

DISSERTATIONES PHILOLOGIAE ANGLICAE
UNIVERSITATIS TARTUENSIS

2

DISSERTATIONES PHILOLOGIAE ANGLICAE
UNIVERSITATIS TARTUENSIS

2

**CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS
OF ANTI-FEMINIST RHETORIC
AS A CATALYST IN THE EMERGENCE
OF THE CONSERVATIVE UNIVERSE
OF DISCOURSE IN THE UNITED STATES
IN THE 1970S–1980S**

RAILI PÕLDSAAR



TARTU UNIVERSITY
PRESS

Department of Germanic and Romance Languages and Literatures, Faculty of
Philosophy, University of Tartu, Estonia

The Council of the Department of Germanic and Romance Languages and
Literatures has, on 15 November 2006, accepted this dissertation to be defended
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English Language and Literature

Supervisor: Professor Krista Vogelberg, University of Tartu

Reviewer: Professor Irina Novikova, University of Latvia

The thesis will be defended in the Council Hall of the University of Tartu on 20
December 2006.

The publication of the dissertation was funded by the Department of Germanic
and Romance Languages and Literatures, University of Tartu.

ISSN 1736-4469

ISBN 9949-11-491-8 (trükis)

ISBN 9949-11-492-6 (PDF)

Copyright Raili Põldsaar, 2006

Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus

www.tyk.ee

Tellimus nr. 626

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	7
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	8
INTRODUCTION.....	9
CHAPTER 1. Equality and difference in feminist thought and political practice.....	36
1.1. Feminism, equality and difference.....	36
1.2. Equality, difference and American feminist practice:	
Equal Rights Amendment.....	51
1.2.1. The emergence of the ERA.....	51
1.2.2. The ERA in the 1970s–1980s: emergence and fate on the national level.....	56
1.2.3. Opposition to the ERA.....	61
1.2.4. Causes of the failure of the ERA.....	71
1.3. Research on the ERA campaigns and the present thesis.....	76
CHAPTER 2. Language, power and ideology: Critical Discourse Analysis.....	79
2.1. Language, discourse, society.....	79
2.2. Michel Foucault and the notion of discourse.....	83
2.3. Ideology, hegemony and the production of consent.....	88
2.4. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).....	93
CHAPTER 3. Critical Discourse Analysis of the anti-feminist discourse on the ERA: Phyllis Schlafly’s <i>The Power of the Positive Woman</i> (1977).....	107
3.1. Description of the corpus.....	107
3.2. Description of textual practice in the PPW.....	108
3.2.1. Vocabulary.....	108
3.2.2. Grammatical choices.....	120
3.2.3. Values attributed to the dimensions of meaning at the level of description.....	124
3.3. Interpretation of the discursive practice in the PPW.....	125
3.3.1. Situational context.....	125
3.3.2. Intertextual context.....	127
3.3.3. Mental models and frames.....	129
3.4. Explanation of the PPW as social practice.....	136
CHAPTER 4. Critical Discourse Analysis of the anti-feminist discourse on the ERA: ERA-related texts from the <i>Phyllis Schlafly Report</i> (1980–1983).....	141

4.1. Description of the corpus	141
4.2. Description of textual practice in the PSR	143
4.2.1. Articles.....	143
4.2.1.1 Vocabulary.....	143
4.2.1.2. Grammatical choices.....	157
4.2.1.3. Textual features.....	160
4.2.2. Other verbal texts in the PSR.....	163
4.2.2.1. Vocabulary.....	163
4.2.2.2. Grammatical choices.....	171
4.2.2.3. Textual features.....	174
4.2.3. Multimodal texts.....	174
4.2.3.1. Caricatures	174
4.2.3.2. Photos	177
4.2.4. Values attributed to the dimensions of meaning at the level of description	179
4.3. Interpretation of the discursive practice in the PSR.....	180
4.3.1. Articles.....	180
4.3.1.1. Situational context	180
4.3.1.2. Intertextual context	181
4.3.1.3. Mental models and frames	184
4.3.2. Other verbal texts.....	187
4.3.2.1. Situational context	187
4.3.2.2 Intertextual context	188
4.3.2.3. Mental model and frames	190
4.3.3. Multimodal texts.....	192
4.3.3.1. Situational context	192
4.3.3.2 Intertextual context	192
4.3.3.3. Mental model and frames	194
4.4. Explanation of the ERA-related texts in the PSR as social practice.....	195
CONCLUSION.....	201
REFERENCES	213
APPENDIX 1. Corpus 2: ERA-related articles from the <i>Phyllis Schlafly</i> <i>Report</i> (1980–1983).....	225
APPENDIX 2. The Equal Rights Amendment.....	227
SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN. Ameerika Ühendriikide sotsiaalkonservatiivse diskursuse kujunemise 1970.–1980. aastate anti-feministliku retoorika kriitilise diskursusanalüüsi näitel	228
CURRICULUM VITAE.....	234

ABSTRACT

Gender issues have been re-politicised in the increasingly conservative USA of the 2000s, creating a need for fresh analyses of the discursive positioning of gender in the conservative universe of discourse. The present thesis is dedicated to the Critical Discourse Analysis of the representation of gender equality in anti-feminist rhetoric employed in debates about the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) in the 1970s–1980s, claiming that it was the anti-feminist rhetoric that acted as a catalyst in the emergence of the conservative universe of political discourse that still dominates in the American public debate.

The Introduction analyses conservatism in the United States and the emergence of the New Right in the 1960s–1970s. The thesis argues that it was social issues such as the ERA that helped to forge the conservative coalition. The analysis focuses on the discursive challenge posed by Phyllis Schlafly's STOP-ERA campaign that de-legitimised feminism in particular and social liberal political stances in general within the American value system.

Chapter 1 discusses feminist debates on equality and difference and how they informed the first- and second-wave feminist movements in the US. The focus will be on the practical applications of the debate, as revealed in the campaigns about the ERA from the 1920s to the 1980s. The chapter also introduces previous research on the ERA.

Chapter 2 is dedicated to the discussion of the notions of discourse and power, on the basis of the work of Michel Foucault, Antonio Gramsci and Louis Althusser. The chapter presents the version of Critical Discourse Analysis developed by Norman Fairclough, adapted in the thesis with insights from Teun Van Dijk, Robert Entman and George Lakoff. CDA proposes a three-tier analysis: the description of textual practice, the interpretation of discursive practice and the explanation of the social effects of the discursive practice.

Chapters 3 and 4 provide a close linguistic analysis of two text corpora undertaken to detect the discursive strategies used to create what became a lasting shift towards conservatism in the American public discourse. Chapter 3 analyses Phyllis Schlafly's 1977 book *The Power of the Positive Woman* that sought to popularise social conservative ideas. Chapter 4 examines ERA-related texts from the *Phyllis Schlafly Report*, social conservative activist newsletter, from 1980–1983. The analysis of the two corpora aims to discover differences in the discursive strategies used inside and outside the conservative grassroots circles as well as the extent to which they change after the victory of conservatism in American politics. Ultimately, the analysis of the anti-ERA campaign is placed within a broader social context to elucidate the uses of social conservative values discourse in maintaining the American status quo.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the Open Estonia Foundation for the travel grants that allowed me to collect primary data at the New York Public Library and conduct library research at Cornell University in 2004 and at the University of East Anglia in 2006.

I also wish to thank Associate Professor Maureen Montgomery from the University of Canterbury for the opportunity to use the university's library resources and for providing an atmosphere conducive to creative research.

I am grateful to Associate Professor Gail Bederman from the University of Notre Dame for opening up new disciplinary vistas and inspiring me to study gender and history.

I would also like to thank Professor Irina Novikova from the University of Latvia for the comments on the present thesis but also her energising example in gender studies research in an academic context where gender is only coming to be accepted as a legitimate area of study.

Thanks are, above all, due to my supervisor, Professor Krista Vogelberg, for her constructive advice on the drafts of the thesis and all the stimulating discussions during the years the thesis took shape that helped me maintain enthusiasm for my work. In addition, I am grateful to her for providing an environment that encouraged intellectual freedom and commitment to socially relevant research.

INTRODUCTION

In 1987 the British feminist thinker Judith Mitchell (1987: 39) noted that gender equality seemed “to have become a somewhat unfashionable concept” and that, although equal rights continued to be a target of political campaigns, the concept no longer enjoyed the unanimous support it once had had. This trend has not been reversed in the Anglo-American political discourse in the past twenty years. If anything, the “untrendiness” has only increased and gender equality enters political discourse primarily in discussions around UN development programmes targeted to the “developing nations” and in pertinent EU efforts in incorporating new member countries¹. According to this reigning consensus, gender equality is a problem for the postcolonial “Other” in Africa, the Middle-East or Eastern Europe, not leading first-world nations. This “export” of gender equality discussion has had a twofold effect: it has relocated the topic at a safe distance from the domestic policy debates in the US and led to a situation where gender issues have become enmeshed in the wider project of Western imperialism. Although Western feminism has been instrumental in furthering equality discourses in non-Western nations, the relationship has not been entirely harmonious as, because of a lack of cultural awareness and/or sensitivity, feminism may become yet another totalising discourse of neo-colonial *mission civilisatrice* that casts the non-Western woman “as either a child or miscreant, but certainly not political co-worker, let alone sister” (Lâm 1994: 872–873). This ambivalent position has made feminism vulnerable to co-optation in hegemonic policies antagonistic to the feminist project, which has not been conducive to the emergence of substantial global equality dialogues beneficial to all participants in the exchange (Pöldsaaar 2003: 123–135).

The “Othering” of gender equality into a post-colonial slot has exiled it from domestic policy discussions in the US.² This relative indifference, in itself, need not be a sign of an anti-feminist backlash. The lack of attention to gender equality in the American context can be explained by the successes of the second-wave feminist movement that, indeed, led to the adoption of laws that protect women’s increasingly equitable participation in the public sphere (Harrison 2003: 155). The principle of gender equality has, at least as a democratic political ideal, been broadly accepted, even if there continue to be uncertainties about what this equality should entail. Many of the achievements

¹ Although gender equality is mentioned as one of the goals of the EU and there are elaborate regulations to offer different equality guarantees, the concept of equality used is limited. The problems inherent in the EU gender equality policies have been pointed out by, for example, Chichowski (2002: 232) or, from a linguistic aspect, by Wodak (2005: 95-97).

² The same applies, to an extent, also to the UK where the Blair government has been responding to EU equality recommendations, however, without initiating a wider public debate about gender equality (Squires 2003: 200).

of the feminist struggles of the 1960s–1970s are largely taken for granted today, without realising how changes in the political climate stealthily erode some of the legal foundations of the currently existing gender equality guarantees. Another explanation for the passivity on policy issues such as gender equality may lie in the complacency of much of the American electorate about the basic principles of American governance, taken to be exemplary and in no need of revision (Lewis 1999: 258). In a similar vein, the legal scholar Deborah Rhode (1997: 13) has explained the lack of a gender equality debate in the US with the general American unwillingness to see “the gap between formal rights and actual practices”. Being rhetorically reassured of the advancement of gender equality in the US, especially in contrast to the dire situation of women in the Islamic world, the majority of American citizens remain oblivious to the potential reformulations of gender equality that may have far-reaching consequences for the position of women and men in American society.

This political quietism raises concerns in a social climate where conservatism has become the dominant force in the American political mainstream, launching a new battle for the American soul and moral fibre, with social and cultural values as a central target. Although the slogan “personal is political” was coined and popularised by the second-wave feminist movement, it has been successfully domesticated by the conservatives who dominate discussions on values and private life today (Lakoff 2002: 19). Such conservative ideologies of gender and sexuality have always existed in the US, their resilience explained by the Puritan roots of the country, but they have blossomed in the “born-again politics” (Marsden 1990: 262) since the 1970s and have now taken very tangible legal shape in recent measures such as the proposed Federal Marriage Amendment, initiatives that prefer abstinence education to information on reproductive health, and reduction of funding for the international anti-AIDS programmes that also provide information about birth control. These measures that “serve to reinforce the old alliance of family, respectability, race and nation” (De Hart 2001: 42) are but few examples of the “stealth misogyny” (Goldstein 2003) that seeks to apply a normative cure to heal the traditionalist gender order ruptured by the permissive 1960s.

Thus, as a result of what several authors (e.g., Finlay 2006) have called the present administration’s “war on women”, the status of gender equality as a general good or a political ideal is anything but secure in the United States, especially in the light of the increasingly concerted social conservative legal activism of recent years, even if the majority of the population seem to have remained largely oblivious to the shift. For this reason, it is necessary today to take a look back at the formation of the social conservative anti-feminist discourse in the 1970s, to see the shaping of discursive strategies that streamline the social conservative stance on gender and sexuality with the American value system, challenging, if not outright discrediting, the feminist and social liberal alternatives. It does not seem a coincidence that Phyllis Schlafly, a key figure in the conservative discursive revolution on gender, has once again taken to the

public podium to declare victory of the conservative revolution and celebrate the death of feminism (Schlafly 2003: 3–43). Although it is premature to pronounce feminism dead (Schlafly herself has been repeating this very announcement for thirty years, the very stridency of her tone testifying to the tenacity of feminist ethos), it and its social agenda of equality have certainly been marginalised in policy discussions as both dominant political parties have veered to the right and adopted a discourse that is closer to social conservative than social liberal ideals.

Before embarking on an in-depth analysis of the rise of conservatism and the attendant shift in the American public discourse, it is necessary to elucidate some of the central terms that are all too often used without proper definition and thus rendered at best useless, at worst misleading. The terms “liberal” and “conservative” are among the most frequently used in social and political analysis yet both terms have multiple, often contradictory, meanings. In order to grasp the relevance of the discursive fluctuations in liberalism and conservatism, it is important to not only establish the meanings in which the terms are used in this work but also to map the complexities involved in both notions, for it is the inherent contradictions in the competing ideologies that have rendered the terms so malleable in manipulative use aimed at shaping public opinion. It can be said that it is only possible to appreciate the premeditated and unpremeditated conflation of the terms if, to repeat Jeff Weintraub (1997: 3), “we start with a clear grasp of the differences between them”.

Classical liberalism, dated back to the work of philosophers like John Locke, Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill, is a combination of political and economic liberalism, centring on the notions of individual rights – that are to be protected from other individuals as well as from the state – but also private property and laissez-faire economic policies. Neoliberalism, put forward in influential works by Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman, is the extension of the original economic liberalism to contemporary context that fuses fierce protection of laissez-faire economic policies with emphasis on global free trade and the reduction of the influence of national governments. It can be said that the two related conceptions of liberalism seek to guarantee people’s negative liberty, that is, freedom from coercion and authority of others (Berlin 1969: 122–131).

These two meanings stand in sharp contrast to social liberalism (also known as modern liberalism or welfare liberalism) that has developed since the 19th century and stipulates a positive role of the state in securing its citizens’ positive liberty, that is, their opportunities and means for self-realisation (Berlin 1969: 131–134). Although, like classical liberalism, social liberalism also functions within a market-capitalist framework and focuses on individual freedom, it claims that inequalities in economic opportunities, education and civil liberties hinder people’s individual freedom and should, therefore, be reduced with the help of government intervention. Another new extension of liberalism is cultural liberalism that emphasises tolerance of difference and people’s right to freedom of choice in matters of worldview, culture and lifestyle (sexual prefe-

rence, cohabitation arrangements, etc.), without government or legal intervention.

There are equally great divisions between different types of conservatism. Classical conservatism, mostly associated with figures such as Edmund Burke in the Anglophone world, suggests opposition to change and progress, with emphasis on hierarchical social structure, law and order, suspicion of government and traditionalism. This continues to be the typical understanding of conservatism in the European context. In the US, its closest form is probably social conservatism, identified by its staunch patriotism, belief in small and limited federal government, defence of traditionalist social values and arrangements on the level of family but also community, the latter at times extending up to the state – as opposed to federal – level. Social conservatism is close to but does not completely overlap with religious conservatism.

These traditionalist forms of conservatism differ from fiscal conservatism, another term for neoliberalism, and neoconservatism, an ideology that has above all argued for an assertive foreign policy and the extension of American power abroad, with less interest in social affairs. Although these two versions of conservatism are sympathetic to social conservative aims, their primary commitments lie elsewhere and are frequently antagonistic to social conservatism (e.g., neoliberals may at least theoretically hold culturally liberal values). Sometimes the term “liberal conservative” is used for a strand of conservatism that integrates belief in the importance of tradition, but not necessarily religious fervour, with neoliberal ideals. This trend is especially notable in countries where liberal economic ideals are themselves part of the tradition to be protected (e.g., the US).

The very diversity of definitions of the two terms shows that we are dealing with complex ideological preferences (it need not be possible to identify either as one coherent ideology) with disparate ranges of usage. These lasting ambiguities help to understand the shifting position of both terms in American politics and their use in political rhetoric, as will be explained in detail below. Although in the thesis the emphasis is on, on the one hand, social and cultural liberals and, on the other hand, social conservatives, in order to avoid confusion, the subtypes of liberalism and conservatism will be specified on all occasions where it is possible to minimise potential misunderstanding. The words will be left unmodified in references to the work of other authors but also when the discussion concerns labels used, rather than the specific ideologies they represent.

Conservatism and liberalism, in all their different guises, are also central to the discussion of gender equality. Mitchell speculates that the reason for the waxing and waning of equality discourses can be found in the socio-political context. According to her equality gains prominence as an attractive political alternative vis-à-vis two types of conservatism: classical conservatism and neoliberalism (Mitchell 1987: 40). Yet, in the context of the broad-based conservative resurgence that started in the USA in the 1970s-1980s, equality

discourses have not emerged as viable political alternatives to conservative policy agendas. The thesis argues that this absence can be explained by the success of the conservative coalition in the deployment of discursive strategies that align the array of social and fiscal conservative values with the American value system and “Other” those of social and cultural liberals. The thesis elucidates the process on the example of gender equality because of its centrality to the various liberal and conservative movements of the 1960s, the era of the discursive realignment that, to quote Micklethwait and Wooldridge (2004), has by now made the USA a “Right Nation”.

Conservatism and liberalism have existed in the US from the birth of the nation, although both directions of ideology, following the pattern of exceptionalism so common to much of American political thought, have had meanings and political loci distinct from those used in European political discourse (Lipset 2000: 32). A country built on Lockean³ ideals of natural rights and protections of liberties from the start identified itself as a bastion of classical liberalism and denounced the class-based classical conservatism of Europe. Although the definitions of both liberalism and conservatism often remained vague in such declarations, it has been habitual for centuries in the US to align oneself with liberalism and decry conservatism (Micklethwait and Wooldridge 2004: 8–9). This has led to a situation where both American liberals and conservatives rely on a foundation of classical liberalism, even if they avoid the label or modify the concept to fit their other ideals. As a result, ideological contestation between liberalism and conservatism does not challenge the centrality of classical liberalism, equated as it is in many ways with the “American way”, but is focussed on methods of implementing classical liberalist values in social and political practice. Substantial disagreements appear in other areas, especially social and cultural affairs, discussed in detail below.

Thus, the “conservative groundswell” (Bjerre-Poulsen 2002: 13) that emerged on the American political scene with the election of Ronald Reagan stands in sharp contrast not so much to the classical liberal roots of the nation as to the modified social liberalism that dominated the American political discourse in the mid-20th century. This, however, does not suggest the absence of social or classical conservatism from the American political scene. Rather, in the post-WWII era the status quo, labelled liberal consensus by Hodgson (1976), was built on a compromise in which social liberals agreed to social conservative anti-Communist foreign policies and social conservatives to social liberal domestic measures, in a modified form. After all, the cataclysms of the preceding decades had unequivocally demonstrated the shortcomings of key

³ Locke formed many of his ideas about property and the state of nature with reference to America, best known in his statement that “in the beginning, all the world was America” (Locke 1967: II §49). It is only fitting that the ideas were subsequently imported to America and realised there.

aspects of classical liberalism: the Great Depression proved the weaknesses of laissez-faire economic system, WWII of isolationist foreign policy. No such compromise with social or cultural liberalism seems forthcoming in the conservative consensus of today, although the electoral shifts of the 2006 mid-term elections may usher in a broader political realignment. If in the 1950s there seemed to be no viable alternative to liberalism, there does not seem to be one to conservatism today. The oft-quoted opinion of Lionel Trilling (1950: IX) sounds more than ironical in retrospect:

In the United States at this time liberalism is not only the dominant but even the sole intellectual tradition. For it is the plain fact that nowadays there are no conservative or reactionary ideas in general circulation. This does not mean, of course, that there is no impulse to conservatism or to reaction. Such impulses are certainly very strong, perhaps even stronger than most of us know. But the conservative impulse and the reactionary impulse do not, with some isolated and some ecclesiastical exceptions, express themselves in ideas but only in action or in irritable mental gestures which seem to resemble ideas.

While Trilling's prediction could not have been more wrong with regard to the vitality of the conservative tradition in the US, he perceptively notes an important detail about contemporary conservatism, especially social conservatism: its lack of an intellectual tradition.⁴ This absence has also dismayed non-liberals. For example, the conservative historian John Lukacs (2005) has expressed his disappointment in the American conservative movements for not developing a coherent philosophy in addition to the negative identification through antipathy for social and cultural liberalism. This tendency to identify themselves through symbols, not philosophy, renders social conservatives the nationalists of the US, in his opinion, a dangerous position: "Nationalism is a very low and cheap common denominator that unites people. /.../ People take satisfaction from the idea that we are good because our enemies are evil" (Heer 2005). The primary peril, in Lukacs' opinion, lies in the fact that one cannot build a stable system on such populist premises and this does not bode well for conservatism as a potential unifying philosophy of the US.

Although Trilling's wording in the quotation above is ironical, his observation that conservatism manifests itself in action rather than theorisation continues to have validity, especially with regard to social conservatives.⁵ Most

⁴ Here neoconservatives with their intellectual ambition stand as a distinct exception to the conservative rule. However, it is also important to point out that they represent the strand of conservatism that has the least popular appeal.

⁵ Alan Brinkley (1994: 425) has argued that the lack of a coherent intellectual framework and the abundance of ideological contradictions in contemporary conservative agendas has baffled historians, especially as social conservative activism has contradicted their basic assumptions about the logic of development of modern societies in general and the US in particular. For Brinkley, this is one of the possible reasons for the paucity of serious historical enquiry into conservatisms in America.

of those actions have clustered around nostalgic calls to revive the mythic America of the past and make it the America of the future. It can be argued that it is this symbolic struggle that has won social conservatives their present central position on the American political landscape as an embodiment of “authentic” America opposed to the transitory versions offered by the political elites. Even if social conservative appeal remains philosophically incoherent, it has led to tectonic shifts in the American political terrain, the success of which can also be measured by the changed perception of the US abroad: the country once identified primarily through its modernity and mobility is now virtually inseparable from social conservatism and even parochialism (Micklethwait and Wooldridge 2004: 414–415).

