impacts and influences and 3) audiences as cultures, communities and families.

Depending on the chosen point of view, all of the mentioned views on audiences can be valid starting points. The present study, however, focuses on audiences as individuals or communities rather than masses.

The study of audiences has been quite established from the late 1940’s. There have been two approaches to the study of audiences, Merton and Lazarsfeld’s *content and response* analysis and audience measurement. Merton and Lazarsfeld’s analysis focused on the content of the message and the response of the audience. Audience measurement

associated success of the message with viewer ratings. The more people were watching, the more successful the campaign. Later, in the 1980's Hall presented the *encoding/decoding* model, which viewed the audience as a far more active participant in the process. *Encoding/decoding* includes the message and the interpretation, both of which are essential in the influencing process and essential in producing discourse (Nightingale and Ross 2033, 11-13.)

The models presented above are in many ways similar, even though they might have differences in some aspects as well. The models all focus on the effects of the message on the audience, and not the process of persuasion. Thus far, the study of audiences has mostly been concerned with measuring the views of the audience by polls and interviews to discover whether the messages have been persuasive or not (Nightingale and Ross, 2003:11-13). Dickinson et al. (1998:xi) argue that all media process research stems from the interest in the consequences. Therefore it is important to emphasise that the present study does not research audiences, but appealing to an audience. Even though I acknowledge the importance of the consequences of political rhetoric, it must be stated that the present study is distinctly a rhetoric analysis, and not audience analysis.

Peter Dahlgren (1998:298) argues that only a few decades ago, the research of audiences used to be unproblematic. The study of audiences was expensive, but the processes had a "common-sense quality". Researchers studied the size, composition and responses of the audience. The contemporary research landscape, Dahlgren (1998:299) argues, has become heterogeneous. Even the ideological grounds of audience research are questioned in the present atmosphere, i.e. what kind of information is even possible to gain of audiences and what kind of knowledge is desirable (1998:298). Even the definition of an audience is expanding and changing (1998:298), which is discussed more in the following section.

3.2.1. Fragmentation of audiences

John Fiske (1998) represents the new view of audiences, and argues that audiences

negotiate and renegotiate power, and that they represent a plurality of “social domination”, which includes the economic sphere, but also gender and race (1998:300).

According to Fiske (1998:198), different audiences worldwide only signal the different audiences within a country, and that people of different subcultures use different discursive practises and ideological frames in decoding messages. Fiske further argues that ideology is an important part of the whole appealing process (1998:200). He suggests that an argument can only appeal to a variety of audiences if there is a common ideological frame that the audience recognise, even if they do not agree with it. (1998:200).

Fiske’s view is radical, as he combines the ideological aspect of the theory with the idea of capitalist hegemony and criticises the use of power in the current state (1998:198-204). According to some critics, instead of advocating an active audience, he presents a “hyperactive audience” (1998:300). However, I would argue that Fiske’s view of the audience is closer to the reality than the previous attempts to understand the public. The fragmentation of audiences is recognised in other aspects of television and media studies (Tewksbury, 2005), and even though Fiske’s view has some radical aspects, it offers a perspective to a phenomenon that is also otherwise recognised.

3.3. Previous research on appealing

In this section I will present some of the most interesting previous studies on appealing and addressing. I will begin by discussing race-based appeals, after which I will present the study of addressing women. I will end the section with a feminist criticism of the current field, which also serves as an introduction to the next chapter.

3.3.1. Race-based appeals

As argued previously by Fiske (1998:300), the plurality of audiences is reflected in economic status but also particularly in gender and race. McIlwain and Caliendo (2011) have written about the race aspect in appealing in U.S. political campaigns. This is

especially interesting from the perspective of the present study, as there seems to be a lack of similar studies on appealing to female audiences.

According to the study (2011: 16), there are race-based appeals and racist appeals. McIlwain and Caliendo use the term race-based appeal to signify “racialised message” without any expectation of the intended audience or effect. Racist appeal, however, uses race as a political strategy, often to the disadvantage of minorities (2011: 16). Race-based appeals can be representations of for example black communities that base on two rhetoric strategies: unity references and counter-stereotype references (2011: 188). Unity references apply such phrases as “we, unite America, end division” etc. Counter-stereotype references used expressions such as: “Harvard Law School, rooted in our values, hard work, faith, honest answers” etc. McIlwain and Caliendo also studied racist appeals that were used in attacking candidate Obama in 2008 elections. They found that Obama was depicted in rhetoric as ‘the other’, as elitist, as Muslim, as un-American, as liberal, as child and as untrustworthy (2011: 204-211).

McIlwain and Caliendo use Tali Mendelberg’s definition of a race-based appeal: “constructed through oblique, racially coded language, images or (more effectively) a combination of the two” (2011: 12). Therefore, images and racially-coded language were the main focus points of their study. McIlwain and Caliendo also acknowledge that not nearly enough is known about nature of appeals (2011: 6) and that there seems to be a lack of an appropriate method to study them (2011: 12). This is also argued by Dickinson et al. (1998:xi), who state that the field is defined by the variety of approaches.

In their study, McIlwain and Caliendo mostly focus on advertisements, but also discuss rhetorics. As a method they use the analysis of visual cues but also of narrative, which they argue is essential in discovering the racialised appeals (2011: 13). McIlwain and Caliendo’s study is thematically close to the present study, and offers some assistance in defining appeals and in discovering the best method for analysing them, but nothing definite or inconclusive, which is typical to the field (Dickinson et al. 1998:xi).

McIlwain and Caliendo’s study is also susceptible to criticism as it relies on stereotypes and counter-stereotypes. They, for example, label honesty, hard work and success to be

counter-stereotype. This raises criticism of whose stereotypes are they representing, how were they measured and when. However, their study is important in creating discussion that can help determine the field better and even help negotiate some aspects of their analysis, as well as extend the study to other sub-audiences.

3.3.2. Reference to women

The present study examines the ways of appealing to female audiences. This includes the act of addressing and making reference to women. Susan Ehrlich (1991) has studied the ways that individual women are addressed to in different contexts. Ehrlich (1991:46) argues that men and women are addressed differently in speech and writing. According to Ehrlich (1991:46) women are addressed and designated by terms that are more familiar than those that are used for men. Terms of address are for example the names, titles, terms of endearment etc. that appear in communication with the person that the speaker is talking to. Terms of address are used when something is said *to* an individual or group, not when it is said *about* them. Terms of address carry information about the social relationship between the addresser and the addressee. In particular, asymmetrical terms of address reflect the unequal status of the parties (1991:46.) Ehrlich (1991:47) argues that in speech, women are referred to with more familiar terms than men. Usually this might be symptomatic of an equal and casual relationship, but Ehrlich argues that in the case of addressing women, it is symptomatic of a superior - subordinate relationship (1991:47).

Deborah Tannen (1990) has also discovered in researching talk-show hosts that they addressed men and women with PhD's differently. Men were referred to by their academic title, whereas women were referred to by their first name. According to Ehrlich (1991:47) this shows the difference in social statuses.

Ehrlich (1991:46-54) presents ways of addressing that can demonstrate a difference in status. They include: titles, names, labels and examples. Titles can include academic titles, professions and marital status. Ehrlich (1991:48) argues that the term *Ms* was developed in order to provide a parallel form to *Mr* and to avoid discrimination on the basis of marital status. Therefore, it can be argued that the nature of the English

language is sexist, as it provides different kinds of labels to women in order to indicate whether they are married or not and only one label for men, regardless of their marital status.

According to Ehrlich (1991:49) another indication of men's power is the tradition of addressing women with the first and last name of their spouse, for example: "Mrs. Henry Ross". Furthermore, addressing women with only their last name and at the same time addressing men with their full names or their surnames only can be an indication of unequal language. Ehrlich (1991:50) argues that male and female political figures receive a different linguistic treatment from the media. According to her, Geraldine Ferraro was described by the media in 1984 elections by labels, such as feisty, whereas her male counterparts were mainly described by their titles (1991:50).

Examples can also be signaling a difference in status, Ehrlich (1991:52) argues. Some examples reinforce stereotypes about men and women's roles, while others reveal misogynist attitudes or even explicitly represent violence against women (1991:52).

The difference of statuses can also be used in order to achieve goals besides establishing a difference in power. Kalbfleisch and Cody (1995) have studied the relationship between gender and power, and argue that for example, Bill Clinton used his wife as a way to promote gender equality in order to get in office (1995:3). "You do not have to tear a woman down in order to build a man up" Clinton argued during the campaign (1995:3). Kalbfleisch and Cody understood the statement as an appeal to female audiences (1995:3).

The ways of addressing women that Ehrlich (1991) presents offer an interesting viewpoint to the present study. While appealing according to van Eemeren (2011:4-5) contains much more than the act of addressing or referencing, it can be viewed as an essential part of it. Addressing women in speech can be an indication of the intended audience. Furthermore, Ehrlich's views on reinforcing stereotypes with examples and using labels when addressing women are interesting. Kalbfleisch and Cody's (1995) study also offers an interesting viewpoint and a great example of appealing to female audiences.

3.3.3. Addressivity and feminist critique

The term addressivity comes from Bakhtin (1986) and it is used of the words and structures of sentences which both address and anticipate a response. Bakhtin's point of view as well as the newer approaches, such as the pragma-dialectical, emphasise the communicative nature of rhetorics and argumentation. Rather than seeing it as a process in which the opinions of one party are imposed on another, they see it as "inviting" to adopt a standpoint (1995:5). Bakhtin's theory views people in a more positive light as a whole, it also has a co-operative quality.

The idea of invitationality was further developed by Foss and Griffin (1995: 2-18) who draw largely on feminist theory. They argue, for example, on abortion (1995:3): "In securing the adherence of women to these (abortion) laws, lawmakers have power over women and their lives". They also argue that the act of persuasion or "changing others" as they call it, establishes the power of the orator but in doing so, also diminishes the lives and views of other people (1995:3).

Foss and Griffin believe that at times persuasion is necessary, but the single goal of an orator is not to change and control others. (1995:4) Foss and Griffin's theory points to van Eemeren and Grootendorst's theory (1995) and has some similarities with it. Both theories criticise the view of the audience as "opponents" and support a more ethical take on rhetorics.

One could also argue that these newer theories that view argumentation and rhetoric as a co-operative practices adopt falsely the standpoint that rhetors have in mind in Foss and Griffin's case, common good and in van Eemeren and Grootendorst's case, the resolution of disputes. Examples from politics, business and even family life have shown many of us that not all communication is aiming towards a mutual understanding and that not all people are concerned with the common good. Sometimes people are confrontational on purpose, as Morris and Johnson argue (2012:403). However, this positive view on interpersonal communication is a refreshing take on the study of rhetoric and human communication. Foss and Griffin (1995) as well as van Eemeren (2010) challenge the previous study of rhetoric with a more positive view on human

interaction, and on the nature of people. This will be further discussed in the next chapter, as I will proceed to present the research design of the study and continue with presenting van Eemeren's approach to analysing arguments.

