

# Critical Discourse Analysis of the Anecdotes Used by the Female Political Leaders

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## Abstract

This article critically analyses the use of anecdotes in the speeches of Laura Bush, delivered in the period of the electoral campaigns (2000-2008) at the democratic and the republican national conventions. She has ideologically and emotionally manipulated the anecdotes by making use of rhetorical and the discursive structures of the anecdotes.

**Keywords:** anecdotes (Note 1), politics, discourse, political discourse, discourse analysis, rhetoric

## 1. Introduction and Literature Review

For Fineman (1989) the anecdote provides new information; he views the anecdote as literary while still 'rooted in the real'. Just like historians and literary writers, linguists have found a difficulty in providing a unique and standard definition to the concept of anecdote. According to linguists, there are several definitions of anecdote as a stylistic device. Most of these generally agree: it is a short story about a certain true or fictitious incident, with a vivid or amusing twist. The incident usually involves real people, often famous ones, and sometimes the speaker, but fictitious figures also occur. An anecdote may, but does not need to bear, a necessity in both parable and fable. Hesp (1951) states that anecdotes certainly don't need to be funny: "Preferably not funny" but on the other hand Edens (1979) and Janssen et al. (1989) however recommend humorous stories. In fact, when we combine the linguists' opinions, the anecdote proves to be a versatile technique; a jack-of-all-trades that can be deployed in various situations. However, Van der Spek (1995) states that anecdotes are less suitable for formal speeches (award ceremonies) or unpleasant occasions (bad news speeches) and funeral orations. According to the experts, not every story can be used as an anecdote. There are two main conditions as to this technique and its use: **brevity** (the anecdote must be short) and **relevance** (the anecdote must suit the occasion).

### 1.1 Effectiveness of the Use of Anecdote as a Rhetorical Opening Technique

The importance of the use of anecdote as a rhetorical opening technique stems from the effective and multiple functions that the anecdote can perform when it is used in an introduction of a speech. Starting your speech with the anecdote is highly recommended especially in the 21st century. This is because the anecdote can incredibly contribute to drawing and focusing attention "because many listeners will relate to the story" (Edens, 1979). It has the role of making the audience feel sympathetic towards the subject because an anecdote will make the listener identify with the subject (Pereboom, 1989). Narrating an anecdote at the beginning of the speech is a good way to make contact "an anecdote will enable good contact with the speaker and the audience" (Van Dijk, 1986). Another significant role that the anecdote plays lies in the fact of stimulating memory. Anecdotes will be remembered better by the audience, also in connection with the actual subject of the speech (Krusche, 1986). In fact, such valuable functions are the reasons that stand for paying a close attention to the importance of placing anecdotes at the beginning of the speech. In their article entitled "Theory versus Practice of the Anecdote as Speech Introduction Technique", Andeweg & Jong (2006) discovered that the anecdote "turns out to be the opening technique most often recommended to draw attention to the speech (67% of the 42 books in their corpus). Such a recent contribution to the role of anecdote in the introduction of speech is enhanced with statistical findings. Andeweg & Jong (2006) found out that "many authors turn out to find the anecdote is a good way to start a speech and do not consider a waste of time. Attention getters like challenging statement (55%),

quote (48%), question (48%), presenting something humorous (45%), referring to topical events (45%), are recommended less often compared to the anecdote (67%)". Indeed, such huge percentage of the use of anecdote at the beginning of the speech has made the researcher eager to closely address the question of the use of anecdote particularly in the political context.

### *1.2 Anecdote in the Political Discourse*

#### *1.2.1 Political Discourse and the Rhetorical Political Analysis*

Van Dijk (1986), states that "the political discourse is identified by its actors or authors, viz, politicians." He argues that the vast bulk of studies of political discourse are about the text and talk of professional politicians or political institutions, such as presidents, prime minister and other members of parliament or political parties both at the local, national, and international levels. In fact these instances of political speeches are also instances of rhetoric. They are the object of a political rhetorical analysis. One major illustration of a rhetorical political analysis is the study of the use of anecdotes in the political speech as a specific rhetorical phenomenon.

#### *1.3 Anecdotes in British Political Speech*

In their article about the use of anecdotes in the British political speech, Atkins & Finlayson, (2013) provided numbers and statistics about the use of anecdotes in British leaders' speeches.

Our research shows that their use in political rhetoric has increased consistently and markedly over the last 20 years. We reviewed Liberal Democrat, Labour and Conservative leaders' speeches to their Party Conference and found that from very limited use before 1990, such anecdotes have become one of the most common rhetorical devices. There were just seven in all the speeches from 1990-1994, 32 in the next five years, 48 from 2000-2004, and 73 from 2005-2009.

Atkins & Finlayson, (2013) found that "many of the anecdotes concern leaders' family, background or childhood experiences (e.g., Blair, 1996; Brown, 2007; 2008; Hague, 2000; Howard, 2004; Major, 1995; Miliband, 2010).

#### *1.4 Anecdote in the Political Speech: An Indication of a Change in the Rhetorical Culture*

Atkins & Finlayson (2013) added that the emergence of anecdotes is a result of cultural conditions. Politicians change their speeches according to the nature and the background of their audience. They dramatically tend to account for every culture change which gives rise to a change in the rhetorical culture mainly recognized by the use of anecdotes. In short, changes in rhetorical culture are part of changes to social, ideological and political practice.

#### *1.5 Feminine—Political Rhetoric*

This research is about anecdotes in female political speeches. Many women strategically tweaked their speech style to cope with the conflicting demand of the podium. Women adopted a feminine-style of political communication to achieve political objectives, while staying true to their traditional femininity. In addition to unifying the audience and generating respect, feminine-style rhetoric helps the speaker claim authority, persuade, and empower the audience, yet in a compassionate manner. "By giving examples, anecdotes, and practical wisdom, the speaker can claim legitimacy based on proof of experience, which is actually stronger than rhetorical claims, abstract generalizations, and dry statistics characteristic of masculine rhetoric" (Bonnie, & Mari, 1993). Self-disclosure and personal anecdotes, which help the audience relate to the speaker and empathize with their perspective, also adds to the persuasive effect of the message. They also provide proof by example that the speaker's arguments are valid. Shannon (2000) argues that "using inductive reasoning and colorful narratives empowers the audience because it invites them to relate, draw conclusions, and make judgments". Bonnie & Mari (1993) add that this "helps the audience realize they are equal participants of the speaker's decision-making process who have valued opinions and the ability to enact change". Throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty first, more and more women are succeeding in politics. In fact such a success has broadened the scope of the research in the female political rhetoric.

#### *1.6 Previous Researches about Female Political Rhetoric*

After studying the speech of former Texas governor, Bonnie & Mari (1993) declared that "women still use the feminine rhetoric in contemporary discourse, as masculine communication strategies are still more valued in the public sphere and women still face the 'double bind'". As the first study to recognize feminine rhetoric adapted to the political context, they concluded that "the rhetoric is not just a strategy for unification or audience empowerment. It also validates an alternative mode to patriarchal political reasoning that reflects feminine values, such as making judgments based on parental experience over abstractions, celebrating strength through

mature introspection, and assuming authority by displaying compassion and fostering personal growth”.