Contemporary American conservative revolution was largely won on cultural issues pregnant with symbolism and associations with American myths and moral absolutes. This helps to explain the centrality of the anti-feminist backlash to the social conservative discursive project, the object of analysis in the present thesis. There are few social constructions more integrally linked than gender and nation and thus all projects targeted at (re)constructing a nation become entangled in producing normative constructions of gender. For that reason, it is hoped that the present analysis helps understand not only the success of anti-feminist discourse but that of American conservative discourse in general. Since most authors writing on the issue today (e.g., Hamburger and Wallsten 2006, Edsall 2006) seem to agree that the social conservative dominance has come to stay in the US, it is imperative to understand the strategies that led to this success. The thesis argues that an analysis of the gender equality debates of the past will lead to a better understanding of the world of discourse today and not only in the United States. Owing to the position of the US as the political and cultural Centre of today’s world, the discursive struggles in that nation have a wide global ripple effect. This effect is especially pronounced in post-Socialist “New Europe” that has taken the US and ideological tenets borrowed from there as its ticket to the club of developed nations. It is therefore believed that the present analysis could also contribute to a multilayered understanding of the socio-political climate of Eastern Europe and its multiple paradoxes of gender.⁶

To understand how the shift from a social liberal to social conservative consensus was achieved in the US, the thesis first analyses the tensions inherent in the liberal-conservative dichotomy as well as the formation of today’s broad-based conservative coalition in the United States in the 20th century. The aim of this exercise is not an ideological exegesis of conservatism but, rather, an attempt to dispel the semantic obfuscation that surrounds the notion, especially vis-à-vis its European usage. Appreciating the ambiguities hidden in the deceptively clear term is instrumental to understanding the ideological under-

⁶ For a comprehensive analysis of the complexities in the reception of feminism in the Baltic countries, see Novikova 2003: 24–57).

pinnings and political strategies that shaped the campaign launched against gender equality in the 1970s–1980s as well as the social conservative slogans employed today. Another justification for this historical introduction to conservatism is the relative dearth of research into this particular political philosophy in the US. After all, as Alan Brinkley (1994: 409) noted in his seminal essay, conservatism has been something of an orphan in historical research (cf. above). Although there are several influential studies of women’s mobilisation into social conservative activism (e.g., Klatsch 1987, Mathews and De Hart 1990), the majority of the scholarship on the conservative revolution has been interested in either the restructuring of the conservative ideology (Lowi 1995, Bjerre-Poulsen 2002) or the structural issues involved in the consolidation of the divergent conservative movement as a whole, with but passing references to gender (Schoenwald 2001, Bjerre-Poulsen 2002).

The present thesis attempts to synthesise the results of the scholars whose research has focussed on conservatisms to show how ideological contestations between competing types of conservatism led to the foregrounding of gender-related campaigns on the unified conservative agenda. This thesis, however, differs from social science and historical research in its approach to data as well as in its research goals. Thus, Bjerre-Poulsen (2002: 11) seeks to study not “the social psychology of American conservatives, but their political mobilization” and, similarly to Schoenwald (2001), focuses on the socio-political aspects of developing the conservative movement. The present thesis will also study conservative mobilisation but from a linguistic-discursive angle. Moreover, it aims at a more ambitious project of identifying why gender was the element of the social conservative discursive universe that successfully captured the social psychology of the American electorate. The focus of the thesis is not on the internal workings of the volatile conservative movement but the face it sought to project to the American public as it was this face that helped shift American perceptions of both (social) conservatism and, to an extent, gender. Although perfectly aware of the inevitable imprecision of generalised claims, the thesis ultimately seeks to arrive at a better understanding of the discursive mechanisms that can be exploited to ensure the success of certain ideologies in the American universe of political discourse. The period when the shift from a social liberal consensus to a social conservative one took place seems a pertinent moment to study, for it is in moments of transition that fissures in otherwise naturalised ideological frameworks are most likely to be apparent.

As already mentioned above, conservatism has held a precarious position in the American national ethos. Many authors have even argued that “American conservatism” is oxymoronic as the United States was built on the principle of egalitarian liberalism, a concept that remains undefined but seems to act as a synonym to classical liberalism (Shapiro 2004: 462). In probably the most influential text arguing for this view, Louis Hartz (1955: 16) states that the US “represents the liberal mechanism of Europe functioning without the European social antagonisms”. According to this position, as the US lacks hereditary

aristocracy and other privilege-bound features, there is no political niche for classical conservatism, the ideology identified with belief in hierarchies, elitism and scepticism about social change. Locke's natural rights have been included in the US Declaration of Independence and Adam Smith's tenets of free-market capitalism as a guarantee of such rights have been built into the fabric of American social life. Furthermore, Americans of all political persuasions have embraced technological progress and capitalism, an anathema for many European conservatives.⁷ This suggests that classical liberalism, indeed, is the American tradition.

It is also notable that Edmund Burke, frequently called "the patron saint of British conservatism" (Micklethwait and Wooldridge 2004: 319), lauded the American Revolution for its goal of adapting government so as to serve individual rights, not engineering a government to alter human nature like the French Revolution had done (Burke 1955). The liberal revolution of America was thus in a way traditionalist from the present-day point of view as it was inspired by the relatively conservative agenda of classical liberalism that has now become a central feature of American national mythology. As Richard Hofstadter (1989: XXXVII) puts it, American thinkers have "shared a belief in the rights of property, the philosophy of economic individualism, the value of competition; they have accepted the economic virtues of capitalist culture as necessary qualities of man". The accepted version of American liberalism, then, embraces the espousal of individual rights, liberty and anti-statism. However, the label "liberalism" is frequently used in today's political discourse to refer to a left-leaning political ideology associated with government action to reduce social inequality and further social tolerance, i.e. social and cultural liberalism. The often deliberate confusion of the two contradictory interpretations of the term "liberalism" accounts for its unstable status in American political discourse: the first sense unproblematically fits the American value system as it is classical liberalism that helped shape American values in the first place; the second has more "alien" overtones and requires discursive domestication into the framework of American value system.

These contradictory of interpretations of the word "liberal" have left the unmodified version in something of a terminological limbo, with only limited usefulness for defining particular policy positions but an unlimited range of options for discursive manipulation. Cheryl Greenberg has wittily noted that this definitional conundrum makes liberalism resemble pornography: "to paraphrase Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart, we can't define it but we know it when we see it" (Greenberg 2001: 55). Even this test becomes suspect in circumstances where all political actors prior to the 1960s have sought to identify themselves with liberalism and disassociate themselves from the taint

⁷ This leads to statements that unite elements considered mutually exclusive in European political parlance like the quotation by Senator Roger Jepsen who declared that "I am a conservative because I am for change" (cited in Critchlow 2005: 2).

of conservatism, which at that point lacked a positive “native” definition, being associated with (European) elitism and stagnation (Micklethwait and Wooldridge 2004: 8).

This suspicion is eloquently echoed already in the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson, according to whom a conservative party “vindicates no right, aspires to no real good, it brands no crime, it proposes no generous policy, it does not build, nor write, nor cherish the arts, nor foster religion, nor establish schools, nor encourage science, nor emancipate slaves, nor befriend the poor, or the Indian, or the Immigrant” (quoted in Shapiro 2004: 462–463). In the US, thus, conservatism, when defined as classical conservatism, has traditionally been marginalised, if not designated as outright deviant (reflected in studies such as e.g., Hofstadter 1965) for much of the 20th century as well, to the extent that the word “conservative” could even be seen as a term of abuse.⁸ After all, as Alan Brinkley (1994: 409) has observed, the history of the US in the 20th century has been told with focus on “the triumph of the progressive-liberal state and of the modern, cosmopolitan sensibility” and classical or even social conservative themes are incongruous in the master narrative. Therefore, it should not be surprising that for decades the political forces that identified themselves as social conservative were associated with backwardness and relegated to the outcast status by mainstream commentators. Some examples of the marginalised social conservative groups could be the anti-Darwinist litigants in the “Scopes monkey trial” from the 1920s (Settle 1972) or the John Birch Society from the 1950s, classified with the American Nazi Party and the KKK in a catalogue of native extremisms (Sargent 1995).

The marginalisation has become part of the social conservative self-image as well, seen in the label of “silent majority” coined by Richard Nixon in 1969 or, as pointed out by Shapiro (2004: 462), in the book titles of conservative authors from different decades such as Albert Jay Nock’s *Memoirs of a Superfluous Man* (1943) or Samuel Francis’ *Beautiful Losers: Essays on the Failure of America Conservatism* (1993). The perceived victimisation has persisted from the height of liberal consensus to the social conservative rule of today. The nation the imagined community of which is built on mobility, progress and individual aspiration does not seem to have an automatic political niche for the social conservative values of stability, tradition and authority. Such a niche had to be created by discursive restructuring of social conservatism in alignment with the American value system, something that was achieved in the 1970s–1980s.

Owing to the need to incorporate itself into a cultural framework constructed in opposition to (classical) conservatism, there “was (and still is) so much in

⁸ The claim was made by George F. Will (1997: 79) who mentions an article from the 1950s describing a citizen’s arrest for creating a public disturbance. The person’s behaviour was described as follows by a witness: “He was using abusive language, calling people conservative and all that”. Up to the 1960s, many conservatives even preferred the label “radical” to “conservative”, because of the negative connotations of the latter.

American ‘conservatism’ that was (and is) not conservative at all” (Lukacs 2005: 151). Above all, this has concerned economic policies and attitudes towards technological progress but also wholehearted acceptance of individualism and meritocracy that have been viewed with caution by European conservatives. William Appleman Williams (cited in Brinkley 1994: 412) has observed that the capitalist hegemony that rules the US is not in essence conservative but should be called “corporate liberalism”. Indeed, the *laissez-faire* economic theories of the Chicago School, the philosophical cornerstones of Reaganist economic policies of the 1980s, are called neoliberalist. This pervasive classical liberal discursive climate made Clinton Rossiter (1955: 224, cited in Shapiro 2004: 464) ask “When the one glorious thing to be conservative about was the Liberal tradition of the world’s most liberal society, how could a conservative expected to be Conservative?”. As a result, American conservatism, as Shapiro (2004: 471) puts it, has been “more American than conservative”. The unique American marriage of conservatism and liberalism produced a conservative (social) liberalism and this hybrid ideology proved successful in American political discourse until the 1970s when it donned a more explicitly conservative (social) conservative mantle.

John Lukacs (2005: 28) locates the shift in the cultural categorisation of the label “conservatism” in the 1960s when President Eisenhower used the conservative designation in an approbatory sense. Since then “liberalism” as a “brand” has gradually been losing its political appeal, up to the term’s outright dismissal in today’s political discourse. The discursive stigmatisation started as early as 1969 when Spiro Agnew accused liberals of being “an effete corps of impudent snobs”, “ideological eunuchs” and “nattering nabobs of negativism” who “have formed their own 4-H Club – the hopeless, hysterical hypochondriacs of history” (cited in Remnick 2006). Conservative media strategy has transferred these negative categorisations of liberals into common parlance to the extent that the word has today lost all the denotative value it once had, submerged in various negative connotations. In Thomas Frank’s (2006: 20) acerbic comment, this has led to the ostracism of liberal-identified Democrats as “wealthy, pampered, arrogant elite that lives as far as it can from real Americans”. Other negative connotations now habitually attributed to the term “liberal” suggest lack of patriotism, attachment to Big Government and moral relativism, to mention but the most prominent.

The discursive shift can be seen not only in the propaganda of different conservative-identified groups but also in the actions of the Democratic Party, traditional mainstream representative of social liberalism. For example, Bill Clinton re-branded his party as “New Democrats”, hijacking elements of conservative agenda, especially in economic affairs and foreign policy but also in explicitly social conservative matters (Micklethwait and Wooldridge 2004: 103). This trend has found extensive scholarly commentary as well as political imitation. For example, Theodore Lowi (1998) notes that starting from the 1980s “left parties have succeeded only by moving right toward the center, and

then beyond. Bill Clinton became a Republican, in New Democrat clothing. Labour's Tony Blair became Maggie Thatcher, in Bill Clinton's clothing". This shift was not only rhetorical: it was during Clinton's term in office that the welfare system of the US was effectively dismantled.⁹ In addition, Clinton, although not all voters were aware of it, supported the death penalty and opposed signing the treaty to ban landmines, positions traditionally not associated with social and cultural liberalism (Lewis 1999: 261). It is telling of the national mood that in the late 1990s Clinton had to defend himself against accusations that he was a "closet liberal" (Micklethwait and Wooldridge 2004: 106). This stands in stark contrast to the elections of 1964 where Barry Goldwater, labelled as a "radical, a preposterous candidate who would ruin this country and our future" (Schoenwald 2001: 154), was overwhelmingly defeated because of his extreme conservatism.¹⁰ The near total disappearance of "liberal" as a positive label in political discourse, indeed, allows one to conclude that, at this point, conservatism can be equated with Americanism (Micklethwait and Wooldridge 2004: 19). The liberal consensus of the early 20th century has been replaced by a conservative one, reflected in the fact that "by the 1990s twice as many Americans identified themselves as conservatives as liberals" (Shapiro 2004: 467).¹¹ Although there has been a revival of social and cultural liberal identification and activism in the recent years, this has not (yet) changed the general conservative mood.

Despite the fluctuation in the fates of the terms "liberalism" and "conservatism" in American political discourse, the country has for most of its history maintained a considerable unity of vision. While most theorists from the 1950s saw this as a sign of the unique stability of the American political landscape in comparison with the frequent turmoil in European multi-party systems, Christopher Lasch argued, on the basis of the work of Richard Hofstadter, that

⁹ However, this is not to suggest that the Republican and Democratic economic policies can be equated. Even after the movement of the Democrats towards the centre in the Clinton era the Republicans have always positioned themselves to the right of the Democrats, at this point, towards a more emphatically neoliberal stance.

¹⁰ Lyndon B. Johnson won with the greatest number of votes, the greatest margin, and the greatest percentage achieved by any presidential candidate, making Richard Hofstadter wonder about Barry Goldwater "when in all our history has anyone with ideas so bizarre, so archaic, so self-confounding, so remote from the basic American consensus, ever gotten so far?" (cited in McGirr 2001: 47). Yet what seemed a humbling defeat of conservative ideology, more specifically, social conservative ideology, could have been precisely the opposite. For example Schoenwald (2001: 5) sees Goldwater's defeat as a victory for the unified conservative movement as the campaign honed its organisational structure and gave it a powerful stimulus to continue its struggle.

¹¹ It is important to note that such surveys do not specify the meanings of the terms employed. This vagueness, however, makes the self-alignment of the respondents a good measure of the location of the conservatism and liberalism as general categories on the general connotational scale of public discourse.

such a consensus, whatever its ideological guise, was not a sign of healthy pragmatism but, rather, of a tendency for the American political system to dwell on popular mythologies (frontier, the West, self-reliance, etc.) rather than reality (Hofstadter 1989: XIII). In addition, this tendency towards mythical thinking has deprived the population of the habit of critically comparing different policies and made people relatively blindly embrace a reigning consensus. As Justin Lewis (1999: 254–255) cogently argues, the structure of American political system prefers certain kinds of candidates who tend to hold views friendly to a pro-corporate hegemony which, in turn, promotes a preference for right-wing ideas, with their combination of fiscal and social conservatism. This, according to Lewis (1999: 255), leads to a situation where “hegemony is achieved before a single ballot is cast”. He goes on to argue that the inequities of the system are muted by the exaggeration of differences between the forces defined as liberal or conservative in political reporting. The seeming conservative-liberal struggle, largely limited to the political elites of the Republican and Democratic Parties in the media, sustains the appearance of a pluralistic democracy. This hegemony, most importantly for the present thesis, is achieved largely by downplaying areas where today’s American liberals and conservatives consent (economy, to a great extent also foreign policy) and over-emphasising cultural and social issues where they dissent, as a result limiting the serious discussion of the underlying economic arrangements of the American polity.

Arguments about the merger of liberalism and conservatism in American political discourse have been put forward starting from the 1960s. For example, Theodore J. Lowi (1979: 43), analysing the era of liberal consensus, sees the liberal-conservative debate as “almost purely ritualistic” and for him “the decline of a meaningful dialogue between a liberalism and a conservatism has meant a decline of meaningful adversary political proceedings in favour of administrative, technical, and logrolling politics”.¹² The argument seems much less persuasive in the newly polarised US of today, even if a coherent debate between two (or more) clearly articulated ideological positions has yet to emerge. This absence might, to an extent, derive from discursive vacuity of the overused and underdefined terms of debate, which makes meaningful exchange of ideas almost impossible.

¹² It should be pointed out that the thrust of Lowi’s book is not dedicated to the conservative-liberal debate but, rather, to diagnosing the problem that ails American democracy, “interest-group liberalism”. Lowi is, however, not a libertarian but an advocate of clear legal rules or, in his terms “juridical democracy”. In his follow-up to *The End of Liberalism*, titled *The End of the Republican Era* (1995), Lowi, in addition to detailing the rise of the New Right as a core part of a new Republican Party, also sees the centrality of the moral absolutism of the Christian Right as a danger to the pluralistic democracy that should, by definition, be amoral and grounded in the rule of law.

The historian John Lukacs (2005: 224) even goes as far as to dismiss the categories of “conservative” and “liberal” as outdated, preferring the “Left”-“Right” dichotomy, although he also admits that the Left has lost its appeal almost universally and “in the future the true divisions will be not between Right and Left but between two kinds of Right”. However, the “Left”-“Right” pair is not unproblematic, either, since most social scientists agree that the US is unique in not having developed a viable social democratic political movement (e.g., Brinkley 1994: 410). Today’s Democrats are significantly more conservative than even the New Labour of Tony Blair in the UK, not to speak of the Social Democratic parties of Scandinavian countries.¹³ Identifying American Democrats as “Left” thus is ideologically charged, aligning them with economic agendas that the party does not share and stigmatising it with political positions unacceptable within the American universe of political discourse. It can be argued that the major players on the American political scene have traditionally placed themselves on different loci on the classical liberal continuum, but tended to identify themselves as more or less “Right”. Because of the problematic positioning of the term “Left” and the fact that no mainstream political group identifies itself as such, the pair “Left”-“Right” will not be used here. Within the present thesis, the terms “liberal” and “conservative”, despite their many shortcomings, are preferred, especially as they are more apt in the discussion of cultural values than the labels “Left” and “Right”. To avoid any potential misunderstanding of the terms in the American context, the following section will give a short overview of the emergence of liberalism and, in greater detail, conservatism as they are conceptualised in the US today.

Greenberg (2001: 57) argues that the current form of liberalism – more precisely, social liberalism, although Greenberg does not use the term – evolved in the 1930s–1940s. Social liberalism, like classical liberalism, is constructed around the notion of individual rights but, unlike its predecessor, social liberalism believes that the state has a positive role to play in guaranteeing individuals’ equality of opportunity. (It should be pointed out that no major American party or political actor has propagated equality of outcome.) While meritocratic ideas and emphasis on individual effort have a central place in American social liberal discourse, there is also the acknowledgement that not all citizens are equally positioned. Thus, if the ethos of competition that permeates American society is to identify the most able, not those best positioned before the competition begins, the state should interfere to level the playing field. Even the aim of Franklin D. Roosevelt’s economic policies, much maligned by fiscal conservatives, was not the imposition of federal regulation on business but the guarantee of “fair competition” (Bjerre-Poulsen 2002: 24). Ultimately, these notions seek to align social liberalism with the American universe of political

¹³ In many ways, this perceived conservatism may be the result of the caution of Democratic politicians in articulating social liberal ideas in the prevalently neoliberal universe of political discourse in questions of economy.

discourse by tapping into core American values: egalitarianism and achievement.¹⁴

Maybe even more importantly, American social and cultural liberalism have defined pluralism and social tolerance as central goals of civil society, again building on American mythology, in this case the American self-image as the bastion of freedom of speech and religion. American liberalism of today, however, has distanced itself from the economic policies of the New Deal that makes the term “social liberal” somewhat imprecise in discussions of American liberalism. It can be argued that while liberalism remains liberal on cultural issues, it has reverted to fiscal conservatism – or classical liberalism – in economic affairs. According to Greenberg (2001: 72), post-WWII American liberalism was generally marked by moderation in methods used and policies pursued, in accordance with the American value system, focussing on the individual and not challenging the existing economic relations. This position granted modified social liberalism a central position in the American world of political discourse but also deprived it of the possibility of critiquing the basic tenets of the system. Rather, the legitimacy of the social liberal position was established by its classical liberal credentials as a result of which American social liberals based their policies on a principle derived from Mill that allows limiting individual freedom to prevent harm to others. This basic premise was subsequently translated that into a wide range of social policies.

American social and, especially, cultural liberals distinguished themselves from social and cultural conservatives by embracing what could be termed cosmopolitanism that elevated “tolerance, relativism, and rationalism over parochialism and provincialism” (Greenberg 2001: 72). Already the terminology used echoes the general discursive focus of the 1960s: although the same features can still be used to identify liberals, in the newly conservative world of discourse the same characteristics are called permissiveness, godlessness and un-Americanness, all loaded with a heavy negative baggage. The concept of relativism has also acquired an almost universally negative connotation in today’s political discourse and its association with cultural liberalism has important political consequences, making the liberal lack of moral absolutes or transcendent values a constant in the conservative critique. For example, William Buckley has summed up the liberal creed dismissively as “a loose agglutination of methodological principles that have denied metaphysics, that rely primarily on positivism and pragmatism, and that suggest the emptiness, with which so much of the West faces its current problems” (cited in Bjerre-Poulsen 2002: 31). Buckley goes on to argue that liberalism fills the void with

¹⁴ Although the identification of values that can be counted as “American” is more than problematic in the case of a country as diverse as the US, there is a whole tradition of scholarship dedicated to the study of American mentality that employs the term (see Wilkinson 1992: 1–14). The concept of “American values” also appears in intercultural communication research (e.g., Stewart and Bennett (1991)).

“fetishes” like academic freedom, democracy and civil rights (ibid.), denying them the legitimacy of moral values.