4. THE SET UP OF THE STUDY

In this chapter I will describe the aims and research questions of this study, present the methods of gathering data and outline the method of approach.

4.1. Aims and research questions

The aim of this study is to explore the use of rhetoric appeals to female audiences in the 2012 presidential candidates' speeches. Even though there are some texts about targeting rhetoric or making appeals to specific audiences, for example women (Kalbfleisch and Cody, 1995) and black communities (Charlton and Caliendo, 2011), the study of appealing to a specific audience is still quite new. To my knowledge there are no extensive studies on appealing to female audiences in a presidential debate, so therefore this kind of study is needed.

As the previous studies have mainly focused on race appeals in political campaigns and debates, I will discuss more the gender aspects in this context. I will attempt to find the means by which gender is created in rhetoric, if at all. My research questions for this study are as follows:

RQ1: Do the presidential candidates make appeals to female audiences?

RQ2: If so, what kinds of appeals do they use?

Even though the word 'appeal' can be described differently according to the chosen rhetorical analysis movement, in this context, the pragma-dialectical definition is suited. As explained in the previous chapter, pragma-dialectics views the term appeal as almost synonymous to the term argument. The term appeal is used by van Eemeren (2010: 4-5, 202-206) interchangeably with the term argument.

Audience is often thought of as one of the most important aspects that define an argument. For example, Tindale (2007:9) argues: "at the core of any account of argumentation that gives prominence to rhetoric is a fundamental accommodation of

audience”. This study will be relying on Fiske’s (1998) idea of the fragmented audience. Especially, I am interested in a sub-audience that consists of women.

The first research question is focused on finding the possible appeals in the presidential candidates’ rhetoric. The second research question is about discovering the nature of these appeals. In order to discover the kinds of appeals that the candidates use, I will use the pragma-dialectical approach and critical questions on presidential rhetoric as methods of analysis, but they will be presented at the end of this chapter.

4.2. Methods of gathering data

The data of this study consists of two of the three election debates aired during the autumn and winter 2012. The debates featured the two remaining candidates in the running to become the next President of United States, Barack Obama and Mitt Romney. Barack Obama as the representative of the Democratic Party and Mitt Romney as the representative of Republican Party. The debates were televised and had a large audience of 67 million voters (Shapiro, 2012). The outcome of the debates is discussed extensively in the American media and press and the debate is thought to have a significant effect on the outcome of the election (Scherer, 2012).

The debates covered varying topics: the first debate was about the economy and the second debate about internal affairs and the third debate about external affairs. During the process of selecting the data it became obvious that the third debate was not necessarily as suited for the purposes of this study as it did not contain as many references to women as the two previous debates. Thus, the data of this study consists of the debate about the current economic situation and the debate about internal affairs.

Debates as a medium are quite distinct from other social situations. According to the Commission of Presidential debates (2012), there are certain rules to be followed and a certain kind of conduct is expected from the audience, the chairperson and the candidates. The rules of the debate were described in more detail in chapter 2.

According to the rules of the debate (Commission of Presidential debates, 2012) , both candidates have two minutes on each topic and they are not to be disrupted at any point

of that two minutes. In the beginning of the broadcast, the audience members are told not to clap, laugh or make any kinds of sounds during the debate.

Topics interesting to women were featured in both of the debates. In the first debate the presidential candidates discussed economics and differences in income as well as the financial crisis from the family point of view. In the second debate the candidates discussed women quite a lot: there were questions about equal pay, for instance. All of the topics in the debates revolve around equality in society, differences in income, equal pay, health care, safety in society and employment.

The topic that was perhaps one of the most interesting ones from the perspective of appealing to women, was of addressing the question of equal pay to men and women. The section starts at 35 minutes into the second debate and lasts approximately ten minutes. The candidates both have two two-minute turns to answer the question. What is significant about this, is that the candidates asked more time in order to elaborate on the topic and express their standpoints in an appropriate manner. This signifies that the candidates find the topic important enough to stress it over other topics in the domestic issues-category.

The data were gathered by watching the televised debates and transcribing word for word the lines of the candidates. The data is limited to parts of the discussion that mention women. The entire data used for this study is around five pages in consided written form. In video this amounts to around 35 minutes of speech.

4.3. Methods of analysis

The study of appealing to women is still young, and there are no set methods of analysis. However, analysts can agree that it is important to study narrative, which McIlwain and Caliendo argue is essential in discovering appeals (2011: 13). The suggestion hardly limits the options for choosing a method, as there is a large variety of rhetoric analysis methods, as well as other methods to choose from. This study bases on a current trend in rhetorics, the pragma-dialectical approach by van Eemeren (2010), which was originally designed to help solve differences of opinion.

Previous studies by Morris and Johnson (2011:403-414) have shown that the pragma-dialectical approach (2010) can be used in order to analyse political debates. In order to gain a critical aspect to the analysis, Windt's (1986: 102-117) critical questions about presidential rhetoric are used. Windt's questions were designed to help analysts better evaluate the content of speeches and be critical towards argumentation, rather than merely describing it. Other analysts as well have discovered it important to combine the pragma-dialectical approach with another method. For example, Ihnen and Richardson (2011) have used the pragma-dialectical approach with critical discourse analysis.

The pragma-dialectical approach contains three main foci: topic selection, audience adaptation and presentational tools. Topical selection is about choosing the topics of discussion that an audience would find interesting, audience adaptation about finding the correct approach to the topic keeping in mind the audience, and presentational tools about the form of the message, for example, whether the rhetor chooses to use anecdotes or statistics to present the information (van Eemeren 2010: 95-111).

Van Eemeren (2010:126) argues, that in order to make effective appeals in a debate, the arguer must adapt his or her speech to an audience. This idea is very relevant to the present study as well, as its focus is discovering whether the presidential candidates put arguments forward in order to appeal to female audiences, and if so, in what ways. The ways of appealing can be discovered by applying the categories of presentational tools.

Van Eemeren (2010:108-113), depicts ways of adapting to an audience. He divides these examples according to the pragma-dialectical theory's stages of argumentation. In the beginning stages of the debate, one possible option is to avoid voicing out the difference of opinion, so that the audience is not clear on which stand they would adapt. In the argumentative stage of the debate, one possibility to appeal to the audience is to only mention starting points that the audience can easily accept. Another option is to only choose argumentative strategies that are known or of interest to the audience.

The appeals can be analysed by applying the presentational tools categories (Feteris et al. 2011:199) . These categories mainly focus on the types of arguments that are

“acceptable” or successful. Therefore the list is by no means complete, as it omits fallacies (errors in argumentation).

Table 1 presentational tools

symptomatic argumentation	Z is a symptom of Y
argumentation from authority	being uttered by A is an indication of being true
argumentation from meaning/definition	Z means Y
argumentation from cause to effect	Z generally causes Y
argumentation from effect to cause	Z generally has Y as a causal factor
pragmatic argumentation (positive/negative)	having desirable/ undesirable consequences, Z is a reason for doing/refraining from doing Y
argumentation from being a means to an end	being a means to an end, Z is a reason for doing Y
argumentation from the nobility of goal	contributing to a noble goal, Z is a reason for doing Y

Table 2 presentational tools

argumentation based on an analogy	X is similar to Z
argumentation based on the principle of fairness	X should be treated in a similar way as Z
argumentation based on the reciprocity principle	X should do for the other member of the pair whatever Z has done for the other member of the pair
argumentation from example	other members of a class have the same value as X

The argumentation scheme categories that van Eemeren presents in the previous table from the sign, causal relations and analogy arguments. Van Eemeren, Grootendorst and Henkemans (2002: 37-43) also further discuss the use of presentational tools. These additional ways of recognising persuasion include 1) textual context, 2) cultural context, 3) explanation, 4) elaboration, and 5) clarification (2002:37-43). According to van Eemeren, Grootendorst and Henkemans (2002:37) argumentation can be recognised from texts that explicitly express standpoints, from arguments that are framed in a way that suggests a standpoint or by recognising the use of a verbal pattern that is commonly used in expressing a point of view.

Even with the additions to the categories, the limitations of the categories are evident and reflected in especially van Eemeren's positive view of human interaction. Van Eemeren presents an ideal model of argumentation (2002:25-26), that depicts as a prescriptive and normative model. The model represents argumentation as it should be according to van Eemeren (2002:25-26). Van Eemeren also largely acknowledges fallacies (2002: 109-150) as flawed manners of argumenting. These fallacies are breaking the rules of argumentation that van Eemeren presents in his ideal model (2002:109). However, the model is concerned with logic and reason, and does not acknowledge argumentation types that are for example repetitive or emotional. These argumentation strategies are often effective, but they are not acknowledged by van Eemeren. For example, van Eemeren's theory (2002:109-120) depicts emotional appeals as fallacies, as they are not argumentative and can be beside the issue (breaking the rule of relevance).

This poses a dilemma between seemingly irrational arguments, which can also be effective, and argumentation that follows the rules of argumentation i.e. is logical, consistent and focused on the issue. Therefore further research is needed on the topic. I would argue that the dilemma between the rational appeals and the use of seemingly irrational appeals has to be resolved.

Van Eemeren, Grootendorst and Henkemans (2002:109-150) present the list of fallacies, which includes close to a hundred different kinds of errors of argumentation. The list is not included here, since it is so extensive.

Critical view by Windt

The needed critical aspect to the analysis comes from Theodore Otto Windt (1986), who states that the modern study of criticism of presidential speeches stems from the essays written on Richard Nixon's November 3rd 1969 speech on Vietnam (1986:105). He describes the method as "a significant critical methodology". This method consists of a set of questions, that the analysts have used in order to critically evaluate the arguments put forward. The questions include:

- (1) How are rhetorical strategies developed and adapted to persuade a target constituency (or constituencies) of the validity of the President's policy? And why were these chosen rather than others?
- (2) Is the speech internally consistent? If so, why? If not, why not?
- (3) Is the evidence cited by the President used truthfully, and is the rhetorical reality of the speech plausible?
- (4) What are the probable consequences of the speech on target constituencies that believe it, on adversaries who will oppose the President, on future policies, and on the development of our on-going political debates on the subject?
- (5) Why would supporters of the President believe the speech? Why would adversaries disbelieve it? And why would "waverers" be persuaded or not?
- (6) How does the speech fit into the political movement of which it is a part, or into the generic tradition from which it comes, or into the rhetorical biography of the President who gave it?