Blankenship & Deborah, (1995) agreed after looking at speeches and utterances by 45 women holding or seeking public office, that women use feminine rhetoric to advocate comprehensive policies and give women's issues more salience in politics.

Herrnson, Celesta, & Stokes (2003) revealed that because voters hold stereotypes of women candidates, perceiving them as more compassionate and competent at handling women's issues, women are more successful when they “employ their identity as a strength” and prime the positive attributes that voters look for.

Looking back through the twentieth century, many studies found that women use feminine rhetoric as a tool to emphasize their feminine strengths. For example, Benze & De Clercq, (1985) claimed that “women are twice as likely as men to use feminine rhetoric to stress compassion, warmth, honesty, and morality, thereby making their perceived strengths more salient”. Curtis and et al (1994) found that “women in Congress use more personal tone and inductive structure than men do in their floor speeches”. Bystrom & De Rosa (1999) showed that “women used personal tone in 94 percent of their 1996 Presidential National Convention speeches, addressed the audience as peers in 69 percent, emphasized their experience through personal anecdotes in 63 percent, and used inductive reasoning in 59 percent”.

### 1.7 Critical Discourse Analysis

Political discourse analysis (PDA) and Critical discourse analysis (CDA) are interconnected. Thus, in almost cases, dealing with a political discourse analysis requires a critical view to the political discourse. Van Dijk (1998) confirms this fact when he said that “PDA is both about political discourse and it is also a critical enterprise”. For this reason, adopting Fairclough's (1989, 1995) CDA framework always seems worthy and necessary for a political discourse investigation. It seems necessary especially for the present research because one of the major targets of this research is to look at how the use of anecdotes in female political speeches convey an ideological and emotional manipulation. Manipulation as defined by Van Dijk (2006) “not only involves power but specifically abuse of power that is domination. More specifically manipulation implies the exercise of a form of illegitimate influence by means of power”. Accordingly, “In the spirit of contemporary approaches in CDA this would mean that critical-political discourse analysis deals especially with the reproduction of political *power*, *power abuse* or *domination* through political discourse, including the various forms of resistance or counter-power against such forms of discursive dominance.” (Dijk, 1998)

Following research questions have been raised for the current study.

Q 1: How and why does the use of anecdote convey an emotional manipulation?

Q 2: How and why do they convey an ideological manipulation?

Q 3: How and how do they seem pathetic?

Q 4: How and why do they seem feminine?

The emotional manipulation is tested through the use of the rhetorical figures. The ideological one is tested through the use of Van Dijk overall strategy of self presentation vs. other negative presentation.

The pathetic spirit is tested through the use of the empathy related expressions and the feminine spirit is tested through the use of empty adjectives which is one of the feminine features given by Lakoff (1979).

## 2. Research Methodology

The corpus for this study contains 2 American female political speeches which were delivered in the period of the electoral campaigns (2000-2008) at the democratic and the republican national conventions. They were carefully selected to be as follows: Bush (2000), and Bush (2004). They were made by the female spouses and supporters of the US presidential candidates. These speeches were selected because of their inclusion of a sufficient number of anecdotes. The transcriptions of the speeches have been individually downloaded from the Internet. The number of anecdotes in the political female speeches was counted by means of a hand-searched process. The choice fell of a hand-searched process to assure a thorough and reliable qualitative analysis. The following table represents the necessary information about the anecdotes selected for analysis.

Table 1. Description of the anecdotes selected for analysis

Names of the speeches' performers	Date of the speeches' delivery	Location of the speeches' delivery	Number of the anecdotes per speech	Major theme of each anecdote
Laura Bush	August 1,2000	Philadelphia PA	2	A) Laura Bush related the circumstances of her upbringing. She expressed her fondness for teaching and education. B) An anecdote about the graduation event.
Laura Bush	September 1,2004	New York	6	A) Anecdote about her husband and his running for congress. C) Anecdote about Joshua Crane and the war in Iraq. D) The story of a dad whose wife is deployed in Iraq. E) Anecdote about George Bush and his long and exhausting debate about the war against Saddam Hussein. F) Anecdote about her father and his military career. G) The story of the Iraqi woman.
Total			8	

## 2.1 Analysis of the Anecdote Structure

### 2.1.1 Speech of Laura Bush (2000)

A rhetorical analysis of the anecdotes in the speech of Laura Bush (2000) revealed that this speech includes two anecdotes. Personification and Anaphora are the rhetorical figures employed in those two anecdotes.

#### 2.1.1.1 Anecdote (A)

"I first decided to become a teacher when I was in the second grade. Neither of my parents graduated from college, but I knew at an early age they had that high hope and high expectation for me. My Dad bought an education policy, and I remember him telling me, "Don't worry, your college education will be taken care of."

Growing up I practiced teaching on my dolls. I would line them up in rows for the day's lessons. Years later our daughters did the same thing. We used to joke that the Bush family had the best-educated dolls in America.

George and I always read to our girls—Dr. Seuss' "Hop on Pop" was one of his favorites. George would lie on the floor and the girls would literally hop on pop, turning story time into a contact sport."

#### **Description**

Personification is a type of a rhetorical figure which metaphorically represents animal or inanimate objects as having human attributes, attributes of form, character, feeling, behavior and so on. The rhetorical figure of personification is used by Laura Bush (spouse of George Bush) in an anecdote which was related in her political speech during the electoral campaign of (2000) addressing the republican audience on August,01 in Philadelphia. After thanking Michael and his students for introducing her and pointing at her special consideration for education "Education is my living room" she said, Laura Bush related an anecdote by which she demonstrated her strong interest in performing the role of a teacher. She expressed her deep pleasure while doing this job. She declared that she discovered her passion of teaching at an early age from the second grade year. "I first decided to become a teacher, when I was in the second grade". In this anecdote, she made use of the rhetorical figure of personification by presenting the dolls as if they were students and she was practicing teaching on them. "Growing up I practiced teaching on my dolls. I would line them up in rows for the day's lesson. Years later our daughters did the same thing. We used to joke that the Bush family had the best-educated dolls in America."

The effect of the use of personification on the audience by means of anecdote lies in the fact that Laura Bush wants to show to the republican audience and to the public in general her clear awareness of the necessity of education and her everlasting willingness to establish an incredible educational system in the United State. She chose to select a humorous twist of an anecdote together with a use of personification in order to emotionally manipulate the audience by evoking amusement and let them remember that part of the speech in which she tried to appear in the image of the ideal teacher who gives importance to nothing but education. She aimed at stressing

that since she is a teacher, her husband's reforms are and it will always be devoted to education.