Today’s versions of social and cultural liberalism have been attacked not only from the Right. The moderation of the post-WWII social liberal position, especially its conformity with the corporate and consumer culture, opened it to critiques from the New Left and counterculture of the 1960s–1970s. By the 1980s, to cite Greenberg (2001: 76),

Both Left and Right had lost faith in the possibility of achieving equality and justice while maintaining current institutions and norms. /.../ The Left advocated justice at the price of the system. The Right favored preserving institutions and middle-class values against the leftists who sought to destroy them. Liberals, apparently with little to contribute to the debate, were marginalized in this struggle over the soul of the culture.

As a result of the attacks from both the left and the right wings of the political spectrum moderate social liberalism lost its unquestioned central position in the American creed. This is a position that it is still trying to re-discover amid the new conservative consensus constructed on a combination of neoliberalism, neoconservatism and social conservatism. The task is wrought with difficulty as the USA’s position in the world becomes more precarious and thus nurtures the desire to cling to the certainties of the past. Indeed, it can be posited that the new-found vigour of conservatism in the US partly derives from the fact that by now the country has acquired a past, a self-myth and attendant values that it seeks to preserve.

The genealogy of contemporary form of American conservatism is no less complicated. The troubled position of “conservatism” as a political label in American world of discourse has already been noted above. Conservatism, when identified as such, referred to relatively parochial social or cultural conservatism influential at a local level only, especially in the South, the part of the country that was largely off the mainstream political radar until the mid-20th century. Social conservatism started to mobilise after WWII, but became an effective political movement only in the 1960s, creating a network of, on the one hand, think tanks, publications and political action committees united by neoliberalism and neoconservatism and, on the other hand, a grassroots movement committed to social and cultural conservative goals. Interestingly, in the historical surveys dedicated to social movements of the 1960s the discussion has dwelt on the civil rights, students’ and women’s movement, omitting to mention that one of the most successful movements forged in that decade was this composite conservative movement, constructed in passionate opposition of the dominant social and cultural liberal mood of the time by combining the efforts of economic elites and social conservative grassroots constituencies (Schoenwald 2001: 160).

The building of conservative intellectual credentials started in the 1950s when, in the atmosphere of Cold-War paranoia, segments of American society

started to express concern about the erosion of “traditional” American values in the onslaught of a permissive consumer culture and seemingly relativist social mores. The strategy had two broad aims: first, to find an ideology to unite the seemingly irreconcilable traditions of American conservatism and, second, to build a social movement to gain access to the American power structures. In many ways, the first task proved to be more difficult than the second, to a large extent remaining unaccomplished to this date. Although there were notable conservative intellectuals (from Friedrich Hayek¹⁵ to Leo Strauss), their work appealed to only relatively narrow segments of the conservative movement.¹⁶ Conservative bestsellers were more likely to be middle-brow anti-communist tracts or jeremiads about the erosion of moral values. Many parts of the uneasy conservative alliance that was forged in the 1960s were notoriously anti-intellectual and thus more energy was expended on building an effective social movement than creating an overarching conservative philosophy.

This was acknowledged by Russell Kirk, one of the central ideologues of the conservative resurgence:

In reality, there is no One Big Idea, or One Infallible Platform, which can unite the disparate conservative elements in the United States. No simple formula can join inseparably the Northerners and the Southerners, the rural interests and the urban interests, the religious conservatives and the utilitarian old-fangled liberals, the anti-Soviet people and the isolationists – not to mention the anti-flouridationists, the “philosophical” anarchists, and the protectionists. All that can be hoped for, so far as the immediate future is concerned, is a series of leagues and coalitions of anti-collectivist elements against the collectivist tendency of the times. (cited in Bjerre-Poulsen 2002: 11)

Thus conservatism has remained an uneasy alliance united by a common enemy, social and cultural liberalism. This emergent “tripartite ideology” of conservatism consisted of traditionalism, libertarianism and anti-communism (Schoenwald 2001: 4). Traditionalism was the closest to the Burkean sense of conservatism, with its focus on received moral opinions and religious traditions, although, in the American context, the traditionalists inclined towards individualism and anti-statism, that is, the authentic American tradition that they sought to defend. In the present thesis traditionalists are labelled social conservatives. Libertarians were direct heirs to the creed of Locke and the Spencerian view of social Darwinism, preaching the absolute supremacy of individual liberty and economic freedom. In the present work they are identified as neoliberals. Anti-communism, and its latter-day reincarnation,

¹⁵ It is worth noting that Hayek wrote an essay titled “Why I Am Not a Conservative”, distancing himself from the traditionalist conservative agenda because of its excessive attachment to authority, including government authority (Bjerre-Poulsen 2002: 50–51).

¹⁶ It is remarkable, though, that Hayek’s *The Road to Serfdom* was reprinted in the *Reader’s Digest* and gained the circulation of more than a million copies (Bjerre-Poulsen 2002: 25).

neoconservatism, above all aim at the projection of American strength abroad, through the pursuit of an assertive foreign policy.

Many tensions appear already in this list: while anti-statism is sacred to libertarians and important to traditionalists, it is incompatible with the anti-communist project that requires the presence of a strong central government and ambitions outside the borders of the country. While religion and traditional values form the core of traditionalism, they have but tangential – and mostly rhetorical – value to anti-communists and libertarians. Russell Kirk conceded that building a coalition between traditionalists and libertarians “is like advocating a union of fire and ice” (Bjerre-Poulsen 2002: 39). The situation was complicated even further by the entry of religious conservatism into the political fray in the 1960s. The clash was especially palpable between religious conservatives and libertarians as religious creed, normative by nature, did not shun government coercion, if it acted in its interests, and thus conflicted with the opposition to government control that formed the core of libertarianism. This is but one example of the many fissures between the conservative groups.

Surveying this volatile mixture, Alan Brinkley (1994: 429) admits the difficulty of defining this new American conservatism: “Conservative traditions in America are diverse and inconsistent: both libertarian and normative, both elite and popular, both morally compelling and morally repellent. They fit neatly into no patterns of explanation with which most historians are comfortable”. Edward Shapiro (2004: 470), however, sees disagreements between the three strands of conservatism as a sign of the strength of the movement because the movements that are the strongest are “those racked by dissent and schism, and this is because their members passionately care about what these movements champion”. This passionate commitment is also one of the reasons why united conservatives defeated social liberals whose creed and commitment had been worn out by its predominance in political discourse, especially when the deteriorating economic circumstances raised questions about the viability of its social policies. The uniting of different strands of conservatism also gave the conservative movement the shared benefit of increased membership united under one label that made it into a powerful voting block to be reckoned with.

The heterogeneous conservative constellation is in many ways “reactive” in character: the supporters of the disparate ideas are united not by what they believe but by what they oppose (Shapiro 2004: 475). To cite Willmore Kendall, “What is more important by far than the meaning we assign to ‘conservative,’ is: who are the anti-conservatives, and what are their supreme values” (quoted in Bjerre-Poulsen 2002: 44). The main unifying force, indeed, is social liberalism, accused of being soft on communism as well as too ready to use government intervention in economic affairs and private lives of citizens through the actions of activist courts. Several scholars (e.g., Lowi 1995, 1998) argue that what created the conservative momentum was the expansion of social liberal policies from a federal to a local level which had hitherto been relatively conservative in social and cultural affairs. Such an intrusion in the social

conservative lifeworld evoked existential anxieties in the constituency that had previously been politically passive and propelled it into political activism. This process is most evident in the case of the civil rights legislation and the decisions of the Supreme Court headed by Earl Warren that extended government regulation from economic affairs to personal matters such as education and gender and thus crossed the limit of social conservative tolerance.

Schoenwald (2001) sees the impetus for the mobilisation of the new conservative consensus in the escalation of anti-communist fears in the late 1950s, which led to the construction of a movement culture that was later on employable also in campaigns against the “excesses” of the social liberal state. The grassroots organisations that had protested against Nikita Khrushchev’s visit to the US or Supreme Court decisions that curbed the excesses of anti-communism¹⁷ were well trained to take up campaigns for school prayer or against abortion¹⁸ (Schoenwald 2001: 256–257). Since federal government was perceived to be hostile to social conservative stances in the matters, the newly formed conservative coalition built its own networks of activism to gather enough electoral momentum to, first, gain control in the Republican Party and, then, reform the US. As a result of the mobilisation of activist networks, conservatives might not represent the majority of Americans but, being better organised than their opponents in their combination of the elites and the grassroots, can convey the impression of the voice of the people and lend credence to Hillary Rodham Clinton’s claims about the existence of a “vast right-wing conspiracy” (Micklethwait and Wooldridge 2004: 16).

Conservatism came to represent the voice of the “American majority” by mobilising groups that had been dismissed as insignificant by the mainstream political parties and employing strategies of mass-mailing, protest marches and rallies that gave the emerging movement a collective identity and prominence on the national scale. In the words of Schoenwald (2001: 9), “in neighbourhoods and towns scattered across the country, small groups of Americans comprised the beginnings of what became a conservative movement culture, challenging the status quo and refusing to compromise”. The organisation culture was the more important the less ideological cohesion there was between different conservative groups. This active network, less focused on ideology

¹⁷ The key examples are three Supreme Court decisions from June 17, 1957, the so-called “Red Monday” in conservative parlance – *Watkins v. United States*, *Yates v. United States*, *Sweezy v. New Hampshire*. The most memorable statement about the decisions comes from the opinion of Justice Earl Warren to the last decision: “mere unorthodoxy or dissent from the prevailing mores is not to be condemned: The absence of such voices would be a symptom of grave illness” (Schoenwald 2001: 37). Such decisions made conservatives define the Supreme Court as their enemy, monitor its activities and even launch appeals to impeach Justice Warren, originally a Republican appointee.

¹⁸ The central Supreme Court decisions here are *Engel v. Vitale* (1962) on school prayer and *Roe v. Wade* (1973) on abortion.

than action, may have been perceived extremist by many, but it brought a wide array of conservative voters who had previously been passive, especially social and cultural conservatives, to the political process (Mathews 1993: 139).

Social circumstances also helped the conservative movement. First, many social and cultural liberals dismissed the emerging unified conservatism as a psychological phenomenon, not a legitimate social ideology (Schoenwald 2001: 16) and thus failed to challenge the coalition when it was still weak. Context became especially important in the mainstreaming of social conservatism. Lisa McGirr (2001: 49) has observed that “just as the Right was moving into the respectable mainstream, the mainstream moved towards them”. While in the early 1960s, extremism in American society had been associated with social conservatism and its anti-communist fringe organisations such as the John Birch Society, then by the late 1960s–1970s that label was, as a result of violent street protests and radical lifestyle revolution, transferred to social and cultural liberals who became tainted by their notional association with the ideologies of the New Left and the counterculture (Schoenwald 2001: 218). These processes made the stability promised by social conservatives appealing to the moderate voters and channelled them to the Republican fold. This transition of influence from social liberalism to a broad-based conservatism was completed under Ronald Reagan who managed to tame the more extreme manifestations of conservatism, especially from its religious fundamentalist fringe, and present conservatism as the moderate voice of all America (Marsden 1990: 268).

A more divisive and more radical tone has returned to the conservative coalition during the administration of George W. Bush but since the analysis here concerns data from the 1970s–1980s, these ideological developments will not be traced in detail. While the conservatism in its different sub-types is more powerful than ever, it has not become more coherent. The need to placate the frequently conflicting desires of the reputedly disenfranchised Middle America has inexorably altered the Republican Party, once a patrician and classical liberal political force, but now increasingly identified with populist fervour and stridency. For example, Samuel Francis (1993: 230) declared that the right should not seek compromises with the establishment but, rather, increase the polarisation to maintain the purity of the values of the movement. This polarisation has led the Republican Party to use largely populist rhetoric to appeal to the traditionalist and even fundamentalist voters in the South and West. As Paul Weyrich, called “the Lenin of social conservatism” by Micklethwait and Wooldridge (2004: 81), stated, “the New Right¹⁹ would appeal to blue collar, rather than blue blood” (Bjerre-Poulsen 2002: 299). As a result, many of the Republican presidents, most notably George H. W. Bush, have suffered criticism for being too elitist (Ducat 2004: 84–114). Taking the “Western cure” against East-coast elitism has had a long tradition among

¹⁹ The New Right is a term often used to designate the conservative coalition that emerged the 1970s–1980s, identified with the conservative revolution of the Reagan era.

Republicans, starting with Theodore Roosevelt (Watts 2003: 123–192) and perfectly embodied in the public persona of George W. Bush. This performative populism has led some commentators label the current Republican ideologues who seek to identify themselves with the social conservative “Middle America” in the South as the “new carpetbaggers” (Lukacs 2005: 244) but the strategy they have chosen has proved successful. Jeet Heer (2005) has pointed out that “the right has consistently won elections by talking the language of Power to the People”.

What has concerned commentators from both the right (Lukacs 2005) and the left (Frank 2006) wing of the political spectrum is the confluence of the conservative consensus with fiercely nationalist populism, to the detriment of liberal democracy, the cornerstone of the US as a political entity. The original American populism was a radical grassroots movement for economic justice for the lower classes but now its focus has shifted. Although populism maintains its stance as the protector of the “everyman” from predatory elites, the elites are no longer seen as economic but cultural ones. As a result of what Tom Frank (2000) calls market populism, neoliberal policies are embraced by constituencies whom they harm. While, as Gerteis and Goolsby (2005: 197–220) show, the 19th-century populist nationalism constructed Americanness against foreign, frequently racialised “Others”, today’s populist rhetoric has “Othered” cultural liberal pluralism and tolerance, re-labelled as permissiveness and intellectual elitism. Catherine Holland (2001: XIV) has suggested that conservative attacks against political and intellectual movements purported to “strike at the very heart of what it means to be American” have not sought to contest their social-liberal political vision but have merely declared it “un- or even anti-American”. In an era of uncertainty where there is “a dormant, and perhaps even nascent appetite for faith – for some kind of faith” (Lukacs 2005: 235) the broad conservative ideology, especially manifest in social and cultural conservative focus on absolutes and tradition, caters to the majority better than the social or cultural liberal one.

Moreover, as noted already by Richard Hofstadter (1989: XXXIII), insecurity feeds nostalgia and a sentimental celebration of core American virtues: “since Americans have recently found it more comfortable to see where they have been than to think of where they are going, their state of mind has become increasingly passive and spectatorial”. Although first published in 1948, these words apply, more than ever, in the media-saturated reality of post-9/11 America that seeks to disperse the clouds of doubt about the universality of American mission by clinging to the old verities (e.g., Kellner 2003: 173–178). It is not coincidental, it seems, that populist mobilisation in defence of Americanism, reminiscent of the populism of the late 19th century, has been revived now. Now, as then, the focus has been on defining and ostracising the out-group, especially as the unity of the in-group remains largely elusive (Gerteis and Goolsby 2005: 217). While in the 19th century the out-group included foreigners and ethnic minorities, it is significant that in the new “nativist”

discourse of today's conservatism the out-group also includes liberals, exemplified in the remarkable line from the former Moral Majority leader Jerry Falwell, uttered when commenting on the 9/11 attacks:

I really believe that the pagans, and the abortionists, and the feminists, and the gays and the lesbians who are actively trying to make that an alternative lifestyle, the ACLU, People For the American Way, all of them who have tried to secularize America. I point the finger in their face and say "you helped this happen" (CNN 2001).

The success of populist rhetoric has proudly secured its self-designated position as the new authentic American vernacular, "Othering" social and cultural liberals not just in ideology but also in rhetoric.²⁰ As demonstrated above, American social liberals have been relatively conservative, or classical liberal, on issues of economy and foreign policy and therefore ideological contestation has above all centred on socio-cultural matters (race issues, separation of church and state, gender). Alan Brinkley (1994: 423) has aptly stated that many conservatives "mixed their religious fervor with an essentially secular fundamentalism, which rested on a normative view of 'traditional' middle-class constructions of family, community and morality". In the era that Thomas Frank has called "the Great Backlash" it is these localised tropes that mobilise voters and close their eyes to glaring economic agendas that they mask. According to Frank (2006:5), "while earlier forms of conservatism emphasized fiscal sobriety, the backlash mobilizes voters with explosive social issues – summoning public outrage over everything from busing to un-Christian art – which it then marries to pro-business economic policies. Cultural anger is marshalled to achieve economic ends".

This helps to explain why it was gender issues and anti-feminist campaigns that helped and continue to help fuel conservative activism. In the 1960s a series of Supreme Court decisions radically intruded on what was sacred to a wide array of conservative groups, especially social and cultural conservatives: school prayer was ousted from public schools, schools desegregated, abortion legalised. In addition, Congress passed the Equal Rights Amendment and there was an onslaught on traditional gender order from the counterculture and women's movements. The social changes, happening in close succession, intimidated many who did not instantaneously identify themselves as social conservatives and made them potential converts to the conservative cause.

Already in the 1960s, conservative leaders had noticed that in order to gain the support of the mainstream, they had to focus not on abstract doctrine but "breaking issues" (Schoenwald 2001: 157). Matters associated with gender proved the most appealing to the general population that did not share the anti-

²⁰ Ironically, this also "Others" Barry Goldwater, the former social conservative icon, because of his support to abortion and acceptance of homosexuality (Bjerre-Poulsen 2002: 304–305). In this new discursive universe, dominated by social and cultural conservatism, he has been transmogrified into a condemned cultural liberal.

communist paranoia, the imperfect glue that had sustained the uneasy conservative coalition in the 1950s. While the conservative rallies during the Goldwater campaign had remained strictly a fringe interest, social conservative crusades against the ERA or abortion found sympathy outside the immediate circle of conservative believers as well. This was achieved, as Schoenwald (2001: 258) argues, by a successful transition from a movement based on ideology to one based on issues. This action-orientation was also more congenial to the conservative spirit as it has been argued that “conservatives suffer from an inherent inability to translate their political sentiments into formulae and specific aims, since by nature they tend to be based on instinct and experience rather than on theorizing and rational analysis” (Bjerre-Poulsen 2002: 302). The new American conservatism had from the start been based not on class but values and it succeeded by persuading a sufficient slice of the American electorate that conservative values were also traditional American values which had to be rescued from their perceived perversion in the hands of social and cultural liberals.

Gender issues proved to be especially invaluable as they encapsulated two elements central to conservative agenda that also reverberate in the American ethos: sacredness of the private sphere of life and the role of the state. Many liberal policies instituted in the 1960s eroded the public-private distinction, leading to government involvement with more private issues that many Americans found comfortable. The core of the debate rests in the different reading of the public-personal divide by social and cultural liberals and conservatives of all persuasions. While social and cultural liberals accept the general principle that the private sphere is and should remain outside the control of the state, they, more than conservatives, also acknowledge that this leaves women, whose existence has traditionally been limited to the private sphere, outside the protections of the state (Greenberg 2001: 71). This tension between the tenets of classical liberalism and the actions necessary to guarantee equality of opportunity has not been easy to justify in the American world of discourse.²¹

The expansion of government into the private sphere was accompanied by social activism which raised questions about the viability of the nuclear family or heterosexual marriage, too radical for many Americans who had hitherto identified themselves as social or cultural liberals. Gender and family were especially important for the conservative coalition, not only because they were seen as divinely sanctioned but also because it was believed that the traditional

²¹ It should be pointed out here that although the anti-statist position of conservatives is closer to classical liberalism than today’s liberals’ acceptance of the role of the state in regulating aspects of private life, the conservatives have also supported government action in regard to private life, as long as it promotes a conservative agenda (e.g., the sanctity of life amendment, anti-abortion initiatives, anti-gay marriage ordinances, etc.). The fact that the conservative critique of state activism has been highly selective is frequently left unrecognised in the analyses of conservative social policy.

family guaranteed the stability of a moral society.²² This has been a central claim of many conservative texts, for example, Edgar Allan Hoover's anti-communist bestseller *The Masters of Deceit* (1958). Although Hoover's pathos was above all anti-communist, he identified the family as the bedrock of American identity, at risk from communists and their naïve fellow-travellers (Schoenwald 2001: 47). The stance was broadly embraced within the conservative movement as it also helped to set the US apart from the Soviet Union and its gender order. Although there is more ambivalence on the conceptualisations of gender in the amalgamation of traditionalist and libertarian policies frequently labelled the New Right (David and Levitas 1988: 141–151), gender continues to be one of the most frequently summoned tropes in conservative discourse because it combines many emotionally loaded issues central to conservative ideology such as religion, tradition, freedom and anti-statism.

Discourses of gender tend to gain prominence at moments of public crisis when order is most vulnerable and when notions of containment and control gain mass appeal. Attention to gender and family was heightened in the 1960s when, as symbols of the traditionalist order, they were being challenged by social reform and counterculture (Rowbotham 1997: 434-436). Many of the roles that had been taken for granted had become mere options among many others, and a shift that threatened many women's and men's sense of themselves. As one conservative woman noted, before the turmoil of the 1960s,

America was accepted as being a Christian nation. /.../ This country was then very much family-oriented. Though divorce, living together outside marriage, abortion, homosexuality were not uncommon then, they were at last seldom defended in theory. There were moral absolutes that were recognized; and agencies of public expression, including the media and school system, honoured those values. Then, unfortunately, over the last twenty years this Judeo-Christian moral consensus has been threatened, challenged, and often times shattered. (Klatsch 1987: 25)

What is at stake here, then, is the whole way of life and *raison d'être* of people whose life choices would have been rendered marginal or even meaningless in the transformed cultural space. This helps to explain why the conservative movement was so successful in mobilising traditionalist women into the conservative political culture. This concerned not just women leaders, such as Midge Decter, a central ideologue of neoconservatism, or Phyllis Schlafly, labelled “the Boadicea of social conservatism” (Micklethwait and Wooldridge 2004: 81), but also women who had no political ambitions and were driven by commitment to the cause and, thereby, the protection of their way of life (Schoenwald 2001: 129–130). As Nickerson (2003) has demonstrated, this mode of political involvement had been created by the “housewife activism” of

²² For a longer discussion of the emergence of the American pro-family movement, see Bendroth (1999: 35-54).

the WWII era that “carved out a female political niche that was conducive to the values, responsibilities, and schedules of traditional homemakers, yet removed from the unladylike world of partisan politics”. Now this niche was filled by eager activists who saw their mission not only in the protection of their way of life but the salvation of American values. The conservative women’s movement is made the more remarkable by the fact that women as a voting block have traditionally been loyal supporters of the Democratic Party. There are very differently situated women in the American political landscape and it was the women threatened by social and cultural liberal policies that found a welcoming home in the broad-based conservative movement, especially when the issues increasingly concerned matters central to these women’s philosophy of life such as abortion (for an insightful discussion, see Luker 1984).