(Windt 1986:105)

These questions are a good compilation of the issues that the rhetoric tradition is interested in, such as soundness (truth value), validity (logical form), argument strategies, counter-arguments, as well as premises and ideologies behind the speech. These offer a good basis for the evaluation of the arguments.

The first question is to do with presentational tools, which is discussed in the presentation of the pragma-dialectical approach, and therefore is not explained any further in this section. The second question is important in discovering whether the

argumentation is logical. The third question poses the question of the truth value of the argument, and is also very important in the analysis of the arguments.

Questions number four and five are to do with the possible counter-arguments that can be made about the speech and the consequences of the speech. Question number six is to do with the premises and the ideologies behind the argument. It also allows the analyst to add any information they have about the context of the speech and the rhetorical biography of the president who gave it.

I will use these questions proposed by Windt in the critical evaluation of the analysis. However, not all of the questions are useful in all of the appeals. Only the questions that seem relevant to the argument are discussed in the evaluation.

To conclude, the arguments will be analysed in two parts. Firstly, the topic choice, audience adaptation and presentational tools of the argument are discussed. Secondly, the argument is critically evaluated using Windt's (1986) questions. The first part of the analysis is in order to be able to name and recognize the used appeals. The second part of the analysis is in order to be able to add a critical component to the analysis of the appeals, which would otherwise be merely descriptive.

5. ANALYSIS

In this chapter I will analyse the arguments presented in the 2012 presidential debates by Barack Obama and Mitt Romney. I have limited the data to include only arguments that mention women. I have divided the debate material into two parts: Barack Obama's argumentation and Mitt Romney's argumentation. The candidates are often answering to the same questions and are given an equal amount of time to answer, so there is approximately an equal amount of material on both candidates.

5.1. Obama's argumentation

A) A female member of the audience asks, what the candidates plan to do about women earning only 72% of what their male counterparts earn at workplaces

Obama: Well Cathryn, that's a great question. I was raised by a single mom, who had to put herself through school while looking after two kids. And she worked hard every day and had to make a lot of sacrifices to make sure we got everything we need. My grandmother. She started off as a secretary in a bank. She never got a college education, even though she was as smart as a whip. She worked her way up to become a vice president at a local bank, but she hit the glass ceiling. She trained people who would end up being her bosses during the course of her career. She didn't complain, that's not what you did in that generation. And this is one of the reasons the first bill I signed was something called the Lilly Ledbetter Bill, named after this amazing woman who had been doing the same job as a man for years, found out that she was getting paid less and the supreme court said she couldn't bring suit 'cos she should have found about it earlier but she had no way to finding about it. We fixed that.

Description of the argument

Obama firstly compliments the question and makes an effort to remember the name of the woman who put the question forward. This shows his interest in people, and makes the comment more personal as it is addressed to a specific person.

After the introduction, Obama proceeds to make his point. He tells personal anecdotes about his upbringing: about how his mother had to make many sacrifices and about his grandmother, who was smart and industrious, but did not manage to get pass the 'glass

ceiling'. These personal experiences, he gives as grounds for signing the Lilly Ledbetter bill, a bill that allows women to sue their workplaces if there is evidence of unequal pay. The use of anecdotes, that are essentially appeals to emotions, facilitate the appeal to sense of justice that concludes the statement.

Topic choice

Obama chooses to address the issue of equal pay with several personal anecdotes. He also directs the audience's attention to a bill that he signed. He addresses the question that was asked, but also adds new aspects to the discussion. He is able to choose the topics that he discusses within the limitations of the debate.

Obama:

- 1) **appeal to flattery (fallacy)** Well Cathryn, that's a great question.
- 2) **argument from example, personal anecdote** I was raised by a single mom, who had to put herself through school while looking after two kids. And she worked hard every day and had to make a lot of sacrifices to make sure we got everything we need.
- 3) **argument from example, anecdote** My grandmother. She started off as a secretary in a bank. She never got a college education, even though she was as smart as a whip. She worked her way up to become a vice president at a local bank, but she hit the glass ceiling. She trained people who would end up being her bosses during the course of her career. She didn't complain, that's not what you did in that generation.
- 4) **argument from example, anecdote** And this is one of the reasons the first bill I signed was something called the Lilly Ledbetter Bill, named after this amazing woman who had been doing the same job as a man for years, found out that she was getting paid less and the supreme court said she couldn't bring suit 'cos she should have found about it earlier but she had no way to finding about it. We fixed that.

Presentational tools

In this example, Obama uses plenty of anecdotes as presentational tools. The argument begins with meta-talk about the importance of the topic. Then he presents three cases or examples of women, who have in one way or another suffered from injustice: his mother, his grandmother and a woman called Lily Ledbetter. The argument ends with a concluding statement that emphasizes Obama's involvement in the issue.

Anecdotes are effective presentational tools, but they are also mainly appealing to emotion. In this case the objective is to appeal to the sense of justice in the audience, and therefore the descriptions of unfair treatment of women can be used to evoke feelings of anger and compassion for those that have been unjustly treated.

The examples of Barack Obama's mother and grandmother can be seen as something more than just examples of two women. The anecdotes can be seen as metaphors for generations of women facing injustice. The difference between saying 'generations of women' and essentially 'my mother, and possibly yours as well' is significant. The argument comes closer to the audience, and it forces audience members to acknowledge their own heritage and the emotions associated with it.

The wording or 'framing' of the phrase 'we fixed that' also draws comparisons to Obama's 2008 campaign motto 'Yes, we can'. Framing is a device used to import the meaning of one phrase to another context in order to create the wanted associations in the minds of the audience members (van Eemeren 2010: 216). In this case, the association is emphasising communality and ability to achieve goals.

Audience adaptation

In relation to the audience, the argument has three parts. In the first part, president Obama addresses the woman asking the question. He calls her by her name, Cathryn. This first part is addressed to her, but is also a representation of politeness on his part.

After the first part, which lasts only for the first sentence, begins the second part. In the second part, Barack Obama addresses all listeners. He does not point to any specific group and mainly refers to himself and his mother, grandmother and Lilly Ledbetter. In telling the personal anecdotes, he positions himself as a storyteller and the audience as listeners. In the third part, the pronoun 'I' has been changed to a 'we'. It is not explained, who are the members of the group 'we'. One can assume that 'we' in this context refers to Obama himself and his administration. Although, leaving the exact members of the group 'we' unmentioned gives room for interpretation. If the listener

decides that having voted Obama in the last election has contributed to the passage of the Lilly Ledbetter bill, they can include themselves in this group as voters.

Critical evaluation of the argument

The argument presented is an enthymeme, which means that the chain of deduction is incomplete, because the main premise is left unvoiced. The anecdotes of the women presented in the argument are a set-up for the main premise that no one should experience discrimination based on their gender.

The argument presents women in a very positive light. Obama shares his positive experiences of hard-working and intelligent women, who should have deserved better than what they received in life. Obama uses the word 'amazing' to describe Lilly Ledbetter. He associates sacrifice and women, especially when talking about the equation of work and children in the examples of his mother and grandmother.

Obama's argumentation is based on inductive reasoning. He presents examples of women: his mother, his grandmother and a woman called Lilly Ledbetter. To answer Windt's (1986) second question about whether the appeal is logical, the answer is clear: yes. However, there are some rhetorians, who argue that inductive reasoning is not logically adequate, but as most rhetorians, including van Eemeren (2010:23) include argument from example to be of acceptable form, it is also considered that way in this context.

Answering Windt's third question about whether the appeal is truthful might pose a difficult dilemma, as Obama does not actually answer to the question. The question was what the candidates plan to do in order to solve the problem of unequal pay. Obama's response is focusing on a bill he signed in the beginning of his first term. Obama's plan of action, according to this statement, seems to be dealing more with the consequences, and less with the actual issue. The soundness (truth value) of the argument can be questioned as it breaks the starting point rule of Pragma-dialectics, and is not dealing with the issue at hand.

However, Obama has already served one term as the President of the United States, and has the burden of proof to show that the issue is of interest to him. Therefore, he presents the audience with a more concrete example of what he has achieved already, rather than the requested plan for action.

B) Obama returns to the subject of equal pay in his next statement.

Women are increasingly the breadwinners of the family. This is not just a women's issue. This is a family issue. This is a middle class issue. And that's why we got to fight for it.

Description of the argument

In the extract he widens the concept of “women’s issues” to involve the women’s husbands and their families. Obama encourages men to take into account the loss in wages that contributes to their household economy. He does this by using repetition as a way to emphasise his main argument: the effects of unequal pay are not restricted to women, families suffer as well.

Topic choice

This statement is presented in another context. Obama therefore chooses to return to discuss the topic of equal pay, even though he had moved on in the discussion. This can be viewed as emphasising the importance of the issue.

1) argumentation from cause to effect, argument from repetition (fallacy) Women are increasingly the breadwinners of the family. This is not just a women's issue. This is a family issue. This is a middle class issue. And that's why we got to fight for it.

Presentational tools

The argument starts with a qualifier. Women are increasingly *the breadwinners of the family*. This statement is in contrast with the stereotypical perception of the man as the provider of the family. Men have traditionally had more demanding tasks, and higher

paychecks as well. Obama is acknowledging a change in the dynamics of the family by saying that “women are increasingly the breadwinners of the family” The term breadwinner suggests the family’s highest earner, the person who brings home the bread. Obama is using framing, also known as wording, as a tool to associate women with a traditionally masculine role: the breadwinner. The association is empowering women by representing them as the providers.

After the qualification and validation of women as the breadwinners, Obama proceeds to broaden the discussed issue to concern also men. He uses repetition as an effective presentational tool to convey this message. For repetitive purposes, Obama does not say: “This isn’t”, which is quite common in spoken language. Instead, he uses “This is not”, because it is followed by two more sentences starting with “this is”. The word “issues” is also repeated three times. There are some interesting studies made about the so called “rule of three”, which is widely used in comedy and public speaking. Political scientist Max Atkinson, for example (1984), gives several examples of politicians who frequently use the rule of three in their speeches, including Martin Luther King Jr. and Winston Churchill. The sentences are also kept short to maximise the rhetorical power, so that the repeated parts are close to each other.

At the end of the argument Obama suggest a plan for action. “We got to fight for it”. The basic goal of all rhetoric is to evoke action in the audience, and this is a clear invitation to act. As he has first explained the men in the audience that the women’s issue affects them as well, he pleads for them to act, as if their own rights were violated.

Also, using the word ‘fight’ in political context rather than in military context, underlines the powerful nature of the message, and it is making use of framing as a tool. It is not likely that president Obama suggests that men and women become violent in their pursue of equal pay, instead it is used as a figure of speech to describe the persistence and determination with which this issue can be dealt. The association brings vehemence to the argument.