Table 2. Occurrences of the use of rhetorical figures in the anecdotes

List of speeches and anecdotes	Type of the rhetorical figure	Number of occurrences
Laura Bush (2000): Anecdote (A)	Personification	1
Laura Bush (2000): Anecdote (B)	Hyperbole	1
Laura Bush (2004): Anecdote (A)	Metaphor	1
Laura Bush (2004): Anecdote (D)	Anaphora	1
		<b>Total = 4</b>

### *Interpretation and Explanation*

Evident from the analysis of the rhetorical figure used in the anecdote that Laura Bush chose to narrate an anecdote where there is a use of personification in order to make the anecdote much more attractive, amusing, and interesting especially when the major theme of this anecdote is education. Arousing amusement among the audience by means of anecdote is a type of appealing to their emotions which is a powerful manipulative technique that Laura Bush referred to in order to achieve her goals. Her principal goals behind narrating this particular—amusing personal anecdote can be better drawn from examining the socio-historical context at the time of the production of the speech. Examining the socio-historical context of this speech requires detailed information about the speaker and her husband's previous achievements concerning education.

Relying on her background knowledge and experience as a teacher, Laura Bush preferred to start her speech with such an anecdote. If we take a look at Laura Bush's historical professional archive, we will discover that her first professional experience was teaching second grade at Kennedy Elementary School in Houston, Texas for two years. She graduated from the University of Texas at Austin, Graduate School of Library Science in 1972, with a master's degree in library science. Following, she returned to Austin and worked as a school librarian at Dawson Elementary School. In an attempt to introduce to the audience such professional career in teaching, Laura chose to relate her childhood- memories, focusing on how she used to practice teaching on her dolls. She aimed at expressing her striking passion for teaching and her constructive knowledge of all the tips and techniques of teaching. Being a professional teacher, who has a vested interest in teaching and education, Laura Bush seems to be a credible, honest and qualified speaker who deeply knows the importance of the education and gives a prior concern to reading and early learning. Evins (2000) made this clear when he claimed that "Another player who deserves credit here is Bush's wife, Laura. She is a former librarian who has chosen reading as her particular concern, the one she promotes in her role as first lady of the state". Perhaps the use of such an anecdote is an indication of Laura Bush intention to gain the trustworthiness of the audience and increased the possibility of gaining the electoral campaign by convincing them that she and her husband will undoubtedly make a successfully radical educational reform.

Another striking reason that stands for the recount of this particular anecdote is her husband's latest achievements concerning education. Being the husband of Laura Bush, George Bush served as governor of Texas from January, 17, 1995 to December, 21, 2000. He created a clear agenda focused on issues such as education and juvenile justice. In fact, education reform was the top item on Bush domestic agenda. In his last year in office as a governor of Texas, George Bush accelerated his movements towards improving the American educational policy. He undertook a number of educational priorities. In this respect, Evins (2000) reported that "In addition to his impressive performance in the context of the Legislature on education issues, he used the bully pulpit, one of the few real powers of his office. In 1998 alone he made 47 speeches on education, almost one a week." And by means of the anecdote under analysis, Laura Bush succeeded in reminding the audience of her husband's past major achievements concerning education. She wanted to reinforce and re-consider her husband's valuable and fruitful efforts in the field of education.

In this anecdote which is a short- real instance of narratives, it must be clarified that the discourse participants of anecdote can be also the characters of anecdote. In other words, the characters of this short real event or story are those who participated and took actions in the event or the story. The characters or the participants involved in the present anecdote vary between human being and inanimate object. In this anecdote, the inanimate objects are the dolls, whereas the other characters are Laura Bush, her parents, her husband and her daughters.

Dolls, as the main discursive participants or character in this anecdote, are the most important participants that Laura Bush used to evoke humor. Personifying dolls by attributing the task of students to them, represents a source of humour and amusement. Laura Bush's parents represent the third participants or characters of this

anecdote. They are portrayed as the parents who estimate the worth of education and who have encouraged Laura Bush to continue her studies and achieve her dream of becoming a teacher.

Another participant who constitutes this discursive event (this anecdote) is George Bush. He is the husband of Laura Bush and more importantly the presidential nominee of the electoral campaign of (2000). In this anecdote, Laura Bush told the audience about the way that her husband used to motivate their daughters to read. “George and I always read to our girls—Dr. Seuss’ “Hop on Pop” was one of his favorites. George would lie on the floor and the girls would literally hop on pop, turning story time into a contact sport”. She said. In this event, George Bush is depicted as the potential president who looks aware of the pedagogical techniques of reading- learning; a responsible father and husband. Laura Bush’s daughters’ participation in this anecdote is meant to complete the image of a unified family. Furthermore, they are involved to be a model of a typical-literate generation. Laura Bush’s daughters are considered as the key means by which she expressed her willingness to teach every American child using the same pedagogical strategies that were pursued to teach her daughters. She wanted to reassure the audience that their children’s early childhood development will be one of her priorities.

#### 2.1.1.2 Anecdote (B)

An analysis of the rhetorical and the discursive structures used in Anecdote (B) reveals that in such an anecdote there is a use of hyperbole as a rhetorical figure and there are 3 occurrences of empathy-related expressions (see Table 3, below).

##### Description

**B) This early summer night, the sky was huge and full of more stars that you could take in at once.** The graduation *was especially poignant because one young man who should have been there wasn’t.* (E) He died of cancer two years ago, during his sophomore year. His parents were on the front row, *and we all cried with them* (E). The community embraced them, *on this special occasion that was so happy and so sad all at once.* (E).

In the present anecdote Laura Bush made use of the hyperbole as a rhetorical figure together with some discursive structures of empathy. It is a figure of speech that uses exaggeration to express strong emotions, make a point, or evoke humor or even to play worst -case scenarios on readers’ or audience fear.

Hyperbole is used by Laura Bush at the beginning of her second anecdote which is included in her electoral speech of (2000). The speech is delivered in Philadelphia on August, 01 addressing the republican audience. The anecdote is narrated by the end of the speech. It came just after Laura Bush’s insisting on her husband’s readiness to assure the future of the American children who will represent the next generation. It is about her visit to the high school of Crawford, Texas, population 631, which is the setting of the incident or the anecdote. In the process of describing the circumstances of the event of graduation ceremony, Laura Bush related a poignant incident which is her meeting with the parents whose son died of cancer during his sophomore year. The use of hyperbole helps Laura Bush design carefully the time and the circumstances of that special event. “This early summer night, the sky was huge and full of more stars that you could take in at once”. She said. Also, it is a rhetorical choice meant to emphasize the peculiarity of that special night of graduation by exaggerating the number of the stars which were covering that night’s sky.

The results of an analysis of the use of empathy—related expressions in this anecdote show the presence of adjectives and verbs which are coined with the meaning of sadness and also the presence of adverbs in order to insist on the pathetic aspect of the anecdote. The adjective “poignant” which has the meaning of evoking a keen sense of sadness or regret is used by Laura Bush preceded by an adverb “especially” to emphasize the unfavorable conditions of the graduation. The verb “to cry” is also present to describe the sad and depressing feeling of the parents and all the public attending that graduation ceremony. The adjective “sad” preceded by the adverb “so” is another illustration of emphasizing the unpleasant circumstances of that special event.