It is because of the centrality of cultural and social issues in forging the conservative consensus that the present thesis will analyse the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) campaign from the 1970s, as the discursive strategies deployed by conservative forces in this instance successfully de-legitimated social and cultural liberal definitions of American values by tapping into the ever-present American apprehensiveness about government intervention in the private sphere, especially with regard to matters as sensitive as those related to gender. It is therefore not surprising that it was opposition to the ERA that became the rallying cry for the conservative coalition as the proposed amendment crystallised conservative concerns about the state, individual freedom and the family. While struggling about gender equality, both liberals and conservatives were also struggling for the cultural priorities of the country (Rhode 1990: 212). After all, gender is inextricably tied to the concept of the nation in which race, class, gender and sexuality intersect and are continuously reconfigured into new norms of belonging into the national polity. This is guaranteed to remain a contested terrain. Or, as stated by Jane Sherron De Hart (2001: 42),

For some Americans, it is a matter of *reinforcing* old strands of sexuality, gender, ethnicity, and race that have long been woven into a pattern that many believe to be sacred. For others, it is a matter of reweaving these same strands into a new pattern – a new construction of national identity.

The thesis has chosen to focus on the ERA discussion in the USA in the 1970s–1980s as the last campaign on gender equality that caught national attention and was “won” by conservatives. Much of the previous work on the ERA has focused on the legal (Steiner 1985, Berry 1986) or social movement (Boles 1979, Mansbridge 1986, Mathews and De Hart 1990) aspects of the struggle. Less attention has been paid to discursive contestation in the campaign. The present thesis argues that it is the discursive aspect that has had a lasting effect on the American political discourse and social reality. Therefore the analysis here focuses on the discursive challenge posed by Phyllis Schlafly’s STOP-ERA movement, especially its exploitation of the inherent ambiguities of the equality and difference dichotomy but also those of the American value system.

By focusing on social mobilisation strategies, as much of social science research tends to, we are in danger of missing the lasting effect (strategic) discursive positioning may have on our world of ideas. As George Lakoff (2002: 416) has pointed out, conservatives have largely won the discursive battle in the past twenty years, especially when it comes to moral values. This makes it especially important to understand the processes in play in (re)definitions of gender and equality as central aspects of liberal self-definition.

The first chapter of the thesis details the feminist debates about the notions of equality and difference, the key concepts of the present thesis, and the way they informed the first- and second-wave feminist movements in the US. The focus will be on the practical applications of the debate, as revealed in the discussions concerning the ERA from the 1920s to the 1980s. Not only will the chapter describe feminist strategies in the ERA campaign and anti-feminist responses to them but it will also analyse the existing research on the ERA with the benefit of hindsight unavailable to the researchers who have previously written on the issues (most of the work derives from the 1980s, testifying yet again to the marginalisation of equality questions in today's feminist research).

The second chapter is dedicated to the discussion of the notions of discourse and power, as outlined by Michel Foucault, and Antonio Gramsci's and Louis Althusser's approaches to ideology. The two concept clusters frame the general philosophy and methodology of the thesis. The second half of the chapter focuses on the three-tier version of Critical Discourse Analysis proposed by Norman Fairclough. Fairclough's method, with its primary focus on materialist aspects of discourse, does not entirely meet the needs of the present thesis. The methodology has, therefore, been modified with insights from cognitive discourse analysis developed by Teun van Dijk who dedicates greater attention to the socio-cognitive structures and mental models that act as interfaces between the individual and the social, a necessary aspect for understanding movement mobilisation in the present thesis. The socio-cognitive frames of individuals, however, can also be influenced to meet ideological ends. Therefore, the socio-cognitive study of mental models is complemented with elements of framing theory proposed by Robert Entman and George Lakoff. The whole analysis is informed by the general ethos of feminist Critical Discourse Analysis.

The third and the fourth chapter are devoted to the close linguistic analysis of two text corpora to detect the methods used to create what later became a lasting shift in the American public discourse, characterised by the "delegitimisation" of social and cultural liberal discourses and the "legitimisation" of social conservative ones. In order to trace the emergence of the social conservative discourse on gender, the thesis studies two disparate sets of texts to identify the strategies used to appeal to conservative activists on the one hand and the public at large on the other. Since the present thesis is primarily interested in the mustering of a conservative consensus on a national level, its first text corpus, analysed in Chapter 3, is Phyllis Schlafly's book *The*

Power of the Positive Woman (1977) that reached national popularity and thus took the rhetoric that had hitherto been restricted to social conservative grassroots to a wider audience. The analysis seeks to find out whether and how the ideas of Schlafly's Eagle Forum network and the STOP-ERA campaign are adapted to appeal to a less partisan audience. The analysis has special significance as the book was written and published during the ERA ratification struggle.

The second corpus of texts, analysed in Chapter 4, consists of ERA-related texts collected from the *The Phyllis Schlafly Report*, the newsletter edited by Schlafly and mailed to subscribers, mostly members of her movement from the years 1980–1983. While the analysis of the first corpus hopes to identify strategies used to forge consent to the social conservative position on gender, the study of the second corpus should reveal the rhetorical strategies used to maintain activist support in the final stages of the ERA struggle and immediately after the expiry of the ERA. The analysis of the two corpora targeted at two distinct audiences aims to discover whether the rhetoric used inside and outside the social conservative movement circles exhibits distinct preferences in either the linguistic resources employed or the underlying frames conjured up, as well as the political uses to which the discourses lend themselves. The thesis hopes to untangle the discursive mechanisms that can be exploited to ensure the success of certain ideologies in the American universe of political discourse.

The ultimate aim of the thesis is to gain a better understanding of the framing of gender equality within an achievement-oriented individualist cultural context and its role in forming a conservative consensus of a broad popular appeal. The analysis presented in the thesis hopes to show how feminist and anti-feminist themes and discourses may be co-opted into a wider conservative framework that may have different emphases in different socio-cultural environments.

CHAPTER 1

Equality and difference in feminist thought and political practice

1.1. Feminism, equality and difference

The concept of equality entered Western political discourse with the Enlightenment and the rise of classical liberalism, with its focus on individual rights and freedoms, above all the freedom of thought and choice, and the belief that, in essence, despite class divisions, people are, as social and moral subjects, equal. This notion is reflected in the slogans coined by the two revolutions of the 18th century: *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité* of the French Revolution and the “all men are created equal” of the American Revolution. The central texts of both revolutions make Man, the disembodied rational individual “untouched by social relations of class, gender or race” (Weedon 1999: 13), the subject of guaranteed equality. However, the objectivity of the universal concept of Man is but illusory because, as Anne Phillips (1992: 11) has remarked, “each gender-neutral abstraction ends up looking suspiciously male”.²³ We should also exercise caution with the “generic” human subject of the first liberal political documents, American Declaration of Independence (1776) and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen (1789). The limited scope of this purportedly universal subject was revealed only with the emergence of critiques based on race, class and gender.²⁴

Such critiques gradually raised questions about whether women too were included in the category of Man and led to campaigns for the right of women to be not only female but also human. For example as early as 1700, Mary Astell famously asked “if all Men are born free, how is it that all Women are born slaves?” (cited in Springborg 1995: 629). Entering into a dialogue with John Locke, Astell launched, greatly ahead of her time, a devastating critique of

²³ This underlying gender bias of seemingly neutral terms can be dated back to the classics who made virtue, derived from the word “vir” (man), a singularly male characteristic.

²⁴ However, the inequality encoded in the founding documents of the US was noted already by Abigail Adams who, in a letter to her husband, John Adams, from 1776 pleaded that “I desire that you should Remember the Ladies, and be more generous and favourable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the Husbands. Remember all Men would be tyrants if they could. If peculiar care and attention is not paid to the Ladies we are determined to foment a Rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any Laws in which we have no voice, or Representation.” (cited in Langley and Fox 1994: 21–22). John Adams found the suggestion amusing and too radical for the social circumstances of the time.

Lockean liberalism from the perspective of women. In this, she predates the work of 20th-century feminist political philosophers who have challenged the position of the universal (male) subject, and it is perhaps not surprising that her work sank into oblivion for centuries (for more detail, see, for example Springborg 1998: 276–306 or Perry 1986).

Mary Wollstonecraft, noting that women were treated above all as females, not as human beings, encouraged women to strive for acceptance into full humanity through education and self-improvement. She also called for a wider debate on the rights of women as political subjects arguing that “if the abstract rights of man will bear discussion and explanation, those of woman, by parity of reasoning, will not shrink from the same test” (Wollstonecraft 1992 [1792]: 9). Wollstonecraft is one of the first authors to forcefully demonstrate the social construction of the inferiority of women and, as a result, the potential for improvement in a de-naturalised gender hierarchy. Gender inequality did not match the nascent philosophy of liberalism, as was eloquently demonstrated by John Stuart Mill who, in addition to pointing out the artificiality of the concept of the nature of women, also elaborated on its naturalisation: “so true is it that unnatural generally means only uncustomary, and that everything which is usual appears natural. The subjection of women to men being a universal custom, any departure from it quite naturally appears unnatural” (Mill 1988 [1869]: 230). He, furthermore, considers the subjection of women morally wrong and sees it as one of the chief impediments to human progress. Yet it is important to note that Mill’s conception of equality is a formal one and limits itself to equality of opportunity, in consonance with classical liberalism that he was instrumental in developing, and his position has been challenged by many later authors. Still, although the ideas were not universally adopted in philosophical or political circles in the 19th century, the pioneering texts express sentiments that continue to be relevant for discussions of gender in the public sphere to this day.

The deconstruction of the seemingly neutral key texts of the 18th-century revolutions that advocated equality but with very clear restrictions in a sense inaugurated feminist critique of classical liberalism as well as feminist political action. In 1791 Olympe de Gouges, a pioneering feminist author, wrote the Declaration of the Rights of Woman and Female Citizen, her gender-inclusive version of the central document of the French Revolution that could also be called the first call for universal human rights (Abrey 1975: 48–49). A similar revision was also central to the Seneca Falls Conference of 1848, the first women’s rights congress in the world, the final document of which, the Declaration of Sentiments, in an almost verbatim paraphrase of the Declaration of Independence, proudly declared that:

We hold these truths to be self – evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. Whenever any form of government becomes

destructive of these ends, it is the right of those who suffer from it to refuse allegiance to it, and to insist upon the institution of a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. (Langley and Fox 1994: 83)²⁵

Not only does the text echo the central tenets of Lockean classical liberalism but it also places the responsibility for ensuring gender equality on the shoulders of the government, even raising the subversive possibility of women refusing allegiance to a government inimical to their needs. The radicalism of the proposed agenda, both because of its stance on state intervention and the call for social unrest, has not been reduced in the centuries that have passed. However, the early campaigners did not problematise the notion of equality, the bone of contention of today's debates, as for them it was, above all, an abstract ideal to be striven towards, not a principle requiring practical implementation.²⁶

It is not surprising that feminists have from the beginning of feminist movements sought to exploit the language of rights as it has a symbolic value in addition to legal utility. Dorothy McBride-Stetson (2004: 1) has claimed that the very word "right", when used in the context of gender, implies that "the status of women has both legitimacy conferred by government action and value as a public good". This also explains the controversies that arise as resorting to the language of rights automatically makes the discussion of gender a discussion of public values. However, several authors have also pointed out that the discourse of rights is a knotty one. For example, Carol Smart (1989: 143) has shown how the language of rights legitimises an issue as "it is almost as hard to be against rights as it is to be against virtue". Yet she also warns that such a discourse oversimplifies the complexity of power relations and has the tendency of offering false solutions in the form of formal rights which suggest that former wrongs have been righted by mere passage of a law although it has failed to effect any meaningful change (Smart 1989: 144). Mitchell (1987: 26) also concedes that "equal rights are an important tip of an iceberg that goes far deeper", especially if equality is defined from a narrowly classical liberal perspective. Despite this, the language of rights has continued to be central to feminist activism and it was especially important for first-wave feminists who, indeed, had to conceptualise a future for women within a universe of discourse

²⁵ It should be pointed out that first-wave women's movement was not for abolishing all difference. It was starkly divided on the question of extending equality to people of colour and in some contexts, even racist argumentation was used to campaign for women's suffrage (e.g., Terborg-Penn 1983: 261–278, Lebsack 1993: 62–100).

²⁶ The focus of the whole Seneca Falls Convention was on legal reform (married women's property rights, access to education and professions and the need to combat gender stereotypes. Suffrage for women proved to be the most controversial issue for the participants. It ceased to be a radical proposition only by the end of the 19th century (Chafetz and Dworkin 1986: 106–107, 109).

from which they were excluded. Thus, initially there was no discussion of defining the issue of gender from any other angle but that of individual rights and equality of opportunity.

Questions arise when the position of women has changed to the extent that it is possible to implement the theoretical principles of previous generations. Gender equality is a case in point. The question of equality has been especially controversial in liberal capitalist societies as, according to Mitchell (1987: 29), it is their legal systems that stress liberty and equality but only until scrutiny is extended to the unequal conditions in which the citizens of such countries actually inhabit. The illusion of liberal egalitarianism is possible to maintain when the subjects of the discourse are abstract but problems appear once the universal subject is deconstructed, revealing its racial and gender situatedness as well as the fact that the concept of equality itself has been defined from a clearly gendered perspective.

The majority of problems in discussions of equality arise from the use of the “pithy but enigmatic” Aristotelian principle according to which “justice consists in treating like cases alike and different cases differently” (Jaggar 1990: 239). The application of this principle to the case of equality between men and women inevitably leads to the question of difference between men and women. This is a conundrum that continues to be a major bone of contention not only in mainstream media but also academic circles where a plethora of empirical evidence proves either the essential difference (e.g., Baron-Cohen 2004) or the social constructedness (e.g., Fausto-Sterling 2000) of the two genders. The solving of this debate is not the aim of the present thesis and thus detailed positions of both sides will not be introduced here. However, it should be pointed out that the very persistence with which the issues reappear in public, academic and political discourse demonstrates the extent to which the dichotomous view of gender permeates human society although it has been an academic commonplace for decades to treat gender as a continuum rather than as a clear-cut binary. While there are indisputable and important biological and psychological differences between men and women, they are, in the sarcastic wording of Gayle Rubin (1997: 40), “closer to each other than either is to anything else – for instance, mountains, kangaroos, or coconut palms”. Yet this is hard to grasp in a cultural context that is constructed around a set of hierarchically positioned binary oppositions one of the most central of which is that between men and women (e.g., Cixous 1987: 63–130). Or as the legal scholar Catharine MacKinnon (1989: 233) has put it, “sex in nature is not a bipolarity, it is a continuum; society makes it into a bipolarity”, with important social consequences to debates such as the one on gender equality.

There is considerable disagreement on gender difference within feminist circles as well. Indeed, it is possible to map the feminist intellectual field on an imaginary continuum on the basis of attitudes towards the question. At the one end of the continuum stand feminists whom Catherine Stimpson calls minimalists and who believe that differences between men and women are

marginal and socially constructed, emphasised by social norms in order to maintain the status quo (Rojola 2003: 160–161). At the other end we find maximalists who see male-female differences as fundamental and for whom the major problem is the suppression of true female difference in the male-centred world. The aims of these two directions in feminist thought are cross-purposes: the first seeks to minimise difference that is defined as artificial, the second makes efforts to rediscover and emphasise difference that has hitherto been denied.

Thus it is not surprising that discourse on gender equality is inevitably saturated with tension between the ideal of gender equality and male-female difference, however it is conceptualised. To cite Catharine MacKinnon (1989: 216), “gender is socially constructed as difference epistemologically, and sex discrimination law bounds gender equality by difference doctrinally”. In a hostile cultural environment both minimalist and maximalist positions on gender difference can translate into public perceptions detrimental to women’s rights. The legal scholar Martha Minow (1990: 49) has called this phenomenon the dilemma of difference as “both focusing on and ignoring difference risks recreating it”: emphasising gender differences and providing special provisions for women helps perpetuate gender differences but so does ignoring gender differences and treating women similarly to men as such an approach ignores the male-centredness of the accepted norm and often translates into exclusion of women. Minow sees some hope in a continued social dialogue, especially with regard to the terminology used but, at this point, much of gender equality discussion remains in a vicious circle of the seemingly irreconcilable tension between equality and difference, one that is being successfully exploited by those hostile to changes in the traditionalist gender order. Or, as stated by Joan W. Scott (1990: 144):

Placing equality and difference in an antithetical relationship has, then, a double effect. It denies the way in which difference has long figured in political notions of equality and it suggests that sameness is the only ground on which equality can be claimed. It thus puts feminists in an impossible position, for as long as we argue within terms of discourse set up by this opposition we grant the current conservative premise that since women cannot be identical to men in all respects, they cannot expect to be equal to them.

Scott sees the refusal of the opposition and its reproduction of the hierarchies of Western philosophy as the potential solution to the problem: “the only response is a double one: the unmasking of the power relationship constructed by posing equality as the antithesis of difference and the refusal of its consequent dichotomous construction of political choices” (Scott 1990: 142). Scott’s advice is to deconstruct or relativise the terms of the debate, starting from the categories “men” and “women”, and the ultimate refusal of binary thinking. The radical feminist legal scholar Catharine MacKinnon (1989: 233–234) shares a similar

position according to which the concept of gender equality that is constructed proceeding from a binary opposition of equality and difference would be not only unachievable but also wrong. She, too, proposes that if the discussion is to proceed to a qualitatively new level, the first step is to reassess the key terms. It is, however, above all important to acknowledge the existence of the equality-difference dilemma that remains largely unresolvable within the present framework of liberal state and binary gender order. Therefore the following section will provide a survey of the two central feminist approaches to the question of equality that have also informed feminist political and legal practice in the American context, including the circumstances surrounding the ERA.

The strand of feminism labelled minimalism by Catherine Stimpson, traditionally associated with liberal feminism²⁷, argues that men and women are born equal and therefore deserve equal treatment²⁸. Biological differences should not hinder gender equality in the public sphere. According to this view the seemingly insurmountable non-biological differences between men and women result from gender-biased socialisation and stereotypes. In order to guarantee balanced social development the public sphere and legal system should be gender blind not to perpetuate the existing differences and the subordinate position of women. As difference always tacitly suggests difference from somebody or something (in this case men who are defined as the “neutral” norm) and, in a hierarchical context, difference from the norm is a sign of “deviance”, such difference should be minimised by all means possible to allow women to reach their full potential (McBride-Stetson 2004: 13). It is worth emphasising that the approach does not champion the erasure of biological differences but the elimination of socially constructed gender disparities, starting from gender stereotypes and their cultural manifestations (e.g., laws that reify gender difference).

This is the type of feminism that was first to emerge in the US, in the 19th century, in full harmony with the classical liberalist tenets that dominate in the country’s universe of political discourse in its demand for women’s unhindered participation in the public sphere (Evans 1989: 101–104). Yet this seemingly uncontroversial approach creates a number of problems, many of them proceeding from the very nature of liberal state. Or, as Catharine MacKinnon (1989: 160) has stated, “liberalism²⁹ to women has supported state intervention on behalf of women as abstract persons with abstract rights, without scrutinizing

²⁷ Liberal feminism is understood here as the type of feminist action initiated by Betty Friedan in the 1960s and which, rooted in classical liberalist thought and ultimately individualistic in its orientation, believes that gender equality can be achieved by social and legal reform without the need to challenge the present social structure.

²⁸ Although the stance has been attributed to liberal feminism in the US, it can also be seen in Marxist and socialist feminisms of other countries.

²⁹ MacKinnon seems to be referring to the current American form of liberalism that is based on classical liberalism but allows for some state intervention.

the content and limitations of these notions in terms of gender". Thus, the most central criticism of liberal feminism proceeds from the approach's neglect or even denial of differences between men and women that can have consequences opposite to the intended ones. The neglect of difference is frequently coupled with the conflation of equality and sameness that creates a multiplicity of problems. Sara Evans has figuratively argued that an identical treatment of individuals who are different by, for example, a doctor would be more than problematic: "We do not expect equal 'amounts' of treatment, the same doses of drugs, identical types of medication, for different ills. Indeed, a doctor who treated differently diagnosed patients identically would be treating them unequally, in that there would be different results" (Hughes 2002: 37). If we argue that, instead of an equality based on sameness, we should focus on equality of comparable performance, we enter a further definitional minefield riddled with accusations of double standards and endless disputes about what constitutes comparability.

The crux of this position in the determination of the benchmark against which equality is to be defined. In American legislation, principles of equality are formulated from the perspective of a white middle-class male but they have been "naturalised" to the extent that their gendered nature has become invisible. This produces norms that measure equality on the basis of criteria fitted to male experience and thus (potentially) unsuitable for women. Therefore their application, instead of resulting in gender equality, actually discriminates against women. As a result, ironically, the radical principle of equality may promote gender inequality and injustice (McBride-Stetson 2004: 50; Jaggar 1990: 241). The Australian ecofeminist Val Plumwood has called this approach to gender difference "feminism of uncritical equality", arguing that this approach has "attempted to fit women uncritically into a masculine pattern of life and masculine model of humanity and culture which is presented as gender neutral" (Plumwood 1993: 27, cited in Hughes 2002: 34). On this basis, liberal feminism has been accused of perpetuating the male-centred worldview that forces women to become "social males" and play according to male rules, thus helping to suppress women's authentic experience.

The criticism has been countered with the argument that focus on gender difference distracts attention away from substantial inequalities as well as the historical constructedness of the very concept of gender difference that has for centuries been used to prove the inferiority and consequent subordinate position of women (Rhode 1990: 197, MacKinnon 1989: 216). The American legal tradition has traditionally proceeded from the principle of gender difference, treating men as normative neutral citizens in comparison with whom women were not only different but also deficient. Dorothy McBride-Stetson (2004: 25) cites Supreme Court Justice Bradley's opinion on the 1873 case of *Bradwell v. Illinois* as an illustration of this position:

The civil law, as well as nature herself, has always recognized a wide difference in the respective spheres and destinies of man and woman. Man is, or should be, woman's protector and defender. The natural and proper timidity and delicacy which belong to the female sex evidently unfits it for many of the occupations of civil life. The constitution of the family organization, which is founded in the divine ordinance, as well as in the nature of things, indicates the domestic as that which properly belongs to the domain and functions of womanhood. The harmony, not to say identity, of interests and views which belong or should belong to the family institution, is repugnant to the idea of a woman adopting a distinct and independent career from that of her husband.³⁰

The rhetoric of difference was frequently expressed, veiled in romantic wording that focussed on women's special characteristics that needed gentlemanly guardianship, in protective measures that frequently proved to be discriminatory. For example, the pretext of the need to protect women also prevented them from entering professions that were remunerated better than the jobs predominantly held by women. As Deborah Rhode (1990: 200) has ironically remarked, "it was, for example, never clear why women's 'tender susceptibility' should bar her from prestigious professions but not from more gruelling and indelicate occupations like factory and field labor".