The argument is an incomplete one, and the deduction part of the argument is omitted and left to the audience. The links between unequal pay not being just a women’s issue,

but a family issue and a middle class issue are not elaborated on in any way. The cause-to-effect reasoning, which is implied in the argument is implicit, even though it is understood by the audience. By spelling out the implied message of the argument the cause-to-effect structure of the argument becomes evident: women contribute to the family's income. If women's pay is lower, the family's income is lower. This affects many middle class families in America, and we want to do something about it.

Audience adaptation

The extract has different audiences. Firstly, Obama speaks to women, and of women. Saying that women are increasingly the breadwinners of the family is a compliment of sorts to women, even if it is based on a statistical fact. It acknowledges women and their contribution to the family's income.

After the first sentence, which is directed to women, Obama changes the focus and addresses families and middle class. Obama is already talking to women, so to widen his audience, he has to include men. However, he does not say: "This is not only a women's issue. This is a men's issue." The audience of the debate is not likely to include children, and at any rate, children are not voters. It is unclear, why the word "family" occurs instead of "men", which is likely to be the real target audience of the sentence. This might be in order to acknowledge gay couples and to maintain a level of political correctness, or to be conscious of not undermining the so called "women's issues" by likening them to "men's issues".

In the last part of the argument, the audience changes again. Obama uses the word "we" to include himself in the audience, and to achieve a level of familiarity with the audience. Obama uses the word "we" quite often and especially in expressions that refer to action. Using the word "we" creates a sense of belonging to a large group of people that can achieve great things, which creates an image of power and possibility.

Critical evaluation of the argument

According to Rieke and Sillars (2012:8), the premises of the argument have to be accepted by the audience in order for the argument itself to be convincing. In this case, the premise is voiced. Obama starts the speech with expressing his premise: women are increasingly the breadwinners of the family. In order for the rest of the argument to be convincing and powerful, the audience needs to agree that women are increasingly the breadwinners of the family.

Obama omits the deduction chain entirely in this argument. He is talking to men and middle class families, arguing that they are losing money by accepting the existence of unequal pay. Rather than explaining his first argument, “women are increasingly the breadwinners of the family”, he supports the claim with yet another claim: “this is not just a women’s issue, this is a family issue.” This second claim is followed by more claims: “this is a middle class issue” and: “that’s why we got to fight for it”.

However, Obama does return to the subject later on in the debate. When the issue is raised again, it is important to note that Obama uses almost the exact same wordings as he did the first time. Later on he also explains the reasoning more clearly and does not omit the connections.

Windt’s (2013:105) sixth question, which is: “How does the speech fit --- into the rhetorical biography of the President who gave it?” is answered by a similar argument Obama made in a Ohio University. He said: I’ve got two daughters. I don’t want them paid less than a man for doing the same job. And by the way you men out there, you don’t want your wives paid less for doing the same job.”

In this argument, he is expanding his rhetoric on the topic. He is voicing out his intended message, which is essentially the same as in the example from the debate. In the example from Ohio, he is clearly voicing out the target audiences: women and married men.

Windt's second question about the internal consistency of the speech would be the weakness of the argument. As explained earlier, nothing is exactly argued, but matter-of-factly claims follow one another. Claims are used to back up other claims, which makes for an invalid argument. This does not necessarily signify that the argument is unconvincing, it merely signifies that it is not of logical form.

Even if the argument in itself is not carefully constructed, and is therefore invalid, there seems to be no reason to suspect that it is not sound (truthful). Following Windt's question number three (1986:105): "Is the evidence cited by the President used truthfully, and is the rhetorical reality of the speech plausible?", there is no reason to believe that women are not increasingly the breadwinners of the family, and that unequal pay would not have an effect on families. Therefore the argument is sound.

C) President Obama's next turn is included here in two parts in order for the analysis to be more easily approachable. I have marked the parts of the speech 1) and 2) and I will be analysing them separately.

1) Obama: when governor Romney was asked about the Lilly Ledbetter bill, whether he supported it, he said let me get back to it, and that's not the kind of advocacy women need in any economy. Now, there are some other issues that have a bearing on how women how women succeed in the workplace. For example, their health care. A major difference in this campaign is that governor Romney feels comfortable having politicians in Washington decide the health care choices that women are making. I think that's a mistake. In my health care bill, I said insurance companies need to provide contraceptive coverage to everybody, who's insured. Because this is not just a health care issue, it's an economic issue for women. It makes a difference. This is money out of that family's pocket. Governor Romney not only opposed it, he in fact suggested that employers should be able to make the decision as to whether or not a woman gets contraception through her insurance coverage. That's not the kind of advocacy that women need.

Description of the first part of Obama's argument

Instead of arguing for his goals, plans and ideologies, president Obama seems to be arguing against Romney, using clash-strategies. Clash-strategies are ways of establishing difference of opinion by creating tension (Morris and Johnson 2011:404).

The chosen the line of argument (topic choice according to pragma-dialectics) is representing the opponent in an unfavourable light.

Obama starts by referring to the Lilly Ledbetter bill, and explains the candidates' differences of opinion about the bill. Then he takes on another topic, healthcare, and describes Romney's attitude towards it: "Romney feels comfortable having politicians in Washington decide...". He ends the argument by expressing how important he believes the health care bill is, and by making a face-threatening act to his opponent, as he argues that Romney's kind of advocacy is "not the kind of advocacy that women need". Face-threatening acts are "threatening acts toward one another" (Mills, 2003:6), and in this case used to represent the opponent negatively.

Topic choice

In this statement, topic choice is important. Obama chooses to discuss Romney's policy in the context of equal pay, rather than discuss his own policies. Furthermore, the statement also changes the topic of discussion and directs it towards healthcare. Obama is therefore able to choose the topic within the limitations of the debate.

Obama:

1) ad hominem (=arguing against the persona of the opponent) (fallacy) When governor Romney was asked about the Lilly Ledbetter bill, whether he supported it, he said let me get back to it, and that's not the kind of advocacy women need in any economy.

2) Ignoratio elenchi (=changing the topic of discussion) (fallacy) Now, there are some other issues that have a bearing on how women how women succeed in the workplace. For example, their health care.

3)Equivocation (=the use of a term with more than one meaning) (fallacy) A major difference in this campaign is that governor Romney feels comfortable having politicians in Washington decide the health care choices that women are making. I think that's a mistake.

4) argument based on the principle of fairness In my health care bill, I said insurance companies need to provide contraceptive coverage to everybody, who's insured.

5) argument from cause to effect, argument from repetition (fallacy) Because this is not just a health care issue, it's an economic issue for women. It makes a difference. This is money out of that family's pocket. Governor Romney not only opposed it, he in fact

suggested that employers should be able to make the decision as to whether or not a woman gets contraception through her insurance coverage.

6) argument from repetition (fallacy) That's not the kind of advocacy that women need.

Presentational tools

President Obama raises the issue of Lilly Ledbetter in this argument as well, and presents the matter as his strong point and Romney's weakness. Obama's open criticism of the opponent is evident in the repeating of the phrase: "that's not the kind of advocacy women need."

Obama then leads the discussion to health care, with a claim that how women succeed at workplaces has something to do with their health care. The connection between the two things is not clear to the audience, and Obama does not elaborate on it to make the connection more clear. He presents his idea about making it mandatory for workplaces to provide contraceptives to women. This relates to Meadow's criticism of debates as a platform for candidates to present their "prepared remarks of the whistle-stop variety under the guise of a debate" (1983:91). The change of topic might be an indication of a carefully prepared remark or it might be an important addition to the discussion, depending on the point of view.

Obama seems to be talking about a specific area of health care: contraception and abortion, using the hypernym: healthcare. This intentional vagueness is a presentational strategy, as it is refraining of making any value-laden claims about the subjects. As even the mentioning of the word 'abortion' might estrange some voters, Obama chooses the more modest version: a healthcare choice. The meaning of the sentence is conveyed even without explicitness.

Obama poses a face-threatening act (Mills, 2003) on Romney by saying that "he feels comfortable letting politicians in Washington decide the healthcare choices that women are making". He is suggesting that Romney does not care about women's self-determination. In the process, Obama ends up representing women as susceptible to influence. He does not explain, how is it even possible for politicians in Washington to

decide women's health care choices. Suggesting this would signify that women have no real control over their bodies. This statement faces the criticism presented by Ehrlich (1991:52), who criticises the representation of women in roles that makes them appear weak in comparison to men. Even though in the previous argument, Obama represented women as strong individuals and "breadwinners", and the objective of this argument is to represent governor Romney in a negative light, the argument still functions as a representation of weakness in women. These possibly even sub-conscious representations of gender are interesting to researchers, as they often might reveal even more than the conscious ones.

What is noticeable about the argumentation strategies in this argument, is that according to van Eemeren, Grootendorst and Henkemans (2002:109-150) most of the arguments are fallacies, i.e. argumentation mistakes. This does not necessarily depict the argument the right way.

Audience adaptation

Obama seems to be talking to multiple audiences in this example. He is directing his words to women in expressions such as: "it is an economic issue for women", "health care choices that women are making" and "that's not the kind of advocacy women need", but also to families: "that's money out of that family's pocket". In these examples he is explicitly mentioning the target audience.

The argumentative strategies that are chosen in the example argument are also showing adaptation to the audience. Van Eemeren (2010:108-113) argues that for example being hesitant of expressing a difference of opinion can function as an appeal to audience. I argue that Obama's choice to use the phrasing "healthcare choice" is such an appeal. It is also using framing as a tool to associate the meaning to positive connotations, such as health, taking care of one's body etc., instead of the negative connotations such as contraception, abortion etc. Refraining of making the negative connotations is a way of representing the issue in such a form that the audience can easily accept it.

Critical evaluation of the argument

Studying closely this particular example, one can find several arguments instead of just one cohesive argument. As explained earlier, there are, in fact, seven arguments in this short statement. The speech is also combining topics and leading the topic of discussion from equal pay to healthcare. The arguments made in the extract all support the same claim or premise: Romney's kind of advocacy is not the kind of advocacy that women need.

Because there are several arguments in the example, Windt's (1986) questions have to be evaluated on each argument. The first real argument made in the extract is the argument about women's healthcare, which according to Obama has a bearing on how women succeed in the workplace. Another argument in the extract is that offering contraceptive care on workplaces makes a difference in a family's finances. However, the main argument behind these supportive arguments is that Governor Romney's kind of advocacy is not the kind of advocacy that women need. This statement is expressed twice: in the beginning and in the end of the argument. The repetition emphasises the importance of the topic.