Table 3. Occurrences of the use of Empathy-related expressions in the anecdote

	List of the speeches	Number of the anecdotes per speech	Number of the Empathy-related expressions per anecdote
	Laura Bush (2000)	1	3
	Laura Bush (2004)	2	2
Total	2 speeches	3	5

### *Interpretation and Explanation*

The presence of the rhetorical figure of hyperbole together with the discursive structures of empathy implies an intention to exercise an emotional manipulation and to make the anecdote much more pathetic and affecting. This is because by using the hyperbole especially at the beginning of the anecdote, Laura Bush may have the intention to turn the audience's attention and let them listen carefully to this anecdote. The manipulative intention here lies in the fact that she wants to attract the audience, particularly, because in this anecdote she and her husband showed great empathy for the parents who lost their sons. "We all cried with them" she said. That is, in doing so, Laura Bush wants to humanize her husband and show to the audience that she and her husband do show empathy for every American citizen. This is because she knows that this humanizing effect is important to candidates running under the republican platform since many of the tenets of that platform stress the importance of smaller-government and family-value.

The present anecdote is produced in the same context of George Bush's last achievements about education. "George and I recently went to the high school graduation in Crawford, Texas, population 631". May be her selection to the high school of Crawford to be the setting where the anecdote occurred reveals her intention to shed light on her husband's persistent surveillance and control to the schools of Texas. Perhaps this anecdote is employed by Laura Bush to prove to the audience her husband's last decisions and modifications that have been made concerning schools. This is because on April, 02, 2000, as a governor of Texas George Bush took rigorous decisions concerning the performance of schools. The most important decision was funding 2,000 charter schools while defunding failing schools. "Issues: Policy Points Overview" reported that George Bush "called for the creation of charter schools that would receive maximum flexibility with federal funds in return for meeting high performance measures in increasing student achievement."

The social actors who are involved in this anecdote are the speaker, her husband and the parents of the student who died because of cancer. The parents represent the American citizens as they are depicted as down-to-earth and modest people. Their presence in the anecdote helps the speaker identify her husband and herself as virtuous people who care for the problems of every American citizen. That is, the situation of the parents has a great effect in making the anecdote pathetic and influential.

#### 2.1.2 Speech of Laura Bush (2004)

The rhetorical and the discursive structures used in the anecdotes

In the speech of Laura Bush (2004), there are 6 analyzed anecdotes. 2 types of rhetorical figures are present in two anecdotes (see Table 1). There are also 2 occurrences of empathy—related expressions in 2 anecdotes (see table 2). About the presence of the discursive structures of positive-self-presentation vs other—negative presentation strategy, the results show that Laura Bush uses this strategy in 3 anecdotes. The lexicalization strategy is used 4 times, the warning move is used 2 times however the compassion move was used only one time. (See Table 4 below)

Table 4. Occurrences of the discursive structures of positive self-presentation Vs negative other-presentation strategy in the anecdotes

The discursive structures of positive self-presentation Vs negative-other presentation strategy			
Frequency of anecdotes	Frequency of noun-pairing and naming	Frequency of the compassion move	Frequency of warning
3	4	1	2

#### 2.1.2.1 Anecdote (A)

##### *Description*

"I am enjoying this campaign. It has reminded me of our very first one, 26 years ago. George and I were newly-weds and he was running for Congress. **Our transportation wasn't quite as fancy back then - an old mobile Cutlass—and George was behind the wheel.** Even then, he was always on time and he knew exactly where he wanted to go. You learn a lot about your husband when you spend that much time in a car with him. By the end of the campaign, he had even convinced me to vote for him."

Metaphor is a type of analogy and is closely related to other rhetorical figures of speech that achieve their effects via association, comparison or resemblance including allegory, hyperbole, and simile. Metaphor is used by Laura Bush in the anecdote, recounted at the beginning of her republican speech delivered on September, 1 in New

York, during the electoral campaign of 2004. Before starting this speech, Laura Bush has been introduced by her husband “George Bush”. After that, she started her speech with thanking her husband, and both, his and her family. Relating an anecdote about her husband’s first experience of running for congress was her next step. “It has reminded me of our very first one, 26 years ago. George and I were newly-weds and he was running for Congress”. To demonstrate and explain how hard and difficult his situation was, Laura Bush employs the rhetorical device of metaphor. She claims “Our transportation wasn’t quite as fancy back then—an old mobile cutlass—and George was behind the wheel.” She compares their transportation with an Old mobile cutlass and draws a hilarious image of her husband’s difficult situation by locating him in the most risky and unsafe part of the old mobile which is “behind the wheel”.

In fact her use of the rhetorical figure of metaphor while relating the anecdote has certainly an effect on the audience. By using such a rhetorical figure, Laura Bush looks for depicting the difficulties that her husband had under got when he was running for Congress. In doing so, Laura Bush achieves two goals at once. The first goal is that she lets the audience make a very favorable impression of her. She gets the chance to appear as a spontaneous first lady who has the sense of humor and amusement. The second goal is that she arouses the sense of empathy among the audience. Perhaps the description of her husband’s difficult and hazardous situation and his persistent trials to win the electoral campaign and achieve the progress and the prosperity of USA is a good idea to get the audience’s well-disposed support and gain their sympathy. In short, Laura Bush goals are accomplished via the use of emotional based techniques which reflect her manipulative intention.

The anecdote is about George Bush’s first and tough experience of running for Congress. Only the narrator and her husband George Bush are involved. Perhaps it is necessary for Laura Bush to mention that they were newly-weds at the time of his husband’s running for Congress in order to reinforce her husband’s difficult situation. The fact of being newly-weds may suggest that George Bush is in a delicate and special situation; he was in his first days of marriage witnessing a new stage of life. So, running for congress at this special stage makes the situation of George Bush much hard.

In this anecdote, Laura Bush represents herself as the wife who was watching every step that her husband took in the political life. She appears as the helpful wife who supports her husband designing an image of a unified couple. George Bush is the focal social actor on which the anecdote is based. He is depicted as a diligent political figure with a can-do-spirit. “He was always on time and he knew exactly where he wanted to go” she said.

#### 2.1.2.2 Anecdote (C) + (D)

##### *Description*

The main theme of the following anecdotes is the War in Iraq. Thus, the first anecdote (C) is about Joshua Crane and the War in Iraq and the second one (anecdote D) is also about the dad whose wife was deployed in Iraq. In both anecdotes, Laura Bush tends to use the lexicon of empathy. Two empathy-related expressions are observed in those two anecdotes.

(C) As we gather in this hall and around our television sets tonight, Joshua Crane stands watch abroad the USS John C Tennis. His brothers Matthew and Nicholas stand watch near Fallujah. At home in Colorado, their mother Cindy stands watch too - with worry and prayer. (E)She told me all three of her sons enlisted after 11 September, because they recognized the threat to our country. Our nation is grateful to all the men and women of our armed forces who are standing guard on the front lines of freedom

(D) A Dad whose wife is deployed in Iraq recently wrote about what he is learning as he struggles to rear his three children alone. “I have ruined at least three loads of laundry,” he said, “Once you turn everything pink, it stays pink.” He goes on: “I have learned what our soldiers’ wives have known for generations—hope and grief and perseverance (E).