What makes the application of the equality principle problematic is not only differences between men and women but important differences (e.g., of race, class, age) between different women. Another complicating factor is the American focus on individual and not group rights. The latter tend to be viewed with suspicion in American legal practice and public discourse, exemplified by lasting tensions surrounding affirmative action policies. Liberal feminist thought, aligned with the classical liberal framework, does not provide adequate justifications for positive discrimination as they inevitably appear to justify double standards, or, in the words of Catharine MacKinnon (1989: 233), that women want to be treated similarly to men but also differently from men. As a result of the many tensions, most of the legislation achieved by liberal feminists in the US remains minimalist and centred on particular individuals and thus it cannot adequately address many deep-seated social problems that produce and reproduce discriminatory practices (Hughes 2002: 45). Liberal feminist efforts have also been hindered by the preference of the American legal system for negative freedom, consciously or unconsciously blind to the fact that many positive freedoms have already been granted to men as a group and they cannot be counteracted by any degree of negative freedom (MacKinnon 1989: 164). The current legal system supports those who are already equal or, as

³⁰ In this case, Myra Bradwell had passed the Illinois bar examination but she was not permitted to practice law because of her gender. She appealed her case to the Supreme Court, relying on the Fourteenth Amendment, but her case was declined, on the grounds that the right to pursue a career was not one of the privileges of national citizenship covered by the amendment (Langley and Fox 1994: 151).

MacKinnon (1989: 169) has put forcefully, “only to the extent women have already achieved social equality does the mainstream law of equality support their inequality claims”. She, in fact, believes that the present legal definition of gender equality actually guarantees that equality will never be achieved.

Many measures devised to guarantee gender equality have proved to be less effective than expected or even produced a situation where it is men rather than women who benefit from them (MacKinnon 1989: 222). Legislation has primarily addressed the public sphere³¹ where, indeed, the roles of men and women have become increasingly equal over the past thirty years. However, this has not been accompanied by comparable changes in the private sphere where women continue to be the primary caregivers and performers of housework. This has had a detrimental effect on women’s ability to compete successfully with men in the public sphere, as a result leaving them with less well paid positions, dead-end careers and/or professions that offer less professional satisfaction. As a result, not all women, especially women employed in low-paying and unprestigious jobs, find increased access to paid labour liberating and many remain suspicious of feminist rhetoric on the topic (Hughes 2002: 34). While beneficial for middle-class professionals, such policies have also been ineffective for women who have chosen a traditionalist gender role that centres on the home. As MacKinnon (1989: 227) has observed, “women asking courts to enforce guarantees that have been part of the bargain of women’s roles receive less and less, while also not receiving the benefits of the social changes that would qualify them for the rights on the same terms as men”.

Thus, although liberal feminism and the ideology of gender equality based on the minimalist notion of difference has been instrumental in the transformation of women’s roles in the public sphere and their increasing acceptance as full members of society, this also has, in a way, only meant the right for women to compete with men on the basis of rules that give considerable advantages to men (McBride-Stetson 2004: 49). This approach to the public sphere is inspired by the 19th century calls to see women as human beings, without acknowledgement that the normative human being has been male by gender and thus, in order to be accepted to full humanity in the public sphere, women have to adopt social masculinity. The result is, indeed, an equality of a kind but one that is not gender neutral, does not incorporate women’s expe-

³¹ In feminist thought, as pointed out by Jeff Weintraub (1997: 27–34), the terms “public” and “private” have a meaning that differs from the usage in liberal economic discourse or that of classical authors writing on republican virtue. Here this central dichotomy of feminist thought (Pateman 1989: 119) is used in the manner traditional in feminist writing: “private sphere” denotes the family and “public sphere” society outside the family, both characterised by great gender asymmetry, to the extent that the “private sphere” is frequently labelled “women’s sphere”. Because of the limiting nature of the latter term it is avoided in the present thesis.

rience and therefore does not help to solve the problem of discrimination at its roots.

Moreover, as this approach operates within the classical liberalist social model, it deprives feminism of the possibility of critiquing the patriarchal nature of contemporary society and thus precludes radical change. On the one hand, this self-positioning inside the reigning universe of political discourse has legitimated liberal feminism as a partner in policy dialogue, yet at the price of limiting their aims as well as the theoretical and practical tools available for achieving them. Although liberal feminist policies fit into the existing policy communities and conceptual frameworks (McBride-Stetson 2004: 12) and therefore have resulted in both legitimation and successes, this comes at a price (for a thorough discussion, see Gelb and Palley 1987). Working inside the liberal model of society like that of the US has meant that all legislative efforts on behalf of women's rights are both minimally interventionist and individualised, as it is believed that the system itself is, ultimately, fair and in no need of a radical overhaul. As a result, equality feminism is co-opted into perpetuating the existing system, with all its shortcomings, especially its inherent economic inequalities (e.g., Eisenstein 1993: 231).

The second central feminist approach to the question of equality tries to address the concerns derived from the inherent masculinist bias of today's social arrangements, advocating the abandonment of purely male-centred norms and their complementation with woman-centred values. This strand of feminism, called maximalism by Stimpson (Rojola 2003: 161) and feminism of uncritical reversal by Plumwood (1993: 27), has been identified, above all, with American radical feminism³² or French feminist theory³³. This type of feminism proceeds from the need to value the essential differences between men and women, starting from the re-assessment and re-definition of the concept of difference itself. If liberal feminists contend that the primary gender-related issue is the fact that women and men are considered to be too different, then for difference feminists there is too little difference that would be authentic. The

³² Radical feminism is here understood to present the strand of feminism that identifies patriarchy and the attendant women's oppression as the foundation on which present-day society is constructed and which believes that it is these underlying causes that have to be attacked if change is to be achieved. If liberal feminism to which radical feminism is often opposed prefers to work within the system and tackle issues of discrimination in the public sphere, radical feminism has advocated revolutionary change, starting from changes in the private sphere.

³³ It has to be pointed out that the term "French feminism", coined in Anglo-American academic discourse, is a very selective one, including primarily the work of Julia Kristeva, Luce Irigaray and Hélène Cixous (informed by Lacanian psychoanalysis and invested in celebrating the feminine) while excluding the more socially oriented or materialist strands of French feminism (Moses 1998: 241–274). Here the term is used in the limited Anglo-American sense because, despite the inexactness of the label, it still has common currency in the literature in the field.

model of difference in use in male-centred society is not adequate since it has been defined from a male perspective and erases the true feminine that is to be recovered. According to this view, society treats men and women similarly on the basis of a male-centred model that constructs women as inferior and forces them to adhere to practices and values that do not correspond to women's authentic nature. The primary aim of this strand of feminism is to create a space for genuine female experience and promote a worldview alternative to the present-day male-centred one. Examples of such feminist efforts are multifarious, from Hélène Cixous's *écriture féminine* (Cixous 1976) and the notion of ethics of care as an alternative to the ethics of justice (e.g., Gilligan 1982) to the radical reassessment of issues such as rape and pornography (e.g., Brownmiller 1975, Dworkin 1981).

It is important to remember that the definition of difference offered by these feminist authors is not identical to the widespread patriarchal conception. Rather, it seeks to dismantle the hierarchical nature of the dichotomous approach to gender difference. In the words of Scott (1990: 146), in the feminist interpretation these are "differences that confound, disrupt, and render ambiguous the meaning of any fixed binary opposition". Even staunch defenders of difference such as Julia Kristeva (2004: 104) are adamant in stressing that difference should not be reduced to biology but should also be extended to social factors. As such, difference feminists question the easy essentialism of social conservatism, even if difference feminism's reliance on difference makes them co-optable by those willing to discredit equalitarian discourses. Also, authors associated with the difference approach do not fully decry attempts to rally social movements on behalf of group rights. For example, Julia Kristeva, despite her many misgivings about feminism, acknowledges its relevance as a programme of political action, especially if feminism will learn to incorporate difference, particularly within personal identity (Kristeva 1986: 187–213). For her, it is imperative that women as political agents be "recognized in their difference", not incorporated in the polity "on the basis of submission to equality" (Kristeva 2004: 103).

Discourses of difference have also been energised by the advent of different strands of feminist post-structuralist and postmodernist thought (Sheehan 2004: 32-35). This also in a way explains why equality is no longer in fashion – it has largely been backgrounded by the intense theoretical interest in differences of all kinds that are incompatible with the grand narratives supporting equality discourses, be they liberal or Marxist in their essence. Post-structuralist authors do not see difference as "natural" but as cultural or constructed but nevertheless as having a "real" effect in the production of gendered subjectivities of individual men and women. Seeing difference as a discursive construction thus does not necessarily sever such theory from questions of power and political action. True, critics have claimed that such theorisation is ultimately elitist, emanating from individuals who have been liberated (or have never been oppressed) and therefore can afford such critique (e.g., Di Stefano 1990: 75).

The main concern of authors sceptical of the postmodernist feminist project has been that, ultimately, the inherent relativism of postmodernist thought only leaves the option of individualist politics and excludes the possibility any large-scale social action (Weedon 1999: 110–111). “It is precisely this potential for postmodernism to serve as the vehicle for merely updating the symbolic order, legitimizing the continued unequal distribution of power and privilege in the formation of ‘new’ subjects”, as Hennessy (1993: 6) warns, that feminisms should exercise caution with. This critique can be countered with the reiteration of the postmodernists’ argument that they seek to show the situatedness and constructedness of seemingly stable and “natural” categories and that this very act already carries the potential for counteraction. Above all, these approaches save counter-discourses from the trap of having to work within the system that cancels out their emancipatory agendas. Instead, they offer localised and limited strategies for context-sensitive action, arguing that the situatedness of such strategies only enhances their effectiveness.³⁴

However, postmodernist difference discourses, although honourable in intention, have had threefold detrimental effect of feminist political practice. First, by deconstructing the category of woman and the grand narratives that underlie the theorisation of oppression, such discourses deprive social movements of grounds for action (Phillips 1992: 13, Walby 1992: 48). Second, they, in their theoretical impenetrability and radicalism provide easy targets for social conservative critics, who use the abstruse argumentation of what could be called “ludic postmodernism”³⁵, for example, the famously complex work of Judith Butler³⁶, as representative of feminism as a whole and present it as preposterous in comparison to the traditional “common sense” on gender. Third, they direct feminists into an internecine struggle with each other, fragmenting their joint potential that could be used address existing social ills.³⁷ This

³⁴ Not all postmodernist theorists have remained purely theoretical. For example, Luce Irigaray has been actively involved in Italian feminist movement, to the extent of participating in a project that sought to define new grounds for women’s citizenship, submitted for discussion in the European Parliament (Irigaray 2001).

³⁵ The term has been suggested by Teresa Ebert to refer to postmodernist thought primarily interested in “mechanics of signification”, rather than “the politics of the production and maintenance of subjectivities”, the domain of resistance postmodernism in Ebert’s terminology (cited in Hennessy 1993: 3).

³⁶ It is worth pointing out that there are authors who also see Butler’s performative approach to gender as a form of liberal individualism (Jeffreys 1996: 374, cited in Weedon 1999: 124), so the very subversiveness of her radical theory has also been challenged.

³⁷ Scott’s (1990: 138–140) ironic example of feminists experts being summoned by both sides in a sex discrimination suit shows how the feminist debate on the questions of equality and difference has crossed the limits of a purely academic argumentation and shows how feminist theorisation can ultimately be used to justify existing normative frames of reference.

political co-optation of feminist contestations has received relatively little attention from theorists.

The above discussion does not seek to suggest that difference feminism or post-structuralist feminism has not offered innovative and applicable approaches to the difference dilemma. For example, Drucilla Cornell (1992) has demonstrated the compatibility of feminist politics, legal action and Derridean deconstruction. Cornell (1992: 281) shows that deconstructing the conventional category of “woman” does not reduce woman to “fundamental non-identity” but, rather, acknowledges the irreducibility of difference to the conventional hierarchical definition of the feminine. The main target of deconstruction, after all, is the rigidity of the naturalised gender order. The emphasis on the performative power of language also carries the potential for transformation: woman cannot be defined as lack if there is no “transcendental signifier” and this can translate into a re-configuration of the whole field of gender relations (Cornell 1992: 287). The proposed “dream of a new choreography of sexual difference” allows for political applications within a discourse of equivalent rights, for Cornell a notion more compatible with feminist aims than that of equal rights as it does not require likeness to men (Cornell 1992: 282–283).

Although many suggestions from difference feminists are either too radical or too theoretical for direct political application, examples of efforts similar to their ideas can also be found in legal practice, for example, in the form of special protective legislation for women. Already the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century saw the introduction of legislation regulating women’s employment (e.g., the limitation of hours of work or specific jobs open to women), justified by appealing to women’s “special nature” and their role as (potential) mothers.³⁸ Such laws stressed that women were not so much workers as women, that is, that their biological role overshadowed the social one and, as already suggested above, by emphasising biological difference, perpetuated the idea of women’s weakness and inferiority in the public sphere. This difference-based principle can still be seen in legislation stipulating special protective or positive discrimination measures for women. Such legislation is bound to remain problematic: on the one hand, it, indeed, helps women attain positions that would have been harder to reach without special measures but they also feed the opinion that women are incapable of “fair” competition with men as frequently such measures do not state explicitly that they seek to undo the male prerogatives that are invisibly encoded into the seemingly neutral legal system. Application of difference-based legislation has been especially problematic in the individualistic and meritocratic cultural context of the US which has generally been more favourable to equality feminism than to difference feminism.

³⁸ A key Supreme Court case in this respect is *Mueller v. Oregon* (1908) which limited the hours women could work, explained through the state’s interest in protecting women’s health.

Difference feminism has been criticised for its essentialism or even biological determinism (e.g., Moi 1985; for the criticism of this position, see, e.g., Fuss 1989) but also ethnocentrism (e.g., Weedon 1999: 38–40). Catharine MacKinnon (1989: 218) reminds uncritical difference theorists that gender differences are not the “natural” basis of inequality but the distinctions created by the very inequality. It can also be argued that the problems of difference feminism are transferred to measures developed to accommodate women’s difference within the legislative framework although they may have little ideological connection with radical feminist projects and actually proceed from social conservative notions of gender. Like difference feminism, such measures have been challenged for not dedicating enough attention to differences between women and therefore ending up being as levelling as the much-criticised equality feminism. In the words of Alison Jaggar (1990: 245), “legislation that separates women into a single category inevitably will define that category in a way that makes a certain subgroup of women into the paradigm of the whole sex”. If in the case of equality feminism that normative woman is a middle-class professional, then in the case of difference feminism it is a mother with children.

It has also been noted that difference-based analyses of gender tend to pay insufficient attention to the socio-historical circumstances that produce and prefer certain ways of being and, especially, that these analyses seem to be oblivious to the presence of power and the political situatedness of the question of difference (Walby 1992: 35–36). Rhode (1990: 198) has summed up this position in stating that “the fixation on sexual difference has deflected attention from the disadvantages that have followed from it”. It is this lack of political awareness that has made Catharine MacKinnon (1989: 219) call difference “the velvet glove on the iron fist of domination”. Alison Jaggar (1990: 244–245) has also demonstrated that the apolitical focus on difference helps to maintain and naturalise gender stereotypes, with a detrimental effect to feminist political practice. It can thus be concluded that if the central problem of equality feminism is the inability or disinclination to include difference in the definitions of equality, then difference feminists can be censured for their inability or disinclination to see how the discourse of difference reproduces woman’s secondary or “Othered” position in society. This has made Rhode (1990: 204) conclude that “although discourses about difference sometimes have a place, they should begin- not end- analysis”, one that is integrally linked to the particular socio-political context.

Although neither equality or difference feminism or legal measures that borrow their arguments has managed to offer an unambiguous answer to the dilemma of equality and difference, the debate itself has been important to feminist theory and practice. Most feminist authors try either to combine the two approaches or to deconstruct their purported antagonism. Legal scholars (e.g., Wilson 1992: 174) have called for a reconsideration of whether the aim of feminist legal reform should be formal equality or justice for human beings who

are different. Above all, it is important to note that we might be dealing with a false opposition in the juxtaposition of equality and difference feminisms. For example Alison Jaggar (1990: 250) has observed that the debate is not about the aims of feminism but merely about strategy: “in either conception of sexual equality, the goal of feminism is for women to be in some way the same as men, whether this sameness is interpreted as identical treatment or as access to the same opportunities”. This conclusion glosses over some important disagreements in the equality-difference debate as, in this case, the method in many ways also affects the definition of the aims. Joan Scott (1990: 142) sees only one possible response to the impossible choice encoded in the equality and difference dichotomy: “the unmasking of the power relationship constructed by posing equality as the antithesis of difference and the refusal of its consequent dichotomous political choices”. It should be remembered that the opposite of “equal” is “unequal”, not “different” as this seemingly obvious fact goes unnoticed in much of the public debate on the issue. There are also authors who call for the complete relocation of the project of equality. For example, Julia Kristeva (2004: 104) proposes that we abandon present discussions of equality and, rather, focus on singularity or radical individuality, which accepts differences on an individual, not group level, as a goal of today’s democracies.

Although the deconstruction of the existing discourses is an important task, the construction of new solutions has proved more challenging, especially considering the constraints of existing democracies and their legal systems. Some legal scholars have proposed the designing of new human standards that would combine male and female needs (McBride-Stetson 2004: 51). There have also been calls to move from futile attempts of creating universal solutions to the equality-difference dilemma to localising the debate by dealing with particular issues on a legal or bureaucratic level (Becker 1993: 21). Another compromise can be seen the principle developed by Italian feminists who propose that we strive towards “an equal liberty to shape oneself in accordance with whatever differences one finds significant” (Hughes 2002: 51), that is, the possibility of being both equal and different. Despite the definitional slipperiness of this seemingly equivocating position, it seems to be the one that finds extensive use in the lives of today’s women.

Although today’s feminist thought, in all of its diversity, has generally accepted the impossibility of universalistic solutions to gender inequality and has channelled considerable effort into theorising difference, it is important that the notion of equality, despite its unfashionableness, not be forgotten. In the emotional words of Alison Jaggar (1990: 251)

In a world where women (or certain groups of women) are still at the bottom of the pile, where women in full-time jobs earn on average less than two-thirds of the male wage and still do 70 percent of the housework (with husbands and children averaging 15 percent each), where one girl in four is subjected to male incest, almost one woman in three to rape and half of all

married women to domestic violence, in a world such as this, which is our world, feminists cannot afford to abandon the rhetoric of equality.

Despite the fact that, as Rhode (1990: 198) concludes, “the simplest of conventional legal strategies has been to avoid difficulties by avoiding discussion”, this is a stance that we cannot afford to take in socio-political analyses of gender, if we want to ensure the harmonious development of our societies, one that makes full use of the potential of all of its members, male or female. That is, equality should be not a goal for its own sake but a background condition for general social progress (Jaggar 1990: 253).

Acknowledged or unacknowledged, the dilemma of difference continues to have political currency and wide-reaching consequences in political practice. The fact that the tension has found so active debate in the feminist circles is, in fact, a sign of the increased extent of women’s involvement in the public sphere. Nancy Cott (1987: 7) has demonstrated that different conceptions of what is beneficial for women can appear only when women have the liberty to realise such ideas. When women are equally deprived of civil rights, they are more unified than when they become full citizens. Only then do serious divergences of interests become salient and only then does the need arise for ideologies, including feminisms, to unite women with disparate needs. Divergent aims have also played an important part in the American political context, clashing especially in the question of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA).

1.2. Equality, difference and American feminist practice: Equal Rights Amendment

1.2.1. The emergence of the ERA

The dilemma of difference has proved to be divisive in the American feminist practice. It, in many ways, was part of the first-wave feminist movement already, manifested especially in the struggle for suffrage. On the one hand, feminist activists worked within the liberal tradition of individual rights but, starting from the late 19th century, this stance competed with one that emphasised women’s difference from men as the grounds for granting them the vote (for example, exemplified in different maternalist policies, such as calls for involvement of women in the public sphere by associating it with “unique” feminine skills and capacities, seen in concepts such as municipal housekeeping or political motherhood (for a longer discussion of early women’s organisations see Scott 1991). To cite a speaker from a suffrage convention from 1898:

So long as the State concerned itself with only the most external and mechanical of social interests [the presumption that men should rule was] inevitable, natural and beneficent. The instant, however, the State took upon itself any form of educative, charitable, or personally helpful work, it entered

the area of distinctive feminine training and power, and therefore became in need of the service of woman. (Evans 1989: 153)

This quotation shows an interesting conflation of classical liberalism with masculine citizenship and indicates that with the state moving towards social liberalist measures, the sphere of politics also would have to become gender inclusive, if not exactly feminised.³⁹ The traditionalist rhetoric of women's greater morality was extensively used in the suffrage campaign after the Civil War when the focus of the suffrage movement "shifted from women's natural right to suffrage to the beneficent social effects which women's suffrage would entail" (Chafetz and Dworkin 1986: 110). Although maternalist rhetoric decreased after the end of the Progressive Era, it transformed into efforts to guarantee protective legislation for women workers, furthered by women associated with trade unions who continued to promote goals radically different from those of middle-class professional women. However, differences of opinion on the strategies of women's suffrage movement did not split the movement to the extent as to derail the cause and in 1920 the Nineteenth Amendment, which granted women the right to vote, was entered into the Constitution.⁴⁰

Granting women the right to vote was of utmost importance as it formally acknowledged women's full citizenship and gave them access to political decision-making. However, there are also contradictions that could not be resolved with the suffrage amendment. Sara Evans (1989: 172) has pointed out the ironies of the achieved vote, which "enfolded women into a particular version of the American political heritage defining citizenship as an unmediated relationship between the individual and the state, whose key expression was the act of voting". Although it was collective action by women that had ultimately led to this important legislative breakthrough, the particular kind of suffrage achieved discouraged further engagement with group rights or, in the words of Evans (1989: 173), "what was won with a great collective effort permitted women to confront their newly attained citizenship in the solitude of the voting booth". Although the individualistic nature of the vote included women in the American polity, the resultant backgrounding of collective identities led to further splits within women's movements.