Windt's (1986:105) third question about the truthfulness of the argument is questioned by Romney, who later states that "the president's statement of my policy is completely and totally wrong". Romney's statement seems to be disputing Obama's argument. Access to the actual truth on the matter is probably not even possible to gain, but in this context, it is enough to state that the soundness (truth value) of the argument can be questioned.

Even the validity (logical consistency) of these arguments is susceptible to critique. This is answering Windt's (1986:105) question number two about whether the speech is internally consistent. In this case, the connection between healthcare and equal pay is less evident than presented in the argument. There might be a logical connection between the two, but this connection is not presented to the audience, making the logic of the argument susceptible to criticism.

D) Second part of the argument

2) When Governor Romney says we should eliminate funding for planned parenthood, there are millions of women all across the country, who rely on planned parenthood on not just contraceptive care, they rely on it for mammograms, cancer screenings, that's a pocketbook issue for women and families all across the country, and it makes a difference in how well and effectively women are able to work. When we talk about childcare and the credits we're providing, that makes a difference in whether or not they can go out there and earn a living for their family. These are not just women's issues. These are family issues. These are economic issues. And one of the things that makes us grow as an economy is when everybody participates and women are getting the same fair deal as men are. And I got two daughters and I wanna make sure they get the same opportunity that anybody's sons have. That's a part of what I'm fighting for as the President of the United States.

Description of the argument

In this part, president Obama establishes that Romney is against funding for Planned Parenthood, and that he himself is for it. He points out the importance of this issue by presenting statistical evidence on the exact number of women who rely on Planned Parenthood for contraceptive care. Obama's main objective is to draw the audience's attention to the differences between the two candidates. Obama discusses the positive aspects of Planned Parenthood, such as contraceptive care and mammograms and cancer screenings, which all have an impact on the family's finances. This is also drawing attention to the differences in the candidates' opinions about birth regulation.

Obama also insinuates the loss in national productivity in the case of women, who are not on contraceptive care. "It makes a difference in how well and effectively women are able to work" he states of contraceptive care. He continues: "And one of the things that makes us grow as an economy is when everybody participates." This statement suggests that the less time women spend on maternity leaves, the more time they can spend working. The statement emphasises economic values and presents women from the point of view of economic productivity.

Topic choice

The topic of discussion evolves even further in this statement. Obama still argues against Romney's policies on reproductive health, but also begins to discuss the economic aspect of health care. Obama seems to be in control of the topics of discussion.

Obama:

- 1) argument from cause to effect** When Governor Romney says we should eliminate funding for planned parenthood, there are millions of women all across the country, who rely on Planned Parenthood on not just contraceptive care, they rely on it for mammograms, cancer screenings,
- 2) appealing to a personal gain, cause to effect-argument** that's a pocketbook issue for women and families all across the country, and it makes a difference in how well and effectively women are able to work.
- 3) effect to cause-argument** When we talk about childcare and the credits we're providing, that makes a difference in whether or not they can go out there and earn a living for their family.
- 4) argument from repetition (fallacy)** These are not just women's issues. These are family issues. These are economic issues.
- 5) argument from common good, argument from the principle of fairness** And one of the things that makes us grow as an economy is when everybody participates and women are getting the same fair deal as men are.
- 6) argument from example** And I got two daughters and I wanna make sure they get the same opportunity that anybody's sons have.
- 7) argument from authority** That's a part of what I'm fighting for as the President of the United States.

Presentational tools

One of the main argumentation techniques that Obama uses in this extract is tautology. He repeats parts of the sentence: "These are not just women's issues. These are family issues. These are economic issues." By repeating the structure of the sentences he manages to make them powerful. First he tells the audience what these issues are not: just women's issues. Then he proceeds to tell them what they are: family issues and economic issues. He manages to talk about an issue that has traditionally been important to only about a half of the audience, in a manner that suggests that it is important to

everybody. Instead of only appealing to women, Obama appeals to the entire audience. Men who have wives are also a target group, because according to Obama, it makes a difference in their personal finances as well.

Obama argues for the small pocketbook issue of paid for contraception, but seems to be emphasising its importance more than seems relevant. Even though Obama does not actually voice it, he might be referring to the loss of income in a family when a woman falls pregnant. He is possibly not emphasising the importance free contraception after all, but the possibility of both spouses working outside the house, therefore making more families in America two-income families. When he refers to the pocketbook issue, he is actually referring to the hours that women are able to work. Having a child ensures that a woman is not able to work for several months. Obama says of contraception: “--- it makes a difference in how well and effectively women are able to work.”

One of the possible reasons why president Obama wants to point out the importance of Planned Parenthood and emphasise its importance, is because governor Romney so clearly sees no value in the system and wants to dismantle it. This offers Obama the opportunity to draw attention to the differences between the candidates. Emphasising the differences of opinion between the candidates is a strategy that Obama uses throughout the debate.

Obama also argues for childcare, as he says : ”that makes a difference in whether or not they can go out there and earn a living for their family”. He is promoting women’s employment, because it also makes a difference in the national finances. “One of the things that makes us grow as an economy is when everybody participates” Obama states. This argument is based on the presumption that the more people are able to work, the more national productivity rises.

At the end of the argument, Obama changes the focus from national issues back to the personal perspective. “And I got two daughters and I wanna make sure they get the same opportunity that anybody's sons have”. This statement is emphasising Obama’s “man of the people”-status. It is quite clear that the President's daughters do not have the same opportunities that anybody’s sons have - the President’s daughters’ opportunities are quite significantly better. Obama disregards his status and importance for rhetorical

effect. He is showing personal interest in the issue, which on the one hand is moving and effective, but on the other hand the appeal does not survive counter-arguments.

Audience adaptation

In this turn there seem to be two audiences. At first Obama addresses the whole audience, even though he is talking about women's issues. He explains why Planned Parenthood is important to many women and also why it should be important to many men as well.

President Obama does not make the traditional distinction between men and women, even though it is implied. Instead of saying 'men', Obama talks about 'families'. He explicitly defines the audience by saying: "-- that's a pocketbook issue for women and families all across the country". Obama includes men with some restrictions to the audience: men who are in a relationship with a woman. This relies on stereotypes of a traditional family and excludes gay couples. Obama also states: "these are not just women's issues. These are family issues." He therefore argues for the argument that women's financial issues are often also family issues, and according to the statement, many families across the United States have more than just one provider.

In passing, Obama also mentions the topic of equal pay: "--and women are getting the same fair deal as men are. " This part of the turn seems to be more clearly directed to women. The statement is not argued for in the same way that the other statements that carry similar kind of meaning are argued for. Granted, it could be that Obama realised the lack of time at the end of his two-minute turn and therefore did not have time to argue extensively for this statement. However, after this statement he returns to the previous subject and shares an anecdote of his own daughters. The personal anecdote shows his personal perspective on gender equality as a father. The choice of argumentative strategies in the example suggests that Obama prefers personal anecdotes over the traditional claim-support -model, especially when the target audience appears to be women.

In this second part of the argument, Obama makes a clearer distinction between men and women. Whereas at the first part of the argument men and women were ‘on the same team’ in his rhetoric, in the second part, men and women are rivals. Women want the ‘same fair deal’ that men have. This change in rhetoric is also signaling a change in audience. The juxtaposition of men and women seems to be advanced as an argument in order to appeal to women, as the female perspective is represented more strongly. In this rhetoric, women demand the same opportunities that men have, which requires unity within the sub-group of women. This creates the perspective that men and women have opposite interests.

Critical evaluation of the argument

In this turn, Obama is arguing for many issues, but the one that I would choose as the most important one is the argument that states: women should be able to work. Obama is arguing for this premise from many different perspectives. He is arguing for childcare, so that women could be able to work instead of only taking care of the children. In addition, he is also arguing for contraceptive care, so that women could be able to work instead of being on a maternity leave. He is referring to the economic growth, which according to Obama is only possible “if everybody participates”. Work is obviously an important value to President Obama. The importance of the appeal is argued for from two different perspectives. It is important because of its impact on national economy, but it is also important because of its impact on the family’s economy.

The argument is well structured and valid (of logical form), which answers Windt’s (1986:105) question number two of the internal consistency of the speech. The argument for Planned Parenthood is actually one of the best arguments Obama makes in the data. It is argued for logically from many different viewpoints. It can also be considered sound (truthful), as the information presented in the argument can be difficult to refute.

However, one could question whether the rhetoric reality presented in the argument is consistent with the actual reality (Windt’s question number three 1986:105). Obama paints a picture in which Planned parenthood makes a significant difference in a family’s economic situation, as well as in the national economic situation. It could be

argued that Planned Parenthood and Obama's healthcare bill, are of course important issues, but perhaps not as important economically as for example equal pay. The argumentation therefore could be considered to be on the verge of derailment, as the importance of topics is not necessarily in the correct proportion. However, this aspect is open to interpretation and debate.

5.2. Romney's argumentation

E) The following argument is Romney's answer to an audience question about what the candidates plan to do about women making only 72% of what their male counterparts earn at workplaces.

I have divided Romney's speech into two parts in order to facilitate the analysis.

1) Romney: Important topic. And one which I learned a great deal about particularly when I was serving as a governor of my state. Because I had the chance to pull together a cabinet, and all the applicants seemed to be men. And I went to my staff and I said how can all the people for these jobs be men and they said well these are the people with the qualifications. And I said well gosh, can't we find some women, who are also qualified? And we took our concerted effort to go and find women who had backgrounds that could be qualified to become members of our cabinet. I went to a number of women's groups and said can you help us find folks and they brought us all binders full of women. It was part of the fact that after I staffed my cabinet and my senior staff that the University of New York in Albany did a survey of all 50 states and concluded that mine had more women in senior leadership positions than any state in America.

Description of the argument

Romney begins his turn by emphasising the importance of the topic. Then he commences the argumentation, which occurs in form of an anecdote. Romney narrates about the situation he had during his term as a Governor, when he had to staff his cabinet. According to Romney, all of the applicants seemed to be male, which dissatisfied him. Romney then tells of his decision to find female employees from women's offices. At the end of this anecdotal section of the argument is statistical evidence about his state having the most female leaders in America.

Topic choice

Topic choice is an important aspect of this statement. Romney chooses to discuss the

topic of equal pay from the point of view of employer. He chooses to emphasise equality over competence in recruiting staff.

1) appeal to authority Important topic, and one which I learned a great deal about particularly when I was serving as a Governor of my state. Because I had the chance to pull together a cabinet, and all the applicants seemed to be men.

3) argument from example, personal anecdote And I went to my staff and I said how can all the people for these jobs be men and they said well these are the people with the qualifications. And I said well gosh, can't we find some women, who are also qualified? And we took our concerted effort to go and find women who had backgrounds that could be qualified to become members of our cabinet. I went to a number of women's groups and said can you help us find folks and they brought us all binders full of women. It was part of the fact that after I staffed my cabinet and my senior staff that the University of New York in Albany did a survey of all 50 states and concluded that mine had more women in senior leadership positions than any state in America.