Anecdote (C) is a depiction to the hard situation of Joshua Crane’s family during the period of war against Iraq. The empathy—related expression “with worry and prayer” is used to describe how hard the situation of Crane’s mother was when she sent her sons to Iraq at the time of war “His brothers Matthew and Nicholas stand watch near Fallujah. At home in Colorado, their mother Cindy stands watch too—with worry and prayer.” The noun “worry” is present to signify a feeling of anxiety or trouble about actual or potential problems. The noun “prayer” is defined as a solemn request for help or expression of thanks addressed to God or another deity. So, the uses of such nouns help Laura Bush describe the feeling of inquietude that Crane’s mother suffered from, during the period of war.

In the second anecdote which is anecdote (D), Laura Bush introduces the case of a Dad whose wife was deployed in Iraq. In fact his story with the American-Iraqi war is another illustration of the appalling



effects of the war on the American people. In this anecdote, Laura Bush reports how he was struggling to grow up his children during the absence of their mother, The Dad's testimony which appears in a form of an anecdote is ended by his real consideration to the hardship that the soldiers' wives had experienced. "I have learned what our soldiers' wives have known for generations—"hope and grief and perseverance". "Hope and grief and perseverance" is the Dad's last comment about the hard situation of the soldier's wives. The three nouns are used; to express the feeling of expectation or desire for a particular thing to happen (hope), the feeling of an intense sorrow (grief) and the persistence in doing something despite difficulty or delay in achieving success (perseverance). Hence, the presence of such particular emotive words may dramatically contribute to prove the pathetic and the emotional aspect of the anecdote.

### ***Interpretation and Explanation***

By means of those two anecdotes, Laura Bush raises the question of the war against Iraq "His brothers Matthew and Nicholas stand watch near Fallujah" and reminds the audience of the act of 9/11 "She told me all three of her sons enlisted after 11 September, because they recognized the threat to our country". In fact, the inclusion of such anecdotes is expected especially in Laura Bush speech of (2004). The speech is delivered after just one year of war against Iraq. On March, 20, 2003, George Bush declared the war on Iraq as a response to the 9/11 terrorist attack. In fact, beginning in 2002, and continuing after the 2003 invasion of Iraq, large-scale protests against the Iraq War were held in many cities worldwide. Furthermore, on May, 2004, BBC news reported that there was a fury over pictures showing the abuse of Iraqi prisoners in US custody. Thus it is necessary for Laura Bush to justify such an abuse, by describing the terrible conditions of the American soldiers family so as to gain the audience's empathy for them. In sum, Laura Bush employs pathetic and influential anecdotes about the American soldiers' families for the purpose of gaining the support of the entire American public for the American soldiers and changes their opposite opinions about the war against Iraq.

In those two anecdotes, the discursive participants are carefully selected. Laura chooses to involve the testimonies and the stories of the American soldier's family. Joshua Crane's brothers and sons exemplified the America soldiers who served the USA honorably in Iraq. They are glorified as being the armed forces who will bring back freedom and security to the USA. The speaker aims at embellishing their image and valorized their efforts as long as they are standing guard on the front lines of the American freedom. The mother Cindy and the Dad are the key elements that Laura Bush used to evoke empathy. Depicting their hard situations indicates Laura Bush's attempt to focus on their sacrifice. The soldiers family is presented to make the audience estimate their efforts and their pains in the absence of their sons and their wives.

#### **2.1.2.3 Anecdotes (E), (F) and (G)**

The analysis of the following anecdotes reveals the presence of the rhetorical figure of Anaphora and the presence of the overall strategy of positive -self presentation vs negative -other presentation. The discursive structures employed to announce such a strategy are the use of lexicalization (lexicon choice, noun-pairing, naming), the use of the compassion move and the use of the warning move.

(E) I remember some very quiet nights at the dinner table. George was weighing grim scenarios and ominous intelligence about potentially even more devastating attacks. (W) I listened many nights as George talked with foreign leaders on the phone, or in our living room, or at our ranch in Crawford. I remember an intense weekend at Camp David. George and Prime Minister Tony Blair were discussing the threat from Saddam Hussein (W). And I remember sitting in the window of the White House, watching as my husband walked on the lawn below. I knew he was wrestling with these agonizing decisions that would have such profound consequence for so many lives and for the future of our world. And I was there when my husband had to decide. Once again, as in our parents' generation, America had to make the tough choices, the hard decisions, and lead the world toward greater security and freedom.

(F) I wasn't born when my father went to World War II. Like so many of our greatest generation, he is gone now (L) lost to Alzheimer's nine years ago. He served in the US Army in Europe for almost three years, and helped liberate Nord hasten, one of the concentration camps. You cannot imagine his horror at what he found there. The methods of the terrorists we face today are different (L) -but my father would know this struggle. Our parents' generation confronted tyranny and liberated millions (L). As we do the hard work of confronting today's threat—we can also be proud that 50 million more men, women and children live in freedom, thanks to the United States of America and our allies (L).

(G) I recently met a young Iraqi woman. She is one of the new Iraqi Fulbright scholars. She survived horrific ordeals, including the gassing of her village by Saddam Hussein(C). She told me that when people look at Iraq,

what they don't see is that Iraq is a country of 25 million people, each with their own hope.

### **Description**

Anaphora is the repetition of a word, often at the beginning of a phrase. Ancient rhetoricians believed that this rhetorical device can be used to add charm, or gravity or bitterness to a sentence. In the same context, Laura Bush made her political presidential speech at the republican convention. One of the main issues that Laura Bush addressed in her speech is "The war against Iraq". In an attempt to justify her husband's decision of declaring the war against Iraq, she narrates an anecdote (**anecdote E**) about her husband's difficult decisions. By starting her anecdote with the anaphora, "I remember, I remember and I remember", she wants to overestimate her husband's efforts and challenges to fight terrorism and his struggles to realize a peaceful future for the American children and protect every American citizen from potential Iraqi attacks. Perhaps, her aim is to receive a generous empathetic return from the audience and to depict a memorable image of her husband. The repetitive mode of the phrase at the beginning of each anecdote reveals her intention to add charm and gravity to her anecdote and reflects her manipulative plan to powerfully impose a positive image of her husband as a loyal and a human president.