One of the key issues for a bifurcation of interests was the question of a constitutional amendment on gender equality. In the aftermath of the successful passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920 the National Women's Party (NWP) proposed, as a logical extension, a further constitutional amendment to

³⁹ This association between Big Government and femininity can still be seen in the disparaging label "nanny state".

⁴⁰ It is pertinent to mention here that the suffrage movement also faced opposition from an organised women's anti-suffrage movement that was short-lived and largely limited to the elite women who saw suffrage as a threat to the status of women as ladies (for a longer discussion, see Marshall 1985: 349–355).

guarantee constitutional protection to equality between men and women.⁴¹ As Dorothy McBride-Stetson (2004: 22–23) has pointed out, the Constitution holds a special place in the American polity as its language is not merely symbolic, like in many other countries, but it is also “crucial to policy powers”, especially with regard to the relationship between the federal government and the states. In addition, the Constitution holds a central place in the American civil religion and entering a concept into it automatically elevates it to the highest symbolic position among the nation’s ideals (see, e.g., Levinson 1979: 123–151). This explains the reluctance with which Americans amend the Constitution and the difficulties of campaigns that seek to pressure the public into such far-reaching change. The ERA campaign has proved a lasting testimony of such difficulties.

The NWP campaign that started in 1921 led to the first congressional hearing of the ERA in 1923, with the following text “Men and Women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction” (Langley and Fox 1994: 236). The proposed amendment proceeded from the perspective of female individualism and, above all, garnered the support of professional women who saw all attempts to treat women as a special group as a sign of relegating them to the status of a minor. To cite one campaigner:

They [proponents of protective legislation] are trying to make our legislators believe that we women in industry are a class of weaklings, a special class of creatures devoid of both moral strength and physical stamina, totally unfit, mentally, morally and physically, to decide for ourselves, to judge between right and wrong, good and bad. (Evans 1989: 193)

This, in turn, brought unmitigated criticism from women reformers who, proceeding from a vision of “politicised domesticity” (Evans 1989: 194), had campaigned for protective legislation for working-class women and poor mothers. Moreover, there was also a concern that an equal rights amendment might endanger the very bases of women’s political participation: as women had been granted suffrage on the grounds of women’s special needs and abilities, the proposed ERA, by outlawing the premise on which women’s political rights had been based, might lead to the annulment of suffrage (McBride-Stetson 2004: 30).

This split illustrates a broader ideological confrontation between different feminist groups. The beginning of the 20th century had seen a discursive shift in the course of which 19th-century rhetoric of duty was replaced by that of rights (Cott 1987: 37). What those rights should entail created considerable disagreement among women, even women who identified themselves as feminists. Right to education or career outside the home were uncontroversial but what

⁴¹ This was not the first call for a formal declaration of equal rights: there had been a short-lived Equal Rights Party in the 1870s that, among other things, endorsed the idea of a woman president for the US (Chafetz and Dworkin 1986: 111).

proved divisive was the issue of equal rights to men and women, above all because declaring full gender equality at the level of the Constitution would have come into conflict with legislation that provided special protective legislation to women in the labour force (Banks 1981: 207). Thus there appeared an ideological chasm between the middle-class professional women⁴² who campaigned for equality and those who defended the rights of working-class women. The central question of the debate was whether the rhetoric of equal rights was in the best interests of most women and whether this rhetoric contributed to the increase of equality in real life. It was noticed already in the 1920s that the seemingly neutral laws had been created from a male-centred perspective, with man as the normative worker. As Florence Kelley, a prominent campaigner for the rights of working-class women, scathingly remarked, “so long as men cannot be mothers, so long legislation adequate for them can never be adequate for wage-earning women; and the cry Equality, Equality, where Nature has created Inequality, is as stupid and as deadly as the cry Peace, Peace, where there is no Peace” (Cott 1987: 138). This argument vividly illustrates the multiple tensions within the concept of legal equality.

While the opponents of the ERA proceeded from the concept of women’s maternal nature, the NWP saw differentiation of men and women in the labour market and the public sphere as the result of socially constructed gender roles, not essential difference. These constructed roles, however, were treated inconsistently by the courts, usually in ways detrimental to women. This is why Alice Paul, the leader of the NWP, declared that “we shall not be safe until the principle of equal rights is written into the framework of our Government” (cited in Becker 1981: 19). The passion of the defenders of the ERA and the supporters of protective legislation helped to keep the amendment from succeeding in Congress. Thus, although the early campaigners did not initiate the problematisation of the concept of equality itself, the debate focussed on themes that have remained topical to this date.

Although the ERA was proposed already in 1923, it did not gain enough political clout to be seriously considered by Congress for decades. Yet, although the Great Depression and WWII channelled the energies of the nation away from discussions of gender, the ERA did not die. Thanks to the efforts of the NWP it was presented for discussion during all sessions of Congress since the amendment was first proposed, although there was slim chance of it being passed (McBride-Stetson 2004: 30). It is especially remarkable, considering the present profile of the party, that it was the Republican Party that adopted

⁴² Indeed, the NWP, the engine behind the ERA, found support from organisations of middle-class professional women such as National Federation of Business and Professional Women’s Clubs, the American Medical Women’s Association and the National Association of Women Lawyers all of which agreed in finding protective legislation to be a double-edged sword (Banks 1981: 208).

support for the ERA into its Party platform first, in 1940.⁴³ It took the Democrats four more years to do the same, because of the opposition of labour unions, influential backers of the Democratic Party (Banks 1981: 209). As Anne Costain (1991: 116) has stated: “the Democratic Party countered GOP⁴⁴ commitments to equality by emphasizing its concern for protecting the health, safety, and economic well-being of working women”. Some authors have argued that the stand of politicians on the ERA was less dependent on party affiliation than worldview in general. As pointed out by McBride-Stetson (2004: 31), “in the 1940s, liberal politicians and labor unions joined coalitions to defeat the ERA, while conservatives in the Republican and Democratic parties supported it”. This social liberal opposition to the ERA⁴⁵ derives from the fear, dating back to the debate in the 1920s, that the amendment would threaten protective labour legislation and, therefore, in this case, the opposing sides were defined by class rather than gender or party affiliation (McBride-Stetson 2004: 31).

In 1943 the text of the amendment was revised and as a result it stated that “equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of Sex”. While the original text could have been interpreted to cover non-governmental activities, the new version clearly restricted the amendment to laws and government purvey (Freeman 1975: 211). Political support for the ERA, seen as a potential encouragement to women’s participation in the war effort, was strong enough in 1945 for it to be passed with a majority in the House of Representatives but not in the Senate. This was repeated in 1950 and 1953, as Olive Banks (1981: 210) suggests, because of the changing pattern of women’s labour force participation and the concomitant need to re-examine legislation on discrimination against women. Banks argues that labour force shortages increased the investment of both employers and politicians in facilitating women’s entry into labour force and hence stimulated their interest in the ERA. Harrison (2003: 158) argues that the changing attitude may have derived from international role of the US: “both the position of the United States as the avatar of democracy and the valour women displayed as workers and military personnel made their exclusion from protection of fundamental law seem both embarrassing and unfair”. The debate continued, without gaining momentum. In 1950 Senator Hayden, an Arizona Democrat, offered a compromise to help solve the standstill. His proposed addition to the

⁴³ Republicans were also first to include the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of gender into their party platform in 1956 (Costain 1991: 116).

⁴⁴ GOP is the abbreviation of “Grand Old Party”, the label frequently applied to the Republican Party.

⁴⁵ The opposition included labour unions, the Women’s Bureau at the Department of Labor and the American Civil Liberties Union. This coalition even established the National Committee to Defeat the Unequal Rights Amendment (McBride-Stetson 2004: 30–31).

amendment was to allay fears about the disappearance of special protections and reads as follows: “the provision of this article shall not be construed to impair any rights, benefits, or exemptions conferred by law upon persons of the female sex” (McBride-Stetson 2004: 31–32). Although many supporters of the ERA did not approve of the change, the compromise enabled politicians to appease different interest groups and it remained part of the ERA, which both parties retained in their party platforms without making it into their central cause.

1.2.2. The ERA in the 1970s–1980s: emergence and fate on the national level

The political climate became favourable to women’s rights again as a result of the re-activation of the second wave of women’s movement in the 1960s, inspired by the civil rights movement and countercultural outburst of energies (e.g., Morgan 1970, Gitlin 1987: 362–376). The responses on the federal level were not immediate or enthusiastic but all three branches of government exhibited an increased readiness to engage with matters pertaining to social values (Chafe 1977: 154). Gender equality became a topic of discussion as a result of changes in the labour market where the participation of white married mothers was becoming commonplace, revealing “stresses in the family-work dynamic” among the middle-class families (Harrison 2003: 159). It has often been argued (e.g., Greenberg 1977: 6, Williams 1992: 151) that the legal establishment is a notoriously conservative institution that does not initiate social changes but, rather, recognises developments that have already taken place. The fact that laws are difficult to alter means that legal debates surface only when there is broad-based demand for them.

The ERA had been kept alive by the NWP and had gained increasing support from business and professional women but faced vehement opposition from women associated with the labour movement, including also officials of the Women’s Bureau at the Department of Labor. The key argument of the opponents of the ERA was that equality of rights was already sufficiently covered under the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments⁴⁶ and no further amendment was needed (Evans 1989: 274, McBride-Stetson 2004: 23).

⁴⁶ The Fifth Amendment includes provisions concerning due process of law and protection of private property; the Fourteenth Amendment declares that citizenship rights shall not be abridged. The word “equal” only appears in the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Incidentally, this is also the first amendment that, in Section 2, uses gender-specific language and explicitly bars women from the political community that, on its adoption greatly vexed first-wave feminists who had hoped that emancipation of the black population would also lead to that of women (McBride-Stetson 2004: 25).

What has often been considered instrumental in the new mobilisation of women behind legislative efforts, among them the ERA, is President Kennedy's appointment of a Presidential Commission on the Status of Women, chaired by a figure as respected as Eleanor Roosevelt, that initiated a broad study of women's status. The report of the commission, issued in 1963, the same year Betty Friedan published her *The Feminine Mystique*, which explored the frustrations of middle-class domesticity, documented wide-ranging problems of discrimination and inequality. Although the effects of the report on actual policies were negligible (Freeman 1975: 170), it played an important role in increasing awareness of the problems of women.

Laws, as already stated, have been relatively conservative in responding to social change and hence disparate treatment of women in law persisted, defended by the claim that such differentiation protected women. Or, as Ruth Bader Ginsburg (1978: 143, 144) has put it, "neither legislators nor judges regarded gender lines as 'back of the bus' regulations" but as something that put women on a pedestal which "has all too often, upon closer inspection, been revealed as a cage". A decisive if ironical first step towards legislative acknowledgement of gender equality was the passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 (Langley and Fox 1994: 280–283) that included gender, alongside race, colour, religion and national origin, as one of the categories covered under the provisions designed to ward off discrimination in employment practices. Most politicians did not think gender was a matter serious enough to be treated side by side with race. In fact, it was included in the text only on the proposal of a Virginia congressman who hoped to kill the bill that offended his segregationist sentiments (Langley and Fox 1994: 280). Although many members of Congress seemed at best amused by the provisions for women⁴⁷, the Act that was passed without any feminist campaigning and became the most effective tool for women fighting discrimination. Also, its provisions and the Equal Pay Act⁴⁸ of 1963, with its explicitly worded protections against differential treatment, made protective laws for women legally impossible and thus removed much of the labour opposition to the ERA (Costain 1991: 118). Moreover, in the 1960s women's unions were also starting to critique protective legislation (Banks 1981: 214). However, these important legislative victories were achieved by accident rather than agency. Women still lacked a say in politics and this was the status the emerging women's movements sought to change.

The women's movements that entered the political field in the 1960s once again represent two distinct directions. On the one hand, there was the National

⁴⁷ The new provisions were considered as something of a joke in public discourse in general. For example, *The New York Times* called it the "bunny law" and worried about men who might want to become Playboy bunnies (Evans 1989: 276).

⁴⁸ It is worth recalling that legislation on equal pay was introduced not out of concern for women but for men as it was feared that lower pay received by women would also undercut male pay (Freeman 1975: 175–176).

Organization for Women (NOW), founded in 1966, expressing the needs of middle-class and professional women and constructed on classical liberal ideals of individual rights and equal participation in the public sphere (Evans 1989: 277). By focusing on rights of individuals and distancing itself from group rights the depoliticised NOW did not represent a wide constituency of women but was skilful in lobbying, thus becoming a primary voice of feminism as a mainstream ideology. On the other hand, there was the more radical women's liberation movement that grew out of the civil rights and students' movements and lacked a centralised national organisation. It challenged the established tenets of the American system, believing that it was not enough to merely change legislation to achieve true equality between men and women. Instead, it proposed a new conceptualisation of the political by erasing the ancient dichotomy of the public and the private, and sought to redefine the personal, which had largely remained outside the purvey of liberal feminist campaigns (Evans 1989: 279–281, 290). Although seemingly incompatible, the two directions of feminist activism co-existed and, to an extent, coalesced by the early 1970s when feminist efforts had become a political commonplace.⁴⁹ As Sara Evans (1989: 289) has stated, “most Americans, both male and female, /.../ were not converted [to feminism]. They were angry, defensive, confused, but they were thinking about gender nonetheless”. The US public was ready to engage with the ERA once again.

Prior to the newly introduced ERA, the 27th Amendment to the US Constitution (for the full text, see Appendix 2), as Ginsburg (1978: 144–147) has demonstrated, constitutional law regarding issues of equal treatment of men and women was divided and inconsistent. It was hoped that the amendment would clarify the matters and also send clear guidelines to the lower courts (for a thorough discussion, see Law 1984: 969–987). Harrison (2003: 162) proposes that the feminists were, in their struggle for the ERA, largely asking for clarity: “a clear legal standard of equal treatment without regard to sex /.../ and permanence, a standard that would not be subject to the vagaries of changing political winds of even court personnel”. The ERA that was proposed for congressional discussion was mainly a symbolic, not substantial document (Rhode 1989: 65). Greenberg (1977: 1) situates its main importance in the fact that it would have given a universal legal definition of equality and made “sex” a suspect category in legal documents.⁵⁰ The prevalence of “sex-plus” approach to legislation pertaining to gender long after the disappearance of race-specific stipulations to which sexism has often been compared has been noted by many (e.g., Erickson 1974: 208–282). Greenberg (1977: 2) argues that the ERA “has

⁴⁹ In 1972, 47% of women polled said that women and men should be equal and 29 that they should remain at home. In 1980 the percentages were 58% and 20%, respectively (Chafetz and Dworkin 1986: 167).

⁵⁰ Williams (1992: 154) dates the repudiation of the separate spheres approach by the Supreme Court with the mid-1970s.

less to do with equal rights than with treating each person as unique”, that is, that it would not require sameness for men and women but rather tolerate individual difference. This position is forcefully articulated in Brown et al (1971: 871–985), the definitive article on the legal interpretation of the ERA. As such, the intention of the ERA was in full harmony with the American value system and legal rhetoric.

Most authors (e.g., Hoff 1991: 328) agree that the amendment was not designed to change values, especially in the short term, but rather remove barriers from the way of women who wanted to assimilate into “male mainstream America”. It was noted by activists at the time already that the ERA conveyed a liberal feminist ethos, that is, sought to institutionalise “masculine equality” that could be easily incorporated into the American political discourse and that, as the discussion above demonstrated, would not necessarily have been beneficial for all women (Williams 1992: 151). Some authors, for example Zillah Eisenstein (1993: 234) see it as functioning primarily in the interests of the state: “feminists must realize that the ERA challenges the ideological statements of patriarchy but not the patriarchal organization of everyday life”.

The ERA was couched in rhetoric of negative liberty that “does not instruct people to do something; rather it prevents them from doing anything to inhibit possibility” (Greenberg 1977: 10). The congressional discussions proved that strict stipulations regarding people’s right to privacy would be applied to prevent any interference of the state into people’s private activities or bodily functions (Rhode 1989: 68). Special stipulations were made for “current mores”, especially for privacy purposes (e.g., employment of same-sex police officers for searches, maintenance of separate sleeping and toilet facilities) (Harrison 2003: 161). Moreover, even homemakers were included in the discussion of women who suffered under neutrally phrased laws that indirectly discriminated against women (Greenberg 1977: 15–17). It was also clearly demonstrated that “benign quotas” and “compensatory aid” would not prove legally viable under the ERA (Harrison 2003: 162). That is, the congressional deliberations explicitly touched upon issues that became central to later debate and found satisfactory explanations to all of them. The ERA had no coercive potential when it came to individual lifestyles as it was only targeted against federal agencies and public officials, although it carried the potential to symbolically signal a shift in the society’s perception of gender, alongside with a greater acceptance of pluralism and tolerance. As such, the ERA blended well into both the inherent conservatism of the American political system and the social liberal values, making it supportable by both political parties.

The revival of the ERA campaign, now defined as an issue of civil rights, not class, saw the unification of diverse feminist groups behind the effort to enter gender equality into the Constitution, a central document of America civil religion, a symbolic confirmation of the state’s and people’s recognition of gender equality as a necessary feature of democracy, even if the amendment itself would not have resulted in immediate changes in the lives of men and

women. Increased unity of vision among women's groups was heightened by legislative change that had allayed concerns about protective labour legislation, now protected by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. As the question of gender equality was in full consonance with the American value system, with echoes of the Declaration of Independence and with no redistributive intent, it also united women campaigners from the Republican and the Democratic parties, a rare occasion of bipartisan effort where gender transcends political division (Freeman 1975: 216). Already William Chafe (1977: 177) noted that the advantage of the 1970s feminism lay in the fact that it was in consonance with the prevailing trends in society. Jo Freeman (1975: 236) has argued that even radical feminists habitually ridiculed in the media helped to build broad-based support for the ERA as next to them many feminist organisations that could otherwise have appeared subversive, now seemed moderate if not outright conservative.

The ERA, indeed, was supported by a number of women's organisations ranging from the NOW and the League of Women Voters to the American Association of University Women, YWCA and the United Auto Workers (Evans 1989: 291). In addition, women's activism could be seen all across the US. Women seemed to present a unified front and, in an attempt to win the support of this important voting block, legislators took a positive view of the ERA that seemed to have considerable symbolic value and no political cost. As Jo Freeman (1975: 216) argues, the ERA was uncontroversial at this point as it was "a moral issue that cut across party lines, in part because it cost nothing and therefore was not overtly redistributive". Thanks to the efforts of Michigan Democrat Martha Griffiths the ERA was brought to Congress again.⁵¹ It was approved on March 22, 1972 with a great majority of votes in both houses of Congress (354 to 23 in the House of Representatives and 84 to 8 in the Senate) and was sent for ratification to the states. The ERA was also supported, though belatedly, by President Nixon⁵² but also, reportedly, by such prominent conservative figures as Senator Strom Thurmond, George Wallace and Spiro Agnew (Felsenthal 1981: 234). It was ratified by 22 states by the end of the

⁵¹ The 92nd Congress passed a number of other acts supportive of women's rights (Equal Employment Opportunity Act, Child Development Act, Educational Attainments Act, etc.) (Freeman 1975: 202–204). The role of Martha Griffiths is described in detail by Freeman (1975: 212–215).

⁵² Nixon had been a supporter of the ERA from the beginning of his political career, as expressed in his letter to a Republican colleague from 1972: "As you remember, as a Senator in 1951 I cosponsored a Resolution incorporating the original Amendment; in July of 1968 I reaffirmed my support for it as a candidate for the Presidency. Throughout twenty-one years I have not altered my belief that equal rights for women warrant a Constitutional guarantee – and I therefore continue to favour the enactment of the Constitutional Amendment to achieve this goal" (cited in Costain 1991: 120). However, he was less outspoken in his public addresses and he officially pledged to support the ERA only in 1973.

year.⁵³ It has been claimed that the success of the ERA derived from a (perception of) grassroots support and the women's movement but, above all, skilful use of lobbying by "woodwork feminists" (Freeman 1975: 228) in the government structures and the harmony of the amendment with the American value system that made it an unproblematic bipartisan effort with no serious resistance.

1.2.3. Opposition to the ERA

Organised opposition to the ERA appeared only in the ratification phase, confirming Theodore Lowi's claim, cited above, that conservative movement was mobilised when socially liberal legislation started to be transferred from the federal to the more socially conservative local level. The anti-ERA forces represented a colourful ideological spectrum of opinions, ranging from the left-wing organisations such as the Communist party to right-wing groups (e.g., the ultra-conservative John Birch Society and Catholic associations) (Banks 1981: 215). Since the ERA seemed so commonsensical after its passage in Congress, its supporters did not build grassroots organisations in the states to lobby for the amendment or explain its implications to the public at large. In this, they were clearly bested by the anti-ERA forces that could fall back upon the broad conservative support network that had emerged since the 1960s and that had extensive experience with mass mailings, networking and public rallies. As Marshall (1985: 358) suggests, being part of a broad social conservative coalition enhanced the material and discursive resources of the campaign against the ERA.⁵⁴ If the supporters of the ERA worked the federal political establishment, the opponents mobilised grassroots, using populist rhetoric to build on their suspicion of the elites and federal government but, above all, exploiting their fear of change.

The opponents of the ERA were aided by the fact that the American constitution is notoriously difficult to amend: there is no need for a national campaign as it is enough to create doubts and potential of conflict that would make support controversial for naturally cautious local politicians in only thirteen states (McBride-Stetson 2004: 43). The ERA left Washington as a "high-consensus, low-conflict, bipartisan issue" of high symbolic value (McBride-Stetson 2004: 43) but the opposition merely had to redefine it as a high-conflict matter to reduce the consensus and symbolic value of the ERA. Probably as a

⁵³ All amendments to the Constitution have to be ratified in at least 38 states to enter into force.

⁵⁴ This coalition against the ERA included Mormon, Catholic and fundamentalist Protestant churches, the Moral Majority movement, the American Farm Bureau Association, the John Birch Society and the National Conservative Political Action Committee (Marshall 1985: 358).

result of the unanimity of support on the national level, the proponents of the ERA did not prepare campaigns to support the amendment in the states, possibly the greatest strategic error of their effort. While the ERA Ratification Council started its work in 1974, their opponents had initiated their campaigns already in 1972 and thus had the advantage of defining the terms of debate and placing the supporters of the amendment on the defensive from the very beginning.