Presentational tools

The main presentational tool in the first part of the argument is anecdote. In the anecdote Romney represents himself as a fair and just employer. He attempts to achieve this by stating that he used positive discrimination in order to staff his cabinet with female employees. However, the positive discrimination in the anecdote does not promote equal opportunity. It does not place men and women on the same line, but women are given an advantage in the argument. The argument suggests that presumably female applicants need an advantage. This faces feminist criticism from Ehrlich (1991:50-52), who argues that examples (anecdotes) of women, that emphasise their weakness or traditionally stereotypical roles, are essentially a form of sexist language and attitudes.

There is evidence in the argument that suggests that language is important to Romney. The language in the argument is very casual and suited for the anecdotal style of the argument. Romney uses expressions such as: "well gosh", which appear friendly, but also possibly represent a style of speaking that might be geographically or socially familiar to him. The style is creating a sense of a dialogue inside a monologue and diminishing the power-distance between the audience and the orator.

Audience adaptation

The audience of this argument is women. Romney makes a clear distinction between the sexes by posing them against each other as rival employment seekers. Romney clarifies that even though most of the applicants were men, he had no wish to hire only men. It seems, that Romney attempts to create an image of himself as a leader who endorses gender equality. This message is especially mediated to female audiences.

Interestingly, the section is one of the few parts of the debate that is not implicitly directed to men. The sole audience of the speech appears to be women. What is more, the section of the argument depicts men and women as rivals when it comes to seeking employment. In this juxtaposition Romney seems to be on the side of women.

Critical evaluation of the argument

The argument is in form of an anecdote. Romney is not necessarily giving normative instructions of how to operate, but describing his own actions. He is also representing himself a certain way. This self-representation is appealing to emotions more than reason. At first it seems as though the question is omitted and replaced with a personal anecdote, but as argued by Oldenburg and Leff (2009) anecdote is also an effective tool of argumentation.

Romney's speech seems to be convincing female voters of his justness. Romney points out that the topic of discussion is an important one in his opinion. However, if one is to look at the effectiveness of the argument or Windt's (1986:105) question number four: "What are the probable consequences of the speech --- on the development of our on-going political debates on the subject?", one could argue that the argument is not a successful one.

The press discussed Romney's argumentation, and unfortunately for Romney, they did not take kindly to the argument. The negative publicity especially on gender questions could have weakened Romney's changes in convincing the female audiences.

Even though it seems that Romney's argument is somewhat genuine and that the actual goal is to persuade female audiences, in reality, the argument had an opposite effect. Whatever the intentions behind the argument, the argument itself turned out to support gender bias, even if it was for the "weaker gender". Even the notion of a "weaker gender" angers feminists, such as Ehrlich (1991:46-54). Also, the idea of positive discrimination is suggesting that women need help and cannot manage on their own merits. This idea is not compatible with the view of the modern femininity and it is not compatible with the modern view of equality.

Windt's (1986:105) question number two, which is concerned with the internal consistency of the speech is answered simply: the argument is valid (of logical form). Romney does not present any contradictory evidence in the argument and it evolves in a logical order. Even if some rhetorians do not accept argument by anecdote as logical arguments, most rhetorians do, including van Eemeren (2010).

However, the soundness (truth value) of the argument could be questioned. Windt's (1986:105) question number three is concerned with the rhetorical reality's plausibility. One could argue that even though Romney seems to be an equality-endorsing employer, as it is represented in the argument, it is not necessarily evidence of his willingness to achieve equal pay in all workplaces across the America. Therefore the reality of the argument and its connection to the actual world or the question at hand could be questioned.

F) Second part of Romney's argument

2) Now one of the reasons I was able to get so many good women to be a part of the team was because of recruiting effort, but number two, because I recognised that if you're gonna have women in the workforce, the times need to be more flexible. My chief of staff, for instance, had two kids that were still in school she said I can't be here till seven or eight o'clock at night, I need to be able to get home at 5 o'clock so I can be there to make dinner for my kids and be with them when they come back from school, so we said fine, we can have a flexible schedule, so you can have hours that work for you. We're gonna have to have employers in the new economy who are gonna be anxious to get good workers, that they are gonna be anxious to hire women. In the last four years, women have lost 5,8 million jobs, that's the net of what's happened in the last four years. I

mentioned, 3,5 million women more now in poverty than four years ago. What we can do to help young women, and women of all ages, is to have a strong economy, so strong that employers are looking for good employees and bringing them into their workforce and adapting to a flexible working schedule. That get's the women the opportunities that they would otherwise be able to afford.--- I'm gonna help women in America get good work by building a strong economy and by supporting women in the workforce.

Description of the argument

In this part of the argument, Romney continues the anecdote of his experiences as an employer. Romney explains how he managed as a Governor to hire so many skillful women in the workforce. He then explains the adjustments that were required in order to help the female workers with families adapt better. Romney does this by telling an anecdote about a female employee. Romney then represents his core argument. He informs the public of the ways to improve the situation. Romney argues that in his “new economy” there will be employers, who will be anxious to hire women. He then explains how women’s financial situation has decreased over the last four years, referencing to the previous presidential term. Finally, Romney concludes his argument by phrasing his exact plan for action: building a stronger economy.

Topic choice

Romney continues to discuss his role as an employer and represents himself as a person who promotes equality. Romney also discusses women as employees. Then Romney begins to argue for the need of a stronger economy. The topics of discussion evolve in the statement, and Romney is able to choose the topics he discusses.

4) appeal to accomplishment (fallacy) Now one of the reasons I was able to get so many good women to be a part of the team was because of recruiting effort, but number two, because I recognised that if you’re gonna have women in the workforce, the times need to be more flexible.

5) argument from example, anecdote My chief of staff , for instance, had two kids that were still in school she said I can't be here till seven or eight o'clock at night,I need to be able to get home at 5 o'clock so I can be there to make dinner for my kids and be with them when they come back from school, so we said fine, we can have a flexible schedule, so you can have hours that work for you.

6) pragmatic argumentation We're gonna have to have employers in the new economy who are gonna be anxious to get good workers, that they are gonna be anxious to hire women. In the last four years, women have lost 5,8 million jobs, that's the net of what's happened in the last four years. I mentioned, 3,5 million women more now in poverty than four years ago.

7) argument from cause to effect What we can do to help young women, and women of all ages, is to have a strong economy, so strong that employers are looking for good employees and bringing them into their workforce and adapting to a flexible working schedule. That gets the women the opportunities that they would otherwise be able to afford.--- I'm gonna help women in America get good work by building a strong economy and by supporting women in the workforce.

Presentational tools

Romney uses framing as a tool in this argument. In his rhetoric, the word 'effort' is used often. He uses expressions such as "concerted effort" and "recruiting effort" to describe the process of finding female employees. The words represent labour and difficulty and are used to stress Romney's achievements and his investment in the issue. The act of framing with negative words a positive topic is quite unusual. The objective is to represent self (subject) in a positive light and as an industrious person, but the danger lies in ending up representing the object, i.e. women's employment, in a negative light. In this case, it would mean representing employing women as a tiring project that demands a great deal of work and resources.

Another prominent presentational tool that Romney uses in the argument is anecdote. He gives an example of his female chief of staff, who has a family to take care of. This is yet another example of how the presidential candidates like to tell anecdotes of the women they know or have met, in order to appeal to female audiences. However, Romney's example relies on traditional gender stereotypes. The example represents women as family-oriented wives and mothers, who cook dinner for their families every day. This type of argument by anecdote is susceptible to feminist criticism, especially from Ehrlich (1991:52), who argues that stereotypical representations of the female gender are a form of sexist language.

At the very end of the turn Romney begins the actual convincing, which follows the structure of the traditional claim-support-argumentation. He presents the audience with statistic information. "In the last four years women have lost 5,8 million jobs, that's the net of what's happened in the last four years. I mentioned, 3,5 million women more now in poverty than four years ago." Romney does not explicitly claim that the numbers are linked to Obama's term, but it is implied very skillfully. The thought enters the audience's minds, but Romney does not openly suggest it. The presidential term in United States is four years, and as Romney's figures are of that time, it would appear that he considers there to be a link, and that he encourages the audience to make the connection. One of the reasons why it would seem that Romney links Obama to the unemployment rates, is the fact that he does not offer any explanations for the numbers, but allows to the audience to decide. Otherwise, Romney would have taken into account the stock market crash and its effects on employment and the entire economy.

Audience adaptation

The audience of this part of the argument seems to be women. Romney uses a variety of presentational tools to persuade his audience. In this short extract from the speech he uses self-representation, anecdote, and appeals to reason, such as argument from cause to effect. The suspected audience does not in this case, exclude men. However, it would appear that the messages are primarily directed to female audiences.

Romney attempts to impress the audience of his recruiting efforts and adjustments he made as an employer to the work schedules of female employees. This is an indication that he values gender equality, or at least that he values the opinion of those who value gender equality. He expresses an interest in the issue by using anecdotes as presentational tools. However, he does not represent men and women as equals. In Romney's rhetoric women are mothers as well as employees, and some adjustments need to be made in order to accommodate them to a work environment.

Romney does not explicitly express the intended audience of the argument, but the argument appears to be directed to women. There are indicators that point to this conclusion: firstly, Romney's argument is for gender equality, and secondly, he

expresses a bias for women as an employer. I suggest that this expressed bias is an indication of the intended audience. Male audiences would not necessarily react in a positive manner to an open confession of gender bias for women.

Critical evaluation of the argument

Romney's solution to women's unemployment is strengthening the economy. This is also presented as the main argument. According to Romney's suggestion, when the economy is strong enough, employers will need more workforce. In those circumstances, the employers are willing to grant some modifications to female workers, such as flexible working hours, Romney argues. This shows the strong belief that Romney has in the capitalist system. The laissez-faire ideology promoted by Adam Smith in *the Wealth of Nations* (1776) and many other supporters of capitalism is filtered into his speeches. Romney suggests that in a strong economy companies are able to hire more and pay more in wages.

Windt's (1986:105) question number six is as follows: "How does the speech fit into the political movement of which it is a part, or into the generic tradition from which it comes, or into the rhetorical biography of the President who gave it?". Romney's speech is in line with the conservative Republican party's agenda of supporting the economy, but also allowing it to repair itself. According to the ideology, wealth creates more wealth, which will flow to all parts of the society. Therefore according to the ideology, the best cure for unemployment would be time. This ideology is also strongly represented in Romney's rhetoric.