In anecdote (**E**) Laura Bush describes her husband's long and exhausting debate about the war against Saddam Hussein, anecdote (**F**) is about the story of her father and his military career. And, in anecdote (**G**) she illustrates the case of the Fulbright Iraqi scholar who survived the horrific ordeals caused by Saddam Hussein. What we notice in the three anecdotes is that Laura Bush attempts to praise the self while vilify the others. The use of the most classic example of lexicalization of noun-pairing i.e. freedom fighters vs terrorist is significantly present in these anecdotes. The ideological semantics underlying such lexical selection follows a rather clear strategic pattern, viz., that in general in-groups and their members, as well as friends, allies, or supporters, tend to be described in positive terms, whereas out-groups enemies or opponents are described in negative term (Van Dijk 1995, p. 143). Hence, in the anecdotes under analysis, there is use of expressions like "We can also be proud that 50 million more men, women and children live in freedom thanks to the USA and our allies Vs the method of terrorist. In addition, the presence of the compassion move which is mainly recognized by showing empathy for weak victims of the others' actions is also observed, so as to enhance the brutality of the other e.g., while narrating the story of the Iraqi Fulbright, Laura Bush wants to show empathy for her and stress that she is the victim of Saddam Hussein acts of terrorism. "She survived horrific ordeals, including the gassing of her village by Saddam Hussein." Warning which is particularly explained by emphasizing possible threats and terror is also visibly embedded in the following sentence: "I remember an intense weekend at Camp David. George and the Prime Minister Tony Blair were discussing the threat from Saddam Hussein. In anecdote (**F**), Laura Bush lists her father's trials and triumphs in the World War Two and how he was among the greatest allies who insured the United State freedom and prosperity, without missing the opportunity to proudly express her extreme satisfaction of living in such a nation. Expressions like "Like so many of our greatest generation," "we can also be proud that 50 million more men, women and children live in freedom, thanks to the United States of America and our allies," emphasize her clear tendency to praise her country and to represent its worthy and majestic history and culture. However, by her making use of expressions like "discussing the threat from Saddam Hussein", "you cannot imagine his horror at what he found there", "She survived horrific ordeals, including the gassing of her village by Saddam Hussein", Laura Bush misrepresents Saddam Hussein's image by detecting his sinful deeds and his unfair and irregular policy. She also tends to stress America's fight to resist and defeat any terrorists action. The ideological manipulation here is manifested in Laura Bush's attempt to estimate the fundamental American values while criticizing Saddam Hussein's presidential rules and plans. This is because she wants to give reasons for their attacks to Iraq and let the audience believe that they are doing the right thing, that they are protecting them from potential acts of terrorism and saving them from Saddam Hussein's predictable harm. The construction of the discursive participants in these anecdotes is more complex than the other anecdotes. In fact, and to a great extent, this complexity contributes to the development of the ideological manipulation. The mechanism of protagonist vs antagonist embedded in the three anecdotes justifies this complexity. In literary terms, George Bush and Tony Blair are introduced as the protagonists of these minimal stories while Saddam Hussein is presented as their antagonist. The Fulbright Iraqi scholar is portrayed as one of the victims of the antagonist's brutal deeds. And Laura Bush's father seems to be the supporter of the protagonists.

Playing the role of the protagonists or the central characters of the anecdotes, George Bush and Tony Blair are introduced as the good guys who are trying to save the American community from Saddam Hussein's harm and danger. Being presented as freedom -fighters, their main mission resides in fighting Saddam's Hussein's in order to assure the American freedom and protect the American citizens. Laura Bush tends to embellish the image of her husband and Tony Blair. She aims to make the audience believe that it is thanks to her husband's agonizing efforts and challenges that America is still cherishing freedom and peace. And Tony Blaire's presence in the

anecdote reflects Laura Bush's intention to show to the audience that even the other countries are supporting her husband. It is her way to justify her husband's invasion of Iraq. Laura Bush's father, however, is present to be a reflection to the glorifying American history and exposing Laura's proper and noble background.

Being the antagonist of these stories, Saddam Hussein is depicted in a negative way compared to the protagonists who are, of course, depicted in a positive way. Saddam Hussein is featured in the image of the monster that represents a threat to the USA. Terrorism and violence is the primary evil acts attributed to Saddam Hussein. The Fulbright Iraqi scholar is an essential character used to support Laura's negative attitude towards Saddam Hussein. Her story is an evidence of Hussein's brutality. Laura Bush introduces the Iraqi women as a victim of Saddam's brutality and aggression. In doing so, she achieved two goals, the first is the disclosure of the inhuman side of Saddam Hussein and the second is the projection of her human air by showing compassion for the Iraqi women.

### 3. Conclusion

Laura Bush has effectively used the anecdotes to make them appear much more attractive, amusing, and interesting. The emotional manipulation is done through the use of the rhetorical figures. The ideological one is done through the use of Van Dijk's overall strategy of self presentation vs other negative presentation. The empathy related expressions are used to convey the pathetic spirit while the feminine spirit is shown through the use of adjectives which are one of the feminine features.

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## Note

Note 1. The anecdote has been differently defined. Its use in various contexts has led many linguists, literary writers and even speech writers, to go beyond its literal meaning and give much more distinguished connotations and meanings to the term anecdote. In Oxford dictionary the term 'anecdote' is defined as 'a short amusing or interesting story about a real incident or person'. In fact, such definitions have been developed. Many linguists, literary writers and even historians have provided deeper explanations to the anecdote.

## Appendix A

### Original Speeches

#### Address by Laura Welch Bush to the Republican Convention in Philadelphia—August, 01, 2000.

[http://womenshistory.about.com/od/laurabush/a/laura\\_bush\\_1rnc.htm](http://womenshistory.about.com/od/laurabush/a/laura_bush_1rnc.htm)

[http://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=Laura+Bush++\(2000\)RNC&sm=12](http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Laura+Bush++(2000)RNC&sm=12)

I am honored—and a little overwhelmed—to help open the convention that will nominate my husband for President of the United States. You know I am completely objective when I say ... you have made a GREAT choice.

George and I have been blessed throughout our 23 years of marriage with many interesting opportunities. Our lives have changed enormously in the last six years. He was elected Governor, we moved to Austin with our then 13-year-old twin teenagers, and since then, we've been through dating, drivers licenses, prom night and just a few weeks ago, high school graduation.

Now we're helping our daughters pack for college and we're preparing for our next life crisis ... empty nest syndrome. They say parents often have to get out of the house when their kids go off to college because it seems so lonely. Everyone deals with it in different ways. But I told George I thought running for President was a little

extreme.

I'm grateful to my family for being here tonight. My mother, Jenna Welch, our daughters Barbara and Jenna, and a couple of people you may know ... my mother and father-in-law. I love them all dearly.

I thank Michael and all his students for helping introduce me. I have never had this many people watch me give a speech before, but I feel very at home here in this classroom setting. Education is the living room of my life.

George's opponent has been visiting schools lately and sometimes when he does, he spends the night before at the home of a teacher ... well, George spends EVERY night with a teacher.

*(A) (1) I first decided to become a teacher when I was in the second grade. Neither of my parents graduated from college, but I knew at an early age they had that high hope and high expectation for me. My Dad bought an education policy, and I remember him telling me, "Don't worry, your college education will be taken care of."*

*Growing up I practiced teaching on my dolls. I would line them up in rows for the day's lessons. Years later our daughters did the same thing. We used to joke that the Bush family had the best-educated dolls in America.*

*George and I always read to our girls—Dr. Seuss' "Hop on Pop" was one of his favorites. George would lie on the floor and the girls would literally hop on pop, turning story time into a contact sport.*

We wanted to teach our children what our parents had taught us ... that reading is entertaining and interesting and important. And one of the major reasons George is running for President is to make sure every child in America has that same opportunity. That's why he's proposed a 5 billion dollar Reading First initiative with a great American purpose ... to make sure every child in every neighborhood learns to read at grade level by third grade. George led a similar initiative as Governor with fabulous results. A highly respected, nonpartisan RAND study released just last week found our education reforms in Texas have resulted in some of the highest achievement gains in the country, among students from all racial, socioeconomic and family backgrounds.