The most important group that provided the most vocal and most effective opposition to the ERA was the STOP-ERA⁵⁵ movement organised in 1972 by Phyllis Schlafly, a long-time conservative activist who had yet to find a distinctive niche for herself in the emerging conservative coalition. The following sketch of her life is based on the work of Carol Felsenthal (1981) and Donald Critchlow (2005) – the first of which focuses on Schlafly as an individual, while the second uses her as an example for explicating the emergence of grassroots conservatism – as well as materials available on the website of the Eagle Forum. She was active in the Republican Party, unsuccessfully running for Congress twice and thus remaining in the second tier of party luminaries. However, she achieved a position of authority in conservative politics that was instrumental in shifting the party from liberal conservatism to social conservatism. Schlafly was a vocal anti-communist commentator and published several books on the matter. Her most influential work was the 1964 *A Choice Not an Echo*, a polemic against the, in her opinion, excessively moderate Republican establishment that, she claimed, was merely echoing liberal politics, without providing the voters with a real (conservative) choice. It became a bestseller and provided important support to the nomination of Barry Goldwater.

Schlafly was propelled to national fame through the STOP-ERA campaign, introduced in detail below, that she orchestrated. Her own life in many ways remains in contradiction with her rhetoric: although a devout Catholic and the mother of six children, she did not choose traditionalist domesticity but was also a lawyer and prominent political campaigner, successfully combining career and family. Ignoring this contradiction, she made herself the spokesperson for the traditionalist family and social mores.⁵⁶ Her brand of social conservatism continues to resonate in the conservative circles and she has retained her influence even after the ERA campaign, through the conservative Eagle Forum network (founded in 1972) and the *Phyllis Schlafly Report* newsletter (published since 1967). After the fall of communism she dedicated herself fully to issues of family and religious values, remaining an influential anti-feminist authority,

⁵⁵ Significantly, the name of the movement is an acronym that stands for the slogan “Stop Taking Our Privileges” (Marshall 1985: 356).

⁵⁶ This was, however, used against her in her Congress campaigns. According to Tobias (1997: 139) one of her opponents demeaned her by saying that “Mrs. Schlafly ought to be at home minding her family”.

although not on a scale comparable to that of the 1980s. Recently, she has found a new target in the Supreme Court which she sees as a threat to the integrity of the American political system (Schlafly 2004). Once again, she seems to be harbinger of a general shift in conservative policy emphasis that has lately been focussing on remaking the American judiciary. As such, she remains an important voice of the no longer silent American (social) conservative majority.

A public protest movement requires the emergence of a shared consciousness that is built on the recognition of common experience of mistreatment and the contextualisation of such experience as well as the creation of a discursive framework that enables the expression of such consciousness as legitimate protest and provides the movement with a language to express its positions in (Klatsch 2001: 796). Such definitions are frequently not only descriptive but also productive. Or, in the words of Joan Cassell (1977: 32, cited in Klatsch 2001: 804), “when a problem with no name is named /.../ the problem is not only discovered and defined but also in some ways created /.../ A new way of categorizing reality not only names and channels dissatisfaction but also generates it.” What is paramount in contemporary mediatised public sphere is the alignment of the nascent social movement in the surrounding universe of political discourse (Jenson 1987: 65, Klatsch 2001: 803). Understood in a Foucauldian frame discussed in detail on Chapter 2, the universe of discourse delimits what is considered legitimate and meaningful, that is, what can be discussed in a political context.

First-wave feminism had gained its methods and language from the abolitionist movement and similar cross-pollination between movements could also be observed in the 1960s. While feminists derived their inspiration from the civil rights movement, the anti-feminist activists, paradoxically, built their movement on the models and discourses developed by feminists. This dynamic relationship between change-oriented feminist movements and the antitheses they give rise to has been documented internationally (Chafetz and Dworkin 1987: 33–60). As Chafetz and Dworkin (1987: 33–34) and Rebecca Klatsch (2001: 812) have demonstrated, feminist and anti-feminist consciousness are in a dialectical relationship: feminist movements also provide a collective identity to and politicise those groups of women who see feminist social reform as a threat to their way of life and therefore enter the political arena to counter this threat. This mechanism is not, in itself, surprising: collective identity is traditionally constructed by defining the in-group (we) but, above all, the out-group (they). The delineation of the out-group can play a central part in many movements, as was demonstrated above in the discussion of the building of the conservative consensus, and was also successfully employed by Phyllis Schlafly in creating the coherent STOP-ERA movement that, at its height, is reported to have involved several thousand women (Marshall 1985: 355).

Both directions of women’s movements, which Klatsch (2001: 811) sees as a part of the same “multiorganizational field”, operate within the American value system, seeking legitimisation from different ends of the generally accepted

scale of moral values: feminists emphasising rights, anti-feminists duties.⁵⁷ Both operate with the rhetoric of liberty, feminists aiming for positive liberty (unhindered opportunities for self-realisation), anti-feminists for negative liberty (freedom from outside coercion, in this case, from the Supreme Court or federal government, especially in matters pertaining to the private sphere of life). The rhetoric of negative freedom was attractive to the conservative women's groups as the Supreme Court had recently passed a spate of divisive decisions that directly attacked some of the most sacred features of the social conservative way of life and the self-definition (e.g., the banning of school prayer in public schools or the even more controversial legalisation of abortion)⁵⁸. These decisions created a sense of an imminent threat in the conservative electorate who feared that the federal government was about to deprive the states and private individuals of the right to decide on questions of marriage, childbirth, education and other matters related to the most intimate and sacred aspects of life (De Hart 1991: 251). In this case, the rights of the states are confused with individual rights, with important consequences. The fear that the dangerously social and cultural liberal federal government, under feminist pressure, would interfere in its citizens' private lives and infringe upon their negative freedom also helped to unite conservative individuals who had hitherto been uninterested in the issue of gender equality but who were latently anti-feminist.

As the ERA had been adopted as something that furthered traditional American values, above all the equality of all citizens before the law and their right to free self-realisation, the primary strategy employed by Phyllis Schlafly was discursive, essentially striving to redefine the ERA within the same framework of American values. To achieve this goal, she had to find themes to enable her to neutralise the positively connoted notions used by her opponents and reconfigure gender equality as a threat to the "American way of life". The resultant main discursive strategy of the STOP-ERA was the re-framing of the central argument of the proponents of the ERA, the protection of the equality of the roles of men and women, into the ERA as a vehicle of radical role change (McBride-Stetson 2004: 44). This shift takes advantage of the ambiguities of the concept of equality in American political discourse where it has traditionally been interpreted from the perspective of negative liberty, concerning "procedural rights rather than the substantive sharing of resources" (Chafe 1977: 148). As a result, the ERA, based on the concept of negative liberty, limited political action merely to the removal of formal barriers to women's advancement and the introduction of measures to end discrimination. As Chafe (1977: 149) notes,

⁵⁷ The belief systems of the proponents and opponents of the ERA have been compared, for example, by Mueller and Dimieri (1982: 657–675), on the basis of their case study in Massachusetts.

⁵⁸ Interestingly, some of the most controversial issues in recent American political discourse (e.g., abortion but also gay rights) are in consonance with the basic philosophy of American polity as they derive from the concept of negative freedom.

the ERA was also defined in “negative terms” and was pervaded by the sense that the mere act of conferring equal legal rights would, indeed, be sufficient to guarantee equality of opportunity. As such, the ERA was not only a very American document but also, in a sense, a conservative one, radicalised only in opposition rhetoric that lent it the meaning of substantive change, thus rendering the text both threatening and, in a way, un-American.

This frame change was made easier by the radicalisation of the feminist movement as the liberal feminist NOW was increasingly being overpowered by less mainstream groups, tainting the moderate image of feminism⁵⁹, even if they did not alter the meaning of the ERA. (If anything, the radical feminist groups questioned the usefulness of measures such as the ERA that work inside the system instead of challenging the ultimate social ill of patriarchy.) Indeed, there was a greater acceptance among feminists of all strands of the need to counter the traditional ideas of female inferiority by challenging the socially constructed gender norms and, as a result, many of the hitherto naturalised arrangements in the home and the public sphere (Chafetz and Dworkin 1986: 170). While the first-wave feminist movement, as it grew, moved towards conservatism, the second-wave feminism in its heyday showed a tendency towards radicalisation and that helped the conservative opposition in its stigmatisation campaigns. Already the broad acceptance of gender as a constructed category sounded an alarm in the conservative camp that saw gender roles as “natural” and divinely ordained, that is, outside human intervention and as something that gave the undebatable status to the “traditional” gender order.

The shift in the aims of women’s rights and women’s liberation movements, demonstrated at the 1977 International Women’s Year Conference in Houston⁶⁰ where three First Ladies (Lady Bird Johnson, Betty Ford and Rosalynn Carter)⁶¹ stood side by side with black women’s groups and lesbians to endorse the ERA but also government-sponsored child care, contraception to minors and gay rights (De Hart 2004: 614), added fuel to the conservative re-definition of the amendment as a threat. As conceptualised by Schlafly, the ERA would have resulted in the transformation of traditionalist American gender roles through federal intervention in private life. According to these intimidating, if unfounded, images “mothers, no longer financially able to remain at home,

⁵⁹ Examples of the radical public actions are the 1968 protest against the Miss America competition, the 1970 occupation of the offices of the *Ladies Home Journal* or the 1970 Women’s Strike for Equality and a variety of rallies, fundraisers, walkathons and hunger strikes (Evans 1989: 283, 288). As Bradley (2003: 75) suggests, these theatrical events confused the audience, especially when the actions were refracted through the media.

⁶⁰ The Houston Conference has the dubious honour of being the last bipartisan feminist political event in the US in the 20th century (De Hart 2004: 613).

⁶¹ In fact, Betty Ford had selected equality for women as her official issue as the First Lady (Costain 1991: 120).

would be forced to surrender their children to government-sponsored day-care centers. Their childcare personnel would supplant parental authority and family identity with loyalty to the state” (De Hart 1991: 252–253). Although the argument is contrary to both the intentions and the capacities of the ERA, it combines two persistent features of the American value system: its inherent traditionalism, especially with regard to the family, and anti-statism. Here both are compounded with potent Cold-War overtones. The American nuclear family, as argued already by Edgar Allan Hoover, was an American bastion against the threat of collectivist Soviet Union and its supposedly state-raised brainwashed automata loyal only to the state. The expansion of the powers of the American federal government was a persistent conservative anathema for a similar reason and the replacement of the Big Brother in Washington with a Big Sister (De Hart 2004: 614) did not help reduce this unease.

Moreover, as Jane Mansbridge (1986: 27) has perceptively remarked, “the men and women of America approved of the principle of equal rights only so long it did not change very much in practice”. She is seconded by Chafe (1977: 147) who has observed that Americans have a predilection for wording political objectives in “noble slogans” without putting the same energy into implementation. This can be related to the general American tendency to believe in the exemplary nature of its unique political system, one of the central features of the civil religion that holds the multicultural and multifarious nation together. Redefining the ERA as a vehicle of radical social change was therefore effective even for those voters who did not share anxieties about the dissolution of the traditional American family. The debate was spurred by the awareness that it was part of a symbolic struggle for the future of the US and its values. The passion of the opponents of the ERA, social conservative and other, was ignited by the turbulent 1960s that in many ways shattered the illusion of the US as a cultural whole and challenged the validity of many of its most central values, starting from individualism and materialism (e.g., Roszak 1995). This insecurity proved conducive to rhetoric that appealed to permanence and tradition.⁶²

The STOP-ERA movement successfully filled the niche of the defender of traditional America, made the more powerful for exploiting the symbolic value of housewives who, in the hour of need, rise to defend what is sacred, despite their inexperience in political matters.⁶³ The movement gave housewives, a segment of the population that had been largely uninvolved in politics, a collective consciousness and a common language to make itself heard in the campaign against the ERA. Although the number of housewives who actively

⁶² This concern about the post-1960s fragmentation of the US is not limited only to conservative circle and several notable liberal authors have also written on the topic (e.g., Schlesinger 1992).

⁶³ Marshall (1985: 357) has pointed out that this “dilemma of asking women to leave their homes to defend their right to remain there” is one of the central mobilisational difficulties of anti-feminist movements.

participated in STOP-ERA and Eagle Forum was limited, Schlafly skilfully exploited the media, especially television, to create the impression of a wide and active grassroots movement of conservative women, thus breaking the perception that in the matter of equal rights women as a gender presented a unified front (Tobias 1997: 148). This was largely achieved by a widely shared anxiety about the changing social climate and gender roles or, as Chafe (1977: 135) put it, “the greatest obstacle feminism faced was the commitment of millions of people to the institutions, values and personal self-images which were associated with traditional sex roles”. The declaration that they were socially constructed was unlikely to be easily swallowed in a universe of discourse that was couched in essentialism. In addition to pure media spectacle to emphasise this dissonance⁶⁴ Schlafly’s campaign also successfully used the seemingly irreconcilable tension between the discourses of equality and difference.

Jane Sherron De Hart (1991: 248) has demonstrated that the argumentation of the STOP-ERA campaign actually largely coincides with radical feminist ideas as both critique the discourse of individualist rights as a threat to women-centred cultural practices and forces women as autonomous individual subjects to compete in the male-centred public sphere. Phyllis Schlafly, for example, in her speeches frequently argued that “women’s liberation is really men’s liberation” (Tobias 1997: 143) as it breaks the ties of duty that bind a man to his wife and family. Although radical feminism did not employ the discourse of duty like conservative women who also stressed women’s vulnerability and need for protection more than would have been comfortable to feminists, the two seemingly opposing ideological programmes nevertheless proceed from a similar critique of classical liberalism and its extension in liberal feminism. Liberal feminism focussed on women’s equality to men as autonomous individuals and citizens, employees but also soldiers, should that prove necessary.⁶⁵ Radical feminists criticised liberal feminist acquiescence with the rules of patriarchy, conservatives their desire to surrender the protections traditionally provided to women but both fight for women’s right to be women and not human beings, if the definition of humanity proceeds from male value judgements. This ironical overlap of ideas remained unnoticed during the ERA campaign as both sides constructed themselves in opposition to the other. In

⁶⁴ For example, Tobias (1997: 148) recounts an occasion when the STOP-ERA activists visited the Illinois state legislature wearing white dresses, carrying flowers and home-baked bread to senators, borrowing elements of countercultural guerilla theatre to make a conservative point.

⁶⁵ Feminists testifying in defence of the ERA emphasised their readiness for the draft, should the state require it, to deflect criticism that women want rights but are not ready to shoulder the obligations that accompany full equality (Freeman 1975: 215–216). The debate about women’s rights and duties of citizenship has been thoroughly treated by Linda K. Kerber (1998). Interestingly, this issue was discussed as early as in 1921 in Estonia when the Ministry of War debated whether draft is to be treated as an aspect of women’s citizenship (Mäelo 1999, 199–200).

fact, as Marshall (1985: 359) has pointed out, the exaggeration of differences between feminists and anti-feminists was a central rhetorical solution for the countermovement. The mobilisation of fear of change proved to be more effective than the potential for sisterhood among radical feminists and socially conservative women's groups. The more the pro-ERA groups employed the language of classical liberalism⁶⁶ to counter accusations of promoting radical role change, the more they fed the suspicions of their opponents about the "masculinisation" or, rather, "de-womanisation" of women that threatened the conservative women's worldview and help explain the zeal behind what De Hart (1991: 260) has called their "existential scream".

Thus, Schlafly's campaign centred on claims that the ERA would redefine men's and women's rights and duties as a result of which women would lose the social protections they had enjoyed in their domestic role since the ERA would force all women into paid employment and free men from obligations to their wives and children. This claim increased the existential fears of Americans who had chosen the role of housewives and who were seeing the erosion of the cultural tradition that had supported their choice as a result of the socio-economic shift that led to the increasing labour-force participation of women and the sexual revolution that was altering the meaning of motherhood. According to Barbara Ehrenreich (1983: 148–149), while feminist analysis appealed to the housewife's frustration in the confined space of domesticity, the anti-feminist rhetoric tapped into her fear she "might, after all, be a parasite whose support rested on neither love nor accomplishment, but only 'obligation'". These largely moral and symbolic threats were sufficiently intimidating to mobilise women whose chosen traditionalist gender role had limited their actions to the private sphere, in a way achieving an aim that can be called feminist – giving women a voice, access to public discourse and the freedom to defend their chosen way of life. As stated by Mathews (1993: 130) "not a few women believed that, as traditional rules and boundaries associated with gender became more ambiguous, the means of achieving personal identity were gradually disintegrating" and they found a convenient target for their anger about this disintegration in feminism and, especially, the ERA.

However, it has to be remembered that the aim of this movement was less the liberation of social conservative women as self-aware social conservative women but, rather, the de-legitimation of social and cultural liberal policies and world of discourse in general. The conservative groundswell around gender equality, after all, embraced other groups as well who were intent on "saving" the American way of life, defined from a social conservative, neoliberal or even neoconservative angle all of which saw something dangerous in the ERA: social conservatives the dissolution of the traditional American family pattern,

⁶⁶ For example, the research of Mathews (1993: 144) showed that religious fundamentalist women associated the language of rights with masculinity and automatically rejected it from their universe of discourse.

neoliberals the expansion of federal government and neoconservatives the introduction of a family-state relationship that was suspiciously collectivist for the US as the leading anti-Communist force in the world. Or, as Ehrenreich (1983: 156) has put it ironically:

Communism would abolish the family, and conversely, any loosening of traditional sex roles would weaken our defenses against communism. So you did not have to believe in the natural inferiority of women, or in the necessity of their confinement to the high-tech purdah of American middle-class kitchens, to see that there was something menacing about feminism. When the far Right first caught sight of the women's movement, they saw – predictably – red.

It is worth repeating the observation of Chafetz and Dworkin (1987: 35) that counter-movements such as the anti-ERA movements, tend to be pro-institutional and supportive of the status quo. Moreover, as the comparative research of Chafetz and Dworkin (1987: 51) shows, such movements do not emerge unless they find the support of vested interest groups, especially economically based ones. Thus, even if the members of the movement failed to comprehend this, their campaign was co-opted to serve the needs of political and economic interest groups, not those of family-oriented women. As formulated by Bradley (2003: 263), “under the rubric of fighting for the ERA, the relatively small number of feminist activists found themselves on the front lines of a larger conservative-liberal battle but without equal resources”. Feminism proved a useful scapegoat for a variety of social and cultural liberal policies for the united conservatives.

Although the STOP-ERA movement raised important questions about whether legal equal rights measures indeed protect all – or any – women, the campaign itself was characterised by demagogic strategies as well as an excessively creative approach to the use of facts about the purported compulsory mobilisation of mothers⁶⁷, decriminalisation of rape and unisex toilets⁶⁸. The main aim, after all, was not the desire to initiate a substantive debate on the meaning of equality but, rather, create sufficient doubts about the commonsensical nature of the symbolic recognition of gender equality in the highest law of

⁶⁷ This suggestion was bound to be especially incendiary during the Vietnam War and thus it is not surprising that STOP-ERA rallies included little children holding signs reading “Please don’t send my mommy to war!” (Evans 1989: 304)

⁶⁸ Susan Douglas (1994: 234) has summarised this argument as follows: “worst of all, the ERA meant that when you had to go to the bathroom in a restaurant or bus station, you’d be compelled to do it right next to some strange, lascivious man with his penis hanging out peeing in a smelly urinal while he watched you wipe yourself”. Although the “potty politics” (Rhode 1989: 68) may seem bizarre, it nevertheless eloquently illustrates the social conservative fear of the defilement of the “natural order” by the ERA (for a longer discussion of religious fundamentalist rhetoric on gender see Mathews 1993: 129–154).

the land. This made the atmosphere of many legislative sessions, in the words of Boles (1979: 135) “surreal and circus-like”. Indeed, as Rhode (1989: 75) agrees, the “quiche and cookie crusades” trivialised the whole debate and deflected attention away from its substance.

Many authors (e.g., Hoff 1991: 326–327) have also argued that restrained liberal legalistic discourse could not compete with the emotional anxiety generated by the STOP-ERA leaders with the help of “scare tactics”. There was also a fundamental distinction between the two sides in the ERA debate: as Mathews (1993: 133) has observed, while the proponents of the ERA were reshaping a relative reality and socially constructed gender order, the opponents of the amendment rushed to defend what for them was an ultimate reality and an immutable gender order that was central to their social and personal selves. The pro-ERA campaigners, entrenched in their cultural liberal and secular worldview, could not fathom that although the deployment of certain discursive and activist measures by movement leaders may have been strategic, the fears that were aroused in the grassroots conservatives were very real. For social conservative women, the issue was not one of semantics but of essential truths of their way of life that the individualist choice-based rhetoric of equality undermined at a most basic level. Rights and choice are not necessarily a panacea in a world of discourse dominated by duty and order. For the anti-ERA groups, then, their movement was not just a campaign but a mission or spiritual warfare. It was the seriousness of this opposition that remained misunderstood by social liberals. Or, in the words of Rhode (1989: 76), “too often the proponents assumed that the public was simply deceived. In fact, it was deeply divided”. This is what has led Mathews (1993: 137) to conclude that, in essence, the two sides were essentially speaking a different language about gender, rights and obligations.

The STOP-ERA movement showed that gender equality was a topic in regard to which there was great disagreement among women. This shifted the initially enthusiastic attitude towards the ERA enough to slow its ratification and even reverse it in some states – despite the fact that the majority of Americans supported the ERA (Tobias 1997: 152)⁶⁹. This demonstrates that gender equality, as defined in the ERA, had ceased to be a naturalised element of the American value system and thus did not seem to merit the amendment of the Constitution. The supporters of the ERA had to spend time responding to the often preposterous arguments of their opponents, thus perpetuating the very arguments in public discourse and feeding the growing perception that gender equality was a topic wrought with controversy, not one carried by national consensus. In this there is a stark contrast between the civil rights and women’s rights movements that are frequently seen as parallel developments: while it would have been inconceivable that a politician would have ridiculed racial

⁶⁹ It is important to point out that this does not indicate support to feminist movement but to central feminist objectives (Rhode 1989: 69).

equality in the 1970s, they felt (and still feel) free to make fun of the feminist-identified gender equality.