Windt's (1986:105) fourth question is relevant in the analysis of this particular argument: "What are the probable consequences of the speech on target constituencies that believe it, on adversaries-- that disbelieve it, on future policies, and on the development of our on-going political debates on the subject?". Unfortunately for Romney, the consequences of the speech were less than desirable. The media had an adverse reaction to the speeches that were supposed to be supporting gender equality. Instead, Romney was criticised of "being offensive to women" and lacking the capability to "connect to working women" (Abdullah, 2012).

There are several arguments made in the turn, but the main argument is the one in which Romney presents his future plans to repair the situation of unequal pay. The anecdotes that Romney tells are used as persuasive tools, but not as argumentative text. The anecdotes are descriptive text that include no actual claims.

The argument about a strong economy creating more work for women is a valid argument (of logical form). It presents a standard cause-to-effect reasoning chain. The argument can also be considered sound (of having truth value). It is very probable that a stronger economy would create more employment opportunities. Even though the method Romney proposes in the argument might not be the best way to achieve higher employment rates, it does not diminish the truth value of the argument. Therefore, the argument is both sound and valid.

However, Windt's (1986:105) third question "is the rhetorical reality of the argument plausible?", could be debated in the case of this argument. Romney's argument that in a strong economy, there will be employers who will be anxious to have female employees, is very much debatable. Romney himself represents female employees as needing special arrangements, such as positive discrimination and flexible working hours. He does not clarify how the employers in the new economy would especially address women's unemployment. Positive discrimination of women combined with a capitalist system is not necessarily a plausible rhetorical reality, I would argue.

G) The final part of Romney's argumentation occurs after an accusation presented by President Obama. Obama argued that Romney "feels comfortable having politicians in Washington decide the health care choices that women are making." The following is Romney's response to the accusation.

Romney: I just wanna point out that I think I was supposed to get the last section. I Just note that I don't think that bureaucrats in Washington should decide whether or not someone should use contraceptives. And I don't believe employers should tell someone if someone should have contraceptive care or not. Every woman in America should have access to contraceptives and the President's statement of my policy is completely and totally wrong.

Description of the argument

In this section Romney raises the question of whether the turns of the debate are evenly distributed to both candidates. He also criticises the President for misrepresenting his point of view. At the end of the section Romney clearly expresses his actual point of view that is better representing his values, and which replaces the President's misrepresentation.

The argument is also representative of the positions or roles that the candidates have assumed during the debate. Obama has managed to assume the role of a leader. He leads the discussion and can even change the topics of discussion. Romney, however, has unwillingly assumed the role of the underdog. He is in the position to defend himself against Obama's arguments, and instead of arguing for his goals, Romney has to defend his views. This gives the impression that Obama is moving forward in discussion, while Romney stays behind.

Topic choice

In this argument, Romney's role has changed. He no longer can direct the discussion and choose the topics that he discusses, but he has to defend his previously presented points of view. The topic choices are therefore dictated by Obama rather than Romney in this argument.

Romney:

1) argumentation based on the principle of fairness I just wanna point out that I think I was supposed to get the last section.

2) clarification I Just note that I don't think that bureaucrats in Washington should decide whether or not someone should use contraceptives. And I don't believe employers should tell someone if someone should have contraceptive care or not. Every woman in America should have access to contraceptives and the President's statement of my policy is completely and totally wrong.

Presentational tools

The purpose of this turn is to redress some of the previous statements made by President Obama, and to point out a possible bias of the chairperson and the debate. Romney expresses a doubt that he and Obama did not receive an equal amount questions in the debate.

As Romney is pointing out a possible inequality in the debate, he risks representing himself in a negative light instead of Obama. He risks appearing unaccommodating in front of the audience, especially as the chairperson is siding with the President. Romney is in the position of having to defend himself, whereas Obama is in the position to lead the discussion and to make accusations about the opponent.

Romney uses presentational tools, such as meta-talk about the rules of the debate. This is represented also in the pragma-dialectical approach (2010) as the starting point rule. Usually similar discussions occur before a debate, not during it. Another technique that Romney uses, and that is quite effective, is re-establishing his standpoint. Candidates rarely state their policies in such a straightforward manner, so the technique is quite refreshing from the audience's perspective.

Audience adaptation

The audience of this turn seems to be universal. Romney is discussing women's issues, so this statement is primarily directed towards women, but it does not exclude men. In fact, this turn is as much about Romney's views of women's right to contraception, as it is about correcting Obama's claims, and presenting Obama in a negative manner.

The turn is strictly considering not actually an argument but a redress. The argument was made after the chairperson suggested moving on to other topics. The argument is not as planned as the other arguments in the debate, and therefore it is quite interesting.

In the turn Romney uses the pronoun 'someone' quite often, for example in this sentence: "And I don't believe employers should tell someone if someone should have

contraceptive care or not “. It is clear from the previous discussion and Obama’s statements that they are discussing women. The pronoun ‘someone’ appears three times, while the word ‘women’ only once. This could be evidence of the turn being more about expressing the correct point of view than about appealing to women, or possibly it could be a sign of unsexualised language use.

Critical evaluation of the argument

Romney makes his premises evident by voicing them: every woman in America should have access to contraceptives. Romney is very outspoken in this statement considering his previous reputation as a highly religious politician, who is known to have negative views on abortion. To answer Windt’s (1986:105) question about how the speech fits in the political biography of the person who gave it, this particular speech does not necessarily fit well. The previous views that have been associated with Romney in press conferences and media events have been significantly more conservative about reproductive rights.

It is possible that Romney states his views strongly, because they are already slightly diminished and understated by Obama’s statements. Even if Romney succeeds in convincing the audience of his earnestness, they might be wondering whether Obama’s or Romney’s view is the correct one. In such cases, the audience does not necessarily search information from different sources, but relies on the information provided in the debate. Obama has the advantage in this case, as he has presented his view first.

Romney’s correction of Obama’s previous argument is justified. Obama’s argumentation technique that Romney criticises is the so called “straw man”, which means creating an oversimplified version of the opposite side’s view and attacking against this simplified version. It has to be noted that while Romney agrees he is for abolishing Planned Parenthood, he argues that he has not claimed that bureaucrats should decide whether women use contraception or not.

Romney’s view can also be questioned. Windt (1986:105) poses the question of the rhetorical reality of the speech, and whether evidence is cited truthfully in the argument.

This information is very difficult to access, as the absolute truth can be an elusive concept. It is, however, possible to present counter-arguments to this argument.

6. COMPARISON OF THE RESULTS

In this section, I will examine the differences between the speeches of Barack Obama and Mitt Romney. I will be comparing the topic choices, audience adaptation and presentational tools the candidates used in the discussion. I will also include Windt's (1986) questions that will add an evaluative section to the analysis. This evaluation is an important part as it will deepen the analysis that would otherwise be mostly descriptive rather than critical.

The results of the comparison are shown in a table below. I will discuss the comparison of the results further after the table.

Candidate	Barack Obama	Mitt Romney
Topic choice	unequal pay, health care (or actually reproductive rights) Obama answers the asked questions but also changes the topic of discussion	unequal pay Romney answers the asked questions
Audience adaptation	direct appeals mentioning the intended audience	direct appeals mentioning the intended audience
Presentational tools	anecdotes, use of positive adjectives about women, repetition, facts, representation of the opponent, leading the discussion to another topic	anecdotes, statistics, facts
Why were the rhetorical strategies chosen?	Obama uses a variety of techniques. Reasons: evoking emotion, appealing to reason, representing self favorably and the opponent unfavorably, adding new aspects to the discussion.	Romney uses only few techniques. He is in the position to defend himself.
Are they internally consistent?	yes	yes
Is the rhetorical reality	yes, some aspects debatable	yes, some aspects debatable

plausible?		
What are the possible consequences the speech?	if successful, it could result in the candidate being elected and positive media attention, possibly even changes in attitudes if unsuccessful, negative media attention and alienating voters	if successful, it could result in the candidate being elected and positive media attention, possibly even changes in attitudes if unsuccessful, negative media attention and alienating voters
a) Why would supporters believe it? b) Adversaries disbelieve it?	a) a variety of presentational tools is used, appeals to reason and emotion b) adversaries have criticised Obama of not making enough progress during his first term	a) presentational tools based in statistics and reason b) adversaries have criticised Romney of being condescending towards women
How does the speech fit into the political movement of which it is a part or the political biography of the person who gave it?	Well, it represents democratic values, such as reproductive rights.	Well, it represents modern republican values, such as the importance of work.

Topic choice

The candidates have different approaches to resolving the question of unequal pay, or as the audience member posed the question: resolving the issue of “women making only 72% of what their male counterparts earn at workplaces”.

Romney’s approach is financial - he claims to be able to fix the current recession in economy and suggests that women are the first ones to gain when the economy recovers. Obama’s approach is legal - he talks of the Lilly Ledbetter bill that he signed, and that ensures women the legal right to bring suit if they encounter inequality in pay. Obama’s plan is already completed, and he uses the phrase “we fixed that”, as if the issue of equal pay was resolved as well. This might be necessary since he has been in a position to influence the issue for the past four years. Romney’s plan for action is a hypothetical plan for the future, as he has not been elected before.

The topics of discussion evolve in Obama's argumentation. For example, one of his statements begins with the discussion of equal pay, then moves to health care, then to the economic growth, and ends with a personal anecdote. The most significant change is the change from equal pay, the initial topic of discussion, to women's healthcare, or more appropriately, reproductive rights. Obama chooses to change the subject to another question that he finds important. This adds new aspects to the discussion. Depending on the point of view, this move can be viewed as leading the discussion in order to distract from the initial issue to voice his predetermined remarks or it can be considered to show real interest in the issue, as well as initiative.

Romney's topic choices are not as varied as Obama's. Romney discusses the issue of equal pay but does not add any new aspects to the discussion, apart from the redress that he makes to Obama in order to challenge him on his words. This shows the different roles that the candidates have assumed in the debate. Obama leads the discussion, while Romney is in the position to defend himself.

Audience adaptation

Both of the arguers use direct appeals to women. The audience is visible in the explicit statements: "What we can do to help young women, and women of all ages --" Romney argues. Similarly Obama discusses women: "--Lily Ledbetter Bill, named after this amazing woman who had been doing the same job as a man for years, found out that she was getting paid less--", or "not the kind of advocacy women need", "how women succeed in the workplace", "pocketbook issue for women" and "makes a difference in how effectively women are able to work" etc. It is very clear that these arguments are directed to female audiences. Both of the candidates reveal their intended audience by explicitly mentioning it.