It happened because George led the way, focusing state money and schools' attention on reading. We developed a rigorous research-based curriculum; we funded intensive in-school, after-school and summer school reading intervention programs—we improved teacher training.

When I taught school in Houston and Austin, many of my second, third and fourth grade students couldn't read, and frankly I'm not sure I was very good at teaching them.

I tried to make it fun by making the characters in children's books members of our class. We saved a web in the corner for Charlotte. But I know many teachers will agree we need better training in what works to teach children to read—and as president, George will fund improved teacher training.

Public school reforms are crucial but they aren't enough. Learning to read starts much earlier. Researchers have learned parents should read out loud to their babies ... toddler's vocabularies are closely related to how much time adults spend talking with them. And importantly, listening to television doesn't help a young child develop language skills—it's just background noise.

As First Lady, I will make early childhood development one of my priorities, and George will strengthen Head Start to make sure it's an early reading and early learning program.

I watched my husband make a difference as Governor, not by giving one speech about reading, but by giving one hundred speeches about reading—directing time, money and resources to our schools.

And that's the kind of discipline and commitment George will bring to the presidency. He'll set great goals, and he'll work tirelessly to achieve them.

George and I grew up in Midland, Texas—a small town in a vast desert—a place where neighbors had to help each other because any other help was too far away.

Midland was a place of family and community, and it had a sense of possibility as big as the West Texas sky. Midland formed value reserves as deep and longer lasting than any of its oil wells. And from the wellspring of those values, George developed the strength and constancy of conviction.

His core principles will not change with the winds of polls or politics or fame or fortune or misfortune. I know because I've known him through big legislative successes and a few defeats. I sat by his side during some winning and many losing baseball seasons. But George never loses sight of home plate.

I was looking through some family scrapbooks recently. The first year we married, George ran for Congress in West Texas. As I thumbed through the old brochures, what struck me is how the things George said then are the same things he believes now ... that government should be limited ... that local people make the best decisions

for their schools and communities ... that all laws and policies should support strong families ... that individuals are responsible for their actions.

George stood on these principles as Governor, and he worked with Republicans and Democrats to build consensus and get things done.

He shares credit and doesn't cast blame. He sets a tone that's positive and constructive, a tone that is very different from the bitterness and division that too often characterizes Washington D.C. Finally, George has a strong sense of purpose.

To quote the hymn that inspired his book, he believes we all have "a charge to keep," —a responsibility to use our different gifts to serve a cause greater than self.

The President of the United States of America is more than a man—or a woman, as I hope the case will sometime be. The President is the most visible symbol of our country, of its heart and its values and its leadership in the world. And when Americans vote this November, they will be looking for someone to uphold that high honor and that trust.

You can see it in the pictures. The pictures are one of the most compelling stories of this campaign. We first saw them on our very first campaign trip. They're the pictures of America's future.

Moms and Dads and grandparents bring them to parades and picnics. They hold out pictures of their children and they say to George ... "I'm counting on you ...I want my son or daughter to respect the President of the United States of America."

George is a leader who inspires the best in others and he will bring out the best in our country. George and I recently went to the high school graduation in Crawford, Texas, population 631. Like so many Americans, the people in Crawford are down-to-earth people with big dreams for their children.

*(B) This early summer night, the sky was huge and full of more stars that you could take in at once. The graduation was especially poignant because one young man who should have been there wasn't.*

*He died of cancer two years ago, during his sophomore year. His parents were on the front row, and we all cried with them. The community embraced them, on this special occasion that was so happy and so sad all at once.*

As I watched George visit with the graduates and their families, I thought ... This is America. Down-to-earth people who work hard, who care for our neighbors, who want a better life for our children. And the people of America deserve a leader who lifts our sights, who inspires us to dream bigger and do more.

In the midst of this presidential campaign, at our ranch outside of Crawford, George and I are building a house. It's a foundation to come home to—with a big sky to look up to.

As we worked on the plans, I put a door between bedrooms that our teenagers will probably want closed to keep us from hearing their conversations. But one day, we'll want to open that door so we can hear our grandchildren playing.

One day, God willing, George will be a fabulous grandfather. In the meantime, he'll make a great President.

Thank you, God bless you all, and God bless America.

Speech taken from website: [http://womenshistory.about.com/od/laurabush/a/laura\\_bush\\_1rnc.htm](http://womenshistory.about.com/od/laurabush/a/laura_bush_1rnc.htm)

## **Laura Bush**

### **2004 Republican Party Convention Address-September 1, 2004**

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/3617428.stm>

[http://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=Laura+Bush++\(2004\)RNC&sm=12](http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Laura+Bush++(2004)RNC&sm=12)

Thank you, George. I like being introduced by the president of the United States. And Barbara and Jenna, you were great. We are so proud of you both.

I want to recognize the best father- and mother-in-law anyone could ever ask for: President Bush and Barbara Bush. And my husband's brothers and sister who have become my brothers and sister too.

Watching tonight from her home in Midland, Texas, my mother, Jenna Welch. Thank you for the wonderful privilege you have given my husband and me of serving this great country.

**A (1)** *Our lives have been enriched by meeting so many of our fellow Americans. As we've visited your*

*communities, we have witnessed your decency, kindness and character (L). I am enjoying this campaign. It has reminded me of our very first one, 26 years ago. George and I were newly-weds and he was running for Congress.*

*Our transportation wasn't quite as fancy back then—an Oldsmobile Cutlass—and George was behind the wheel. Even then, he was always on time and he knew exactly where he wanted to go. You learn a lot about your husband when you spend that much time in a car with him. By the end of the campaign, he had even convinced me to vote for him.*

This time I don't need any convincing. I am so proud of the way George has led our country with strength and conviction. Tonight, I want to try to answer the question that I believe many people would ask me if we sat down for a cup of coffee or ran into each other at the store: "You know him better than anyone—you've seen things no-one else has seen—why do you think we should re-elect your husband as president?"

As you might imagine, I have a lot to say about that.

### **Past achievements**

I could talk about my passion, education. At every school we visit, the students are so eager. *(B) Last fall, the president and I walked into an elementary school in Hawaii, and a little second-grader came out to welcome us and bellowed, "George Washington!" Close, just the wrong George W.* When my husband took office, too many schools were leaving too many children behind, so he worked with Congress to pass sweeping education reform. The No Child Left behind Act provides historic levels of funding with an unprecedented commitment to higher standards, strong accountability and proven methods of instruction. We are determined to provide a quality education for every child in America.

I could talk about the small business owners and entrepreneurs who are now creating most of the new jobs in our country. Women like Carmela Chaifos—the only woman to own a tow-truck company in all of Iowa. The president's tax relief helped Carmela to buy the business and modernise her fleet and expand her operations.

Carmela is living proof of what she told me. She said: "If you're determined and you want to work hard, you can do anything you want to. That's the beautiful thing about America."