Presentational tools

The candidates use a variety of presentational tools. However, as shown in the table above, there seems to be also a significant difference in the presentational tools that the candidates use. President Obama seems to be using a larger variety of different kinds of

strategies, whereas governor Romney uses strategies that are based in reason. Obama's strategies include: anecdotes, use of positive adjectives about the target group, repetition, facts, representation of the opponent and leading the discussion to another topic. Romney's strategies include: anecdotes, statistics and facts.

What is interesting about the presentational tools that the presidential candidates use, is that according to the view presented by van Eemeren, Grootendorst and Henkemans (2002:109-150), many of the appeals are, in fact, fallacies i.e. argumentation mistakes.

Windt's critical questions for evaluation

Windt's (1986) first question about the reason why these argumentation strategies were chosen is also directly related to the use of these strategies and the positions that the candidates take in the debate. In their second turns, the positions of the candidates become evident. Obama is initiating new topics, he uses more presentational tools and is overall more confident. Romney is in the position to defend himself, and therefore does not use such a large variety of presentational tools as Obama.

The main reason for the use of any kinds of presentational strategies is to convince the audience (van Eemeren 2011:118), but beyond that, there can be also other reasons: evoking emotion, appealing to reason, representing self favorably and the opponent unfavorably or adding new aspects to the discussion.

Windt's question "is the speech internally consistent?" refers to the validity (logic form) of the argument. In most of the cases, I discovered that the candidates used internally consistent strategies.

Question "Is the rhetorical reality plausible?" refers to the soundness (truth value) of the arguments. The question is somewhat challenging to answer, as the truth value of arguments might be more difficult to access. However, as there is the possibility for adversaries to present counter-arguments, the rhetorical reality can be in both of the cases debated as well.

The answer to Windt's question about the possible consequences of the speech is quite similar in the case of both of the candidates. In the case that the speech is successful, it results in the candidate being elected. In the case that the speech is not successful, it might lead to criticism from adversaries and media. The speeches might also influence the attitudes in America about, for example, equal pay and reproductive rights.

Windt poses a question about the reason why supporters would believe the speech and why adversaries would disbelieve it. Both of the candidates present evidence that supporters might find convincing. At the same time, adversaries have presented criticism for both of these candidates. On one hand, President Obama has been criticised by Romney even in the debate about not having made enough progress in equality and economic growth during his term. On the other hand, Romney himself has been under criticism from Obama about having made comments about positive discrimination, that Obama found condescending towards women (Barack Obama's blog, 2012).

The final question about the rhetorical continuum that the speech belongs to is less difficult to answer. Both of the orators represent a political party and therefore reflect different views. The values of the candidates are also present in their rhetoric. For example, Obama's speeches reflect democratic values, such as reproductive rights and freedom. Romney's speeches represent republican values, such as the importance of work and economic growth.

7. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the following I will discuss the results of the study and compare them with previous knowledge of the field

During the autumn 2012, the role of women in the presidential campaigns was discussed widely in the media. Many journalists speculated that the presidential candidates showed interest in female voters, and that their rhetoric in the debates reflected that (for example Schrerer 2012, or Brockes 2012). This study was conducted in order to discover two things: firstly, whether the candidates in the 2012 presidential elections made appeals to female audiences in the presidential debate, and secondly, if so, what kinds of appeals they used.

The term appeal is used by van Eemeren (2010:4-5) interchangeably with the term argument. For example, van Eemeren uses the term appeal to authority and the term argument from authority in similar situations (2010:4-5, 203-206). In order to discover the used appeals or arguments, and their nature, I chose to use the pragma-dialectical approach by van Eemeren (2010). Previous studies by Morris and Johnson (2011:403-414) have shown that the pragma-dialectical approach can be used in order to analyse political debates. In order to gain a critical aspect to the analysis, I used Windt's (1986: 102-117) critical questions about presidential rhetoric, that were designed to help analysts better evaluate the content of the speeches and be critical towards the argumentation, rather than describe it. Other analysts as well have found it important to combine the pragma-dialectical approach with another method. For example, Ihnen and Richardson (2011) have used the pragma-dialectical approach with critical discourse analysis.

The method of analysis is therefore two-fold: firstly the pragma-dialectical approach (2010), that is useful in analysing topic choice, audience adaptation and presentational tools. Secondly the critical questions on presidential rhetoric (1986) that include evaluating the possible reasons for adversaries to criticise the speech, whether the speech shows signs of belonging to a specific political movement and questions about the internal consistency as well as the plausibility of the rhetoric reality of the speech.

The data of this study consists of two of the three presidential debates that were held during the autumn 2012. Specifically, only the parts of the debate that mention, or are addressed to women, were included in the data. In the debate, the data amounts to about 35 minutes of discussion.

The research succeeded in discovering the appeals to female audiences. The pragma-dialectical method offered useful labels for the presentational tools that the candidates used during the debate. However, the pragma-dialectical approach did not necessarily offer superior ways of categorising the argumentation strategies.

Although van Eemeren's (2002, 2010) view on human communication is refreshingly positive and optimistic, it has to be noted that it might not be entirely sufficient. The pragma-dialectical method acknowledges logical and argumentative appeals, but regards unargumentative appeals to be fallacies (flaws of argumentation). The analysis revealed that many of the argumentation strategies that the candidates used in order to appeal to female audiences were, in fact, fallacies according to the pragma-dialectical categories of argumentation. This raises the question of whether the argumentation of the candidates was flawed or whether the categories are inconclusive.

The pragma-dialectical approach was chosen for the present study firstly because it is a recent trend in rhetoric analysis and secondly, because it contains the idea of audience adaptation, which is essential in this study.

The study discovered that the appeals to female audiences were mostly direct and mentioned the target audience. The used presentational tools varied. Obama used overall more argumentation strategies and different types of strategies. Romney used mostly strategies that were based in reason. The presentational tools that were used in the data included for example: anecdotes, use of positive adjectives about women, repetition, facts and statistics.

One of the key findings of this study was the relationship between the presentational tools and the status of the speaker. Obama adopted a leadership-position and was able to lead the discussion to other topics, such as reproductive rights. Romney, however, was

in the position to defend his views, especially after Obama's second turn. Therefore, Obama was able to use more presentational tools than Romney.

The strategies that the candidates used also seemed to be reflecting the views of their parties, and therefore were a part of a continuum. For example, Obama emphasised reproductive rights and control of the state while Romney emphasised economic growth and the importance of work. This answers Windt's (1986:105) question about the political tradition that the speech belongs to. For example, previous presidential candidates of the democrat party include John Kerry, Al Gore and Bill Clinton. Previous Republican Party candidates include John McCain, George W. Bush and Bob Dole. A report conducted by the Pew Research Center in 2012 discovered that there has been a significant polarisation of values in the last sixteen years. The report suggests that the most significant differences of opinion between the 2012 candidates were in their views of government scope, attitudes to labor, business, environmentalism and social safety nets (2012: 11).

This study discovered that the presidential candidates seemed to view female voter's votes as important ones to have. This might be symptomatic of the change in the attitudes of women's importance in the society as a whole. Women were considered significant political actors in the rhetoric of the 2012 presidential candidates. It can also be mirroring the possible change in women's voting behaviour. Whereas in some households decades ago it could have been typical for the wife to vote according to her husband (Grounds 2008: 275), in the current society this kind of control is quite atypical. However, Graaf and Heath (1992) have discovered in researching husbands and wives that female voters are affected more by their spouse's class than their husbands. Graaf and Heath further argue, however, that modern women and men behave differently as voters (1992:1). These studies suggest that women's roles as voters have changed significantly.

The representation of women in the 2012 presidential debate speeches echoes Ehrlich's (1991) views of addressing women. In the data, women were described with positive adjectives such as amazing or intelligent. It was also evident, that in some of the examples that the candidates used as arguments, women were represented in a

stereotypical way. According to Ehrlich (1991:50) the use of labels when referring to women and stereotypical representation are signs of sexist language. Even though the used labels had positive connotations, according to Ehrlich (1991: 50) the need to use labels is still a form of gender bias. This view can of course be challenged, as it is quite radical, but it offers an interesting perspective.

The results of the study also reflect some of the aspects that might be considered typical of presidential candidates' rhetoric (Windt, 1986). The 2012 presidential candidates were careful about choosing the correct words in their statements. They argued in an inoffensive way towards the audience and expressed opinions carefully avoiding negative connotations. This might be caused by the demands of the audiences. The modern audiences are fragmented, as Fiske (1998) argues. The abundance of political, religious and cultural perspectives poses some restrictions on the candidates and their rhetoric as well.

In relation the previous studies on similar topics, this study also adds to the existing knowledge on the use of presentational tools. For example, Morris and Johnson (2011:404) speak of "clash" strategies in rhetoric, as a way of focusing on the differences between the candidates. This was also visible in Obama's rhetoric. President Obama emphasised the differences between the two candidates, while Governor Romney emphasised the similarities. Windt (1986:111) argues that confrontation is an aspect of presidential campaigning rhetoric, and that differentiates it from governing rhetoric. Another type of presentational tool that was well presented in the data was the anecdote. Oldenburg and Leff (2011: 82-86) also stress the importance of anecdotes and have discussed the need to re-establish the value of anecdotes in rhetoric. This study discovered that both of the candidates in the 2012 elections used anecdotes in their rhetoric and even based most of their arguments on them.

The academic implications of this study are in creating a larger understanding of how specific audiences are addressed to. Previous studies on appealing to race (McIlwain and Caliendo, 2011) have shed some light on how race-based appeals could be defined and analysed. Ehrlich's (1991) views on addressing individual women are also very relevant to the field.

This study helps to gain an understanding of the phenomenon of gender-based appeals and how to conduct a rhetoric analysis on them. The analysis of appealing to women is a field of study that is presently developing and taking its form. Therefore any studies on the subject are important in further creating an understanding of the field.

The practical implications of this study are firstly in creating awareness and possibly providing audiences with some tools to analyse politicians' speeches from the perspective of appealing to women. Secondly, this study can also help politicians become more aware of their specific audiences and find effective strategies to address them.

The role of voters who belong to a specific group, is ever growing in politics. It is possible that in the future, politicians will become more aware of groups, such as women, ethnic minorities, different religions and sexual orientations. Therefore more research is needed on appealing to specific audiences. The study of appealing would also benefit from different kinds of methodological approaches. Comparative study is also needed in studying appealing to women and appealing to an unspecified audience.

To conclude, the purpose of this study has been to discover, whether the 2012 candidates appealed to female audiences and in what ways. The present study has successfully discovered that the candidates used appeals. The study has also compared the appeals of Barack Obama and Mitt Romney and discovered some similarities and some differences in them. The relevance of this study is in the areas of rhetoric, appealing, political debate, and specific audiences. This study adds to the existing knowledge on these areas and gives suggestions for further research.

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