I could talk about health care. For years, leaders in both parties said we should provide prescription drug coverage in Medicare. George was able to bring Republicans and Democrats together to get it done.

I could talk about the fact that my husband is the first president to provide federal funding for stem cell research. He did so in a principled way, allowing science to explore its potential while respecting the dignity of human life.

I could talk about the record increase in home ownership. Home ownership in America, especially minority home ownership is at an all time high.

All of these issues are important. But we are living in the midst of the most historic struggle my generation has ever known. The stakes are so high. So I want to talk about the issue that I believe is most important for my own daughters, for all our families, and for our future: George's work to protect our country and defeat terror, so that all children can grow up in a more peaceful world.

### **"Frontlines of freedom"**

*(C) As we gather in this hall and around our television sets tonight, Joshua Crane stands watch aboard the USS John C Tennis. His brothers Matthew and Nicholas stand watch near Fallujah. At home in Colorado, their mother Cindy stands watch too—with worry and prayer.*

She told me all three of her sons enlisted after 11 September, because they recognized the threat to our country. Our nation is grateful to all the men and women of our armed forces who are standing guard on the front lines of freedom.

*(D) A dad whose wife is deployed in Iraq recently wrote about what he is learning as he struggles to rear his three children alone. "I have ruined at least three loads of laundry," he said, "Once you turn everything pink, it stays pink." He goes on: "I have learned what our soldiers' wives have known for generations - hope and grief and perseverance.* This time of war has been a time of great hardship for our military families. The president and I want all our men and women in uniform and their wives and husbands, mothers and fathers, sons and daughters to know we appreciate their sacrifice. We know it will mean a more peaceful future for our children and grandchildren.

No American president ever wants to go to war. Abraham Lincoln didn't want to go to war, but he knew saving

the union required it. Franklin Roosevelt didn't want to go to war, but he knew defeating tyranny demanded it. And my husband didn't want to go to war, but he knew the safety and security of America and the world depended on it.

### Difficult decisions

**(E)** *(1.3) I remember some very quiet nights at the dinner table. George was weighing grim scenarios and ominous intelligence about potentially even more devastating attacks. I listened many nights as George talked with foreign leaders on the phone, or in our living room, or at our ranch in Crawford.*

*I remember an intense weekend at Camp David. George and Prime Minister Tony Blair were discussing the threat from Saddam Hussein. And I remember sitting in the window of the White House, watching as my husband walked on the lawn below. I knew he was wrestling with these agonizing decisions that would have such profound consequence for so many lives and for the future of our world. And I was there when my husband had to decide. Once again, as in our parents' generation, America had to make the tough choices, the hard decisions, and lead the world toward greater security and freedom.*

**(F)** *I wasn't born when my father went to World War II. Like so many of our greatest generation, he is gone now, lost to Alzheimer's nine years ago. He served in the US Army in Europe for almost three years, and helped liberate Nord hasten, one of the concentration camps. You cannot imagine his horror at what he found there. The methods of the terrorists we face today are different—but my father would know this struggle.*

*Our parents' generation confronted tyranny and liberated millions. As we do the hard work of confronting today's threat—we can also be proud that 50 million more men, women and children live in freedom, thanks to the United States of America and our allies. After years of being treated as virtual prisoners in their own homes by the Taleban, the women of Afghanistan are going back to work. After being denied an education, even the chance to learn to read, the little girls in Afghanistan are now in school.*

*Almost every eligible voter—over 10 million Afghan citizens—have registered to vote in this fall's presidential election, more than 40% of them women. And wasn't it wonderful to watch the Olympics and see that beautiful Afghan sprinter race in long pants and a T-shirt, exercising her new freedom while respecting the traditions of her country.*

**(G)** *I recently met a young Iraqi woman. She is one of the new Iraqi Fulbright scholars. She survived horrific ordeals, including the gassing of her village by Saddam Hussein. She told me that when people look at Iraq, what they don't see is that Iraq is a country of 25 million people, each with their own hope.*

As we watch the people of Iraq and Afghanistan take the first steps to build free countries, I am reminded of what Vaclav Havel told me. Vaclav Havel - playwright, intellectual, freedom fighter, political prisoner, then president of the Czech Republic, "Laura, you know, democracy is hard—it requires the participation of everybody."

I think of how long it took us in our country, even though we were given such a perfect document by our founders. It took almost 100 years after the founders declared that all men are created equal for America to abolish slavery—and not until 84 years ago this month did American women get the right to vote.

Our nation has not always lived up to its ideals—yet those ideals have never ceased to guide us. They expose our flaws and lead us to mend them. We are the beneficiaries of the work of the generations before us and it is each generation's responsibility to continue that work.

### Changes

These last three years since 11 September have been difficult years in our country's history—years that have demanded the hope, grief and perseverance that our soldier's husband wrote about.

We've learned some lessons we didn't want to know—that our country is more vulnerable than we thought, that some people hate us because we stand for liberty, religious freedom and tolerance. But we have been heartened to discover that we are also braver than we thought, stronger and more generous.

These have been years of change for our family as well. Our girls went off to college and graduated, and now they are backing home. We are so happy they are campaigning with us this fall and so proud they will be pursuing their own careers soon. My mother moved out of my childhood home and into a retirement community. We lost our beloved dog Spotty, and had our hearts warmed by the antics of Barney.

**(H)** *People ask me all the time whether George has changed. He's a little greyer - and of course, he has learned and grown as we all have. But he's still the same person I met at a backyard barbecue in Midland, Texas and*



*married three months later. And you've come to know many of the same things that I know about him.*

He'll always tell you what he really thinks. You can count on him, especially in a crisis. His friends don't change—and neither do his values. He has boundless energy and enthusiasm for his job, and for life itself. He treats every person he meets with dignity and respect; the same dignity and respect he has for the office he holds.

And he's a loving man, with a big heart. I've seen tears as he has hugged families who've lost loved ones. I've seen him return the salute of soldiers wounded in battle. And then, being George, he's invited them to come visit us at the White House. And they've come, bringing an infectious spirit of uniquely American confidence that we are doing the right thing and that our future will be better because of our actions today.

Many of my generation remember growing up at the height of the Cold War, hiding under desks during civil defense drills in case the communists attacked us. And now, when parents ask me, "What should we tell our children," I think about those desks.

We need to reassure our children that our police and firemen, and military and intelligence workers are doing everything possible to keep them safe. We need to remind them that most people in the world are good. And we need to explain that because of strong American leadership in the past, we don't hide under our desks anymore.

Because of President Bush's leadership and the bravery of our men and women in uniform, I believe our children will grow up in a world where today's terror alerts have also become a thing of the past.

These are also years of hope for our country and our people. We have great confidence in our ability to overcome challenges. We have gained a new appreciation for the many blessings of America, and been reminded of our responsibilities to the country that we love.

George and I grew up in West Texas, where the sky seems endless and so do the possibilities. He brings that optimism, that sense of promise, that certainty that a better day is before us to his job every day—and with your help, he'll do so for four more years. These are times that require an especially strong and determined leader. And I'm proud that my husband is that kind of leader.

Thank you, God bless you and God bless America.

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