The emotional investment of the pro- and anti-ERA groups in the debate was rather different as well. For example, Hoff (1991: 326) contends that by the 1980s state-level ERA measures had made the national ERA less relevant to the women who had been liberated, but more important as a threat to the women who had chosen domesticity and remained vulnerable to no-fault divorce, unpaid alimony and child support. These factors help explain the greater zeal of the STOP-ERA. The momentum of ERA had started to decline after 1975 when only one state ratified it and popular referenda on the matter were lost in New York and New Jersey (Evans 1989: 306). The ERA expired on 30 June 1982, despite a three-year extension period, with only three states short of the required quota for ratification. It is the only constitutional amendment approved by Congress but not ratified by the states. A version of the ERA has been introduced to every session of Congress since 1982⁷⁰ but in the current political climate it has not received momentum necessary for passage. Instead of representing national consensus, it now stands for partisanship, especially after the Republican Party withdrew its support to the amendment during Ronald Reagan's first term in office (Costain 1991: 121–124).

1.2.4. Causes of the failure of the ERA

Different authors have suggested different causes for the failure of the ERA. Janet Boles (1979), the earliest author to write on the issue, prior to the end of the ratification process, gives a contemporaneous account of the shift in public attitudes from wholehearted support to the principle of equality as a democratic right to the anxiety about the ERA as a potential threat to the American gender order and, thereby, the country's moral fabric. This was achieved by anti-ERA campaign's strategic shifting of the initial civil rights issue into the position of a more narrowly defined women's issue, one that lost its persuasiveness once female opposition appeared. Boles, on the basis of her study of the ratification struggle in three differently positioned states, places the debate within a broader framework by suggesting that the clash here is between the New Right and feminism and, through that, social liberalism, that is, her work supports this thesis in claiming that the ERA was but one episode in the larger conservative takeover of American public discourse.

Gilbert Steiner (1985), studying the campaign on a national level, also stresses the importance of socio-political context, linking the defeat of the ERA

⁷⁰ The ERA was introduced most recently in March 2005, sponsored by Sen. Edward Kennedy (Democrat) in the Senate. There are two alternative bills in the House of Representatives, one sponsored by Rep. Carolyn Maloney (Democrat) and Rep. James A. Leach (Republican), the other by Rep. Robert Andrews (Democrat).

to three extraneous events: the legalisation of abortion, the resumption of the draft after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the prominence of Senator Sam Erwin, a vocal anti-ERA campaigner, after the Watergate scandal. Although Steiner himself fails to provide tangible proof to the influence of these particular events, his speculation is likely to hold out when it comes to abortion as it allowed the anti-ERA forces to link the moderate changes of constitutionally guaranteed equality to highly controversial issues such as abortion and stigmatise the feminist efforts as not only anti-family but also anti-life. Unlike many later authors writing on the issue, Steiner emphasises the narrowness of the defeat. According to him, only seven votes in three states would have ratified the ERA (Steiner 1985: 100). Hoff (1991: 323–324) has also identified causes for failure in the wider universe of political discourse, for example, the lack of charismatic leadership from the White House (the President and the First Lady). She as well considers Watergate as a factor that indirectly contributed to the failure of the ERA for in her opinion Betty Ford could have become a high-ranking advocate that the ERA lacked. In this, Hoff is seconded by Costain (1991: 120) who demonstrates the support of both Gerald and Betty Ford to the ERA.⁷¹

The importance of context becomes especially evident in comparison of the ERA in the US with the fate of constitutional equality struggles in Canada. As Haussman (1992: 110–121) has persuasively demonstrated, the universe of political discourse and the political opportunity structure in the USA were weighed against the ERA whereas they were more supportive of the inclusion of gender in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In Canada equality was supported by the popular Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau and it was the government that initiated the incorporation of women into the Charter. Many controversial issues such as contraception and abortion had been resolved prior to gender equality debates and this ensured that they could not be used to discredit constitutional equality provisions. Moreover, the Canadian universe of political discourse was and is more supportive of group rights and there is a consensus about the positive role of the state in promoting the welfare of its citizens as well as a more widespread espousal of feminist values than in the US. In the US, however, the situation was more starkly staked against the ERA as there was no explicit support from the federal government to the process and the universe of political discourse, based on classical liberal values, was more suspicious of both the concept of group rights as well as the extension of the power of federal government over the states. The conservative groups could also rally their supporters with other unpopular legal reforms pertaining to abortion and school prayer. Haussman (1992: 113) ultimately credits the

⁷¹ For example, Costain (1991: 120) cites a speech by Gerald Ford from 1975 in which he states the following: “One of the most refreshing byproducts of the search to secure the rights for women is the emphasis on freeing both sexes from restrictive stereotypes. Liberation of the spirit opens new possibilities for the future of individual Americans”.

success of the Canadian campaign to the maintenance of the role equity discourse and the failure of the American one with the re-framing of the ERA as a vehicle one designed to achieve role equity to a means of effecting role change.

Jane Mansbridge's (1986) also places the ERA debate into the broader socio-historical framework, to demonstrate that, in the post-reform political climate of the late 1970s, the passage of the ERA would have been nearly impossible at the level of states. She argues that constitutional amendments that are to succeed need a new national consensus as any opposition would conjure up natural fears about change and thus stop the amendment process. Mansbridge contends that the failure may have derived from the gap between the real consequences of the ERA and the perceptions of the activists on both sides of the debate who, to justify their emotional investment in the campaign, over-emphasised its effects and hence increased polarisation on the issue. Mansbridge is especially persuasive in her explanation of how the draft became a key issue of debate – for the proponents of the ERA as a sign that women would not shirk full responsibilities of citizenship, for the opponents a key example of the radical role change the amendment would have ushered in. She is also the first to dwell at length on the skilful deployment of the rhetoric of substantive change in the STOP-ERA campaign that effectively muted the pro-ERA rhetoric of abstract rights but she does not undertake detailed textual research.

Berry (1986), who has been primarily interested in the conditions that guarantee the success of constitutional amendments in general, places the ERA into a thoroughly researched historical context. Her work proves the claim, also made by Mansbridge, that the amendments that are more likely to succeed are the ones that are merely symbolic whereas the threat of substantial change has the power to derail amendments. The consensus is especially important in the phase of ratification in the states and this is where the pro-ERA forces fell short, possibly lulled by the ease of their victory in Congress. She, too, points to the importance of a discursive shift – although she does not use the term – from democratic rights to issues of family and sexuality. Hoff (1991: 324) adds to the list of threats to the conservative status quo the individualist bent of the ERA as well as the failure of the pro-ERA groups to create a bond with the conservative women over concerns that the two groups of women shared by over-emphasising the middle-class professional issues at the expense of sexual issues ranging from rape to abuse that, in her opinion, could have potentially led to a constructive partnership rather than antagonism (Hoff 1991: 325).

Mathews and De Hart (1990), on the basis of an in-depth comparative study of the suffrage movement and ratification of the ERA in North Carolina, one of the most contested states, reach conclusions that in many ways echo those of previous research. They point to the strategies chosen by the proponents of the ERA whose naturalised cultural liberal worldview prevented them from anticipating the vehemence of opposition and their consequent failure to present

issues tactically to accommodate them to a more social conservative target audience. This point is also supported by Wendy Williams (1992: 152) who hypothesises that the crisis in feminist approach to equality could have been precipitated by the fact that it had met issues “that touch the hidden nerves of our most profoundly embedded cultural values”, something that has not been widely acknowledged. Mathews and De Hart point out that the ERA was defeated because it became too controversial and divided women, especially over the perceived role change.

In an interesting insight into the anti-ERA ideology, Mathews and De Hart not only demonstrate the existential fears of the conservative women but also their paradoxical stand on male domination. Social conservative women rejected the ERA, with its emphasis on individualist rights-based discourse of self-fulfilment, because of their perception of women’s limited ability to compete in a male-dominated society (Mathews and De Hart 1990: 219), indicating that they concurred with feminists on the male-dominated nature of society but disagreed on the strategies for dealing with it. In many ways, Mathews and De Hart believe that the ERA was, in fact, unwinnable as it required the presentation of social and cultural liberal politics in a social conservative universe of discourse that was increasingly dominant in the US in the later phases of ratification. In this, they not only discuss the failure of the ERA but also, with the benefit of hindsight unavailable to earlier authors, perceptively map the women’s movement onto the American political landscape of the late 1970s (Mathews and De Hart 1990: XI).

It has been argued (McBride-Stetson 2004: 44) that enthusiasm waned as the few tangible changes the ERA would have effected had been achieved by other laws at a federal or state level⁷². Indeed, this has proved to be true. As Harrison (2003: 164) shows, the failure of the ERA and the conservative revolution heralded by Ronald Reagan did not stop the adoption of a series of laws that eliminated discrimination on the basis of gender and fulfilled most of the aims of the ERA. But it is also undeniable that what played a decisive role in the shift of public perceptions was the re-definition of gender equality on the equality-difference dichotomy and its de-naturalisation in the American value system that “Othered” the social liberal definition of liberty and replaced it with a socially conservative one. This has been mentioned by all major researchers who have worked on the topic – of the works cited above, it is only Steiner (1985) who does not acknowledge the importance of the shifting focus of the debate. Other features, from movement strategy and poor timing to lack of resources may have contributed to the failure of the debate, but it would not

⁷² One example of such measures is the *Reed v. Reed* Supreme Court decision from 1971 that indicated that the Supreme Court would not readily tolerate classifications based on gender, a major movement towards a shift in legal consensus supportive of women’s rights (Langley and Fox 1994: 289–290). For a recent analysis of the equal rights provisions on state level, see Wharton (2006: 1201–1293).

have been as resounding but for the strategic reframing of the debate. Hence the focus of the present thesis is on the particular discursive strategies employed to achieve this aim.

Although, indeed, legislation has been passed that has made the ERA seem unnecessary, this is not a consensus opinion. Also, considering the conservative direction of the American legal establishment at this point, the ERA would be sorely needed to prevent a potential erasure of the gains of thirty years of feminist activism in family law, education and work (McBride-Stetson 2004: 47). Harrison (2003: 170) suggests that the ERA need not have made a dramatic difference in this respect as “permanence /.../ is always illusory” and the interpretation of law, including constitutional law, always rests with judges whose opinions would be shaped by the social context. Regardless of the interpretation given to the failure of the ERA, it is undeniable that, at this point, the USA is the only Western democracy not to have constitutional guarantees to equality between men and women. It also has the dubious honour of not having ratified the UN Convention for Eliminating All Forms of Discrimination Against Women that has been signed by 183 nations. If we take the symbolic position of women in American society as the measure to assess the “progress of civilization or humanization” within that society (Mitchell 1987: 24), then the US does not reach the status of a world leader. This is also reflected in the 2005 World Economic Forum study of gender equality that placed the US 17th, well beyond Scandinavian and other English-speaking countries (Lopez-Claros and Zahidi 2005: 8).

In retrospect, it can be said that although the ERA was never ratified, it did produce important and lasting change. It brought feminist concerns to the highest political level and legitimised (liberal) feminism as a political force that can align with the American value system (Freeman 1975: 224). However, this feature has been radically re-evaluated in the reigning conservative discursive climate where the label “feminist” has become a stigma that has the potential to derail political careers (see, e.g., Põldsar 2004: 157–171). The ERA campaign also showed that the inclusion of gender equality among American values is not inevitable. Above all, the campaign can be counted as one of the first major victories in the conservative takeover of the American political discourse that has since been extended to other areas of life by conservative think-tanks and aggressive media strategy.⁷³ As a result, the ERA campaign changed not just American perceptions of gender and feminism⁷⁴ but it also

⁷³ This has been covered extensively by different authors from memoirs like Brock (2002) or surveys of the conservative movement like Micklethwait and Wooldridge (2004: 76: 80) to linguistically oriented studies like Lakoff (2002: 415-416).

⁷⁴ The stigmatisation of feminism in American public discourse has been amply documented in media research, e.g., Huddy (1997: 183-204), Costain, Braunstein and Berggren (1997: 205-220), Danner and Walsh (1999: 63–84), Lind and Salo (2002: 211–228).

prefigured the transformation of the whole American world of political discourse as a conservative domain that the social liberals are yet to reclaim as their own⁷⁵.

1.3. Research on the ERA campaigns and the present thesis

Research on the ERA can be divided, roughly, into two categories: the first dealing with the legal aspects of the ERA and the second focussing on the tactics used for the mobilisation of forces on feminist or anti-feminist side, with emphasis on the grassroots level of engagement. Both types have provided a rich array of research that helps understand the psychology and strategies of the groups. The present thesis has greatly benefited from the analyses of previous researchers.

The scholars who have approached the ERA from a legal perspective have either analysed the historical tradition into which the ERA falls or the gender implications of the text. The first type, for example the work of Berry (1986), is invaluable in showing the importance of contextual factors in the constitutional amendment process, especially the divergence of values on the national and the local level, a clash of interests that is also central to the present thesis. The analyses of the legal implications of the constitutional approach to gender in the US (e.g., the work of Erickson (1974), Greenberg (1977), Ginsburg (1978), Law (1984)) inform the claims of the thesis on the factual side of the debate but, because of the disciplinary background of the author, will not be subjected to in-depth explication.

The earliest example of the scholarship of the second type, movement research, is that of Jo Freeman (1975). Herself a lawyer and feminist activist, she details the emergence of feminism as a social movement, building its networks and strategies. The greatest merit and shortcoming of Freeman's book is the year of publication, 1975. It provides a valuable contemporaneous account of the feminist movement as an emerging and legitimate interest group at the height of its influence. Freeman's analysis of the passage of major pieces of legislation concerning women's rights, including the campaigning in Congress prior to the vote on the ERA, continues to have validity but her conclusions on the effectiveness of feminist lobbying have stood the test of time less well. However, it is testimony to the continued relevance of her work that the book was re-issued in 2000. Other authors have produced detailed chronicles of the ERA campaigns, alone (e.g., Steiner 1985) or in comparison with the suffrage movement (e.g., Buechler 1990) and hence the present thesis will not reiterate their results.

⁷⁵ Examples of such attempts, however, have become more frequent, for example the cognitive linguist George Lakoff (2004) providing advice to the Democratic Party about re-framing the political debate on values.

Since the focus of the present thesis is on the conservative movement, the analysis in the thesis will limit itself to scholarship on conservative women and not incorporate the copious research on feminist mobilisation. In research into anti-feminist movements pioneering work was done by Rebecca Klatsch who has studied the lives and attitudes of right-wing women in the American South, based on in-depth interviews with movement participants. This stands in clear opposition to angry polemics from radical feminist authors such as Andrea Dworkin (1983). Klatsch's later work (2002: 185–204) has centred on social movement theory in general and has contributed to the present thesis in its explication of the development of feminist and anti-feminist consciousness as a necessary step to movement building (e.g., Klatsch 2001: 795–797). Similar insights have been garnered from Marshall (1985) and Chafetz and Dworkin (1987). The focus on the creation of shared consciousness underlies the whole of the present thesis that contends that the skilfully contextualised discursive reframing of gender equality in relation to the American value system not only helped to build a grassroots anti-feminist movement but that, by tapping into the pre-existing conservative discursive repertoire, it reassigned the in- and out-group identifications of the mainstream voter and, through this, redistributed the legitimate subject positions within the American universe of political discourse. Another valuable contribution from previous work on anti-feminist counter-movement research is its analysis of the dialectical relationship between feminism and anti-feminism, a feature also analysed in the present thesis on the example of the texts produced by Phyllis Schlafly and her Eagle Forum network.

Much of previous literature on the ERA has analysed the movement from bottom-up, that is, focusing on the participants in the social groups organised to support or oppose the ERA through participant observation, in-depth interviews and archive research (e.g., Mansbridge 1986 but, especially, Matthews and De Hart 1990). They have already amply documented the mobilisation of the forces on both sides of the debate and the ways in which the issues raised threatened their lifeworlds and contributed to differential movement strategies. The life of Phyllis Schlafly herself has also been covered, with Felsenthal (1981) focussing on her personal development in a nearly hagiographic manner and Critchlow (2005) placing her personal career within a wider frame of grassroots conservatism. Marshall (1985) has also studied the newspaper accounts of Schlafly and her campaign. Since Critchlow (2005) has investigated Phyllis Schlafly's personal archives and those of the Eagle Forum network, the present thesis has not aimed at any revision of the archive work and, rather, looks at the materials that have been in wider circulation.

The thesis at hand does not deem it necessary to replicate the studies already performed or re-assess their findings. Rather, it expands upon an aspect of the campaign that has been mentioned in most sources but one that has not found attentive empirical study. Although there is a consensus on the conclusion that what became decisive in the whole campaign was the successful reframing of

the debate from democratic role equity to that of role change, there has yet been no study of specific data to show how this was achieved. This is the gap that the present thesis seeks to fill. Since it will be argued that the ERA campaign signalled the gradual shift to the socially conservative consensus in the US, the focus will be on the material (Phyllis Schlafly's *The Power of the Positive Woman* and a corpus of texts from *The Phyllis Schlafly Report*) that reached an audience wider than the people immediately involved in the closed conservative networks in order to see how the discursive strategies used influence the frame of reference of people outside the conservative fold. The main body of analysis will deal with materials from the 1970s–1980s, with later resources used to measure the persistence of the rhetorical strategies used. As has been explained in the introduction to the thesis, it is these strategies that help understand the realignment of the American body politic from a moderately social liberal to social conservative stance within the past twenty years.

CHAPTER 2

Language, power and ideology: Critical Discourse Analysis

2.1. Language, discourse, society

Language is not just a passive instrument that merely reflects the reality, as has been traditionally supposed. Rather, it is simultaneously actively involved in shaping the reality that it represents. The importance of language has grown in the past decades as the focus of Western societies has shifted from production to consumption, service and leisure industries that require more extensive “communicative labour” (Fairclough 1995: 137). This has led to an increased instrumentalised interest in the functioning of language with the aim of increasing its functional effectiveness in shaping opinions and influencing behaviour. Fairclough and Wodak (1997: 260) have used the term “technologization of discourse” to refer to the “conscious intervention to control and shape language practices in accordance with economic, political and institutional objectives”. Discourses can be manipulated at a societal level, by political or commercial interests, but also at an individual level in order to, to use the terminology of Anthony Giddens (1991), reflexively construct and reconstruct the self. What takes place at the level of an individual can also be extended to groups of individuals within a larger culture who crucially depend on a shared identity to gain coherence and a social role. Moreover, contemporary society in general can be viewed through a discursive frame. Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999: 4) note that the economic, social and cultural changes of late modernity “exist as discourses as well as processes that are taking place outside discourse, and that the processes that are taking place outside discourse are substantially shaped by these discourses”. All this gives special urgency to critical language analysis.

The study of language is the more important that, as Fairclough (1989: 2) states, “using language is the commonest form of social behaviour” and we are dependent on language in our public and private interaction, among other things for determining our relationships with other individuals and the social institutions we inhabit. It is in language, therefore, that we negotiate meanings but also organise socio-cultural knowledge. As Catherine Belsey (1980: 42) claims, “meaning is public and conventional, the result not of individual intention but of inter-individual intelligibility. In other words, meaning is socially constructed, and the social construction of the signifying system is intimately related, therefore, to the social formation itself”. The signifying system, language, gains its meaningfulness in a social context and social usage that it, in its turn, is instrumental in shaping.

Language is used to recall, retain and transmit our values, beliefs and traditions and, as such, it is actively involved in constituting the world we live in, including the myths and biases that circulate in the world. Eagleton (1983: 107–108) summarises the view as follows: “Reality was not reflected by language but produced by it; it was a particular way of carving up the world which was deeply dependent on the sign-systems we had at our command, or more precisely which have us at theirs”. Belsey (1980: 44) concurs in observing that it is not only we that use language but that “language in an important sense speaks us”. The potency of language is the greater that the inherent levers of control that language maintains over our thought processes remain largely hidden. This invests language with considerable ideological potential. In the words of Fowler (1991: 94), “language provides names for categories, and so helps to set their boundaries and relationships and discourse allows these names to be spoken and written frequently, so contributing to the apparent reality and currency of the categories.” Thus language perpetuates socially desired images by repetition, making “these socially constructed categories seem to be natural common sense” (Fowler 1991: 105). It is this potential of language that has made it an increasingly attractive object of analysis for scholars of different disciplines who seek to understand contemporary society. Most of such research into language has been produced within the elastic disciplinary boundaries of discourse studies.

The notion of discourse is one of the most frequently used and most poorly defined terms in today’s academic literature. Although almost endemic in texts that span a wide disciplinary range, it seems to be employed, as suggested by Sara Mills (2004: 1), to mark theoretical sophistication rather than to denote a specific meaning. This scepticism is eloquently summarised by Widdowson (1995: 158) who claims that discourse is “something everybody is talking about but without knowing with any certainty just what it is: in vogue and vague”. Despite many abuses, though, “discourse” continues to be a useful term for studying the use of language in social settings, especially in contexts that are ideologically contested and contribute to the production of broad-based hegemonic consent. Aware of the terminological quagmire, the thesis proceeds heeding the advice of Karl Popper (1966: 19), as suggested by Jane Sunderland (2004: 6):

We are always conscious that our terms are a little vague (since we have learned to use them only in practical applications) and we reach precision not by reducing their penumbra of vagueness, but rather by keeping well within it, by carefully phrasing our sentences in such a way that the possible shades of meaning of our terms do not matter. This is how we avoid quarrelling about words.

The discursive approach to language and society is usually associated with the “linguistic turn” in social sciences that started to actively contest the status of reason and universal truths and investigate the role of language in the consti-

tution of knowledge (Jaworski and Coupland 1999: 4). This direction of inquiry has undermined the “neutral” status of language and implicated it in a wide array of social and cultural processes. As a result, the term “discourse” has come to be widely used in philosophy, media and cultural studies as well as other disciplines in addition to linguistics in ways that have frequently moved away from language use per se to the investigation of underlying strata of human thought and culture.

As a consequence of this extensive range of applications, the term “discourse” has found a multiplicity of interpretations depending on the authors’ disciplinary backgrounds. There is a wide array of definitions even within the framework of linguistics. They can roughly be divided into two: those deriving from the more traditional text analysis and those informed by social and critical approaches to language as a social practice. The first cluster of definitions initially reserved the term to denote spoken communication, as opposed to written text but this distinction has ceased to hold (Crystal 1987: 116). According to another generally employed definition, discourse is “the umbrella term for either spoken or written communication beyond the sentence” (Georgakopoulou and Goutsos 1997: 4). Nowadays even traditional text analysis increasingly sees discourse, above all, as “language in use” the analysis of which has to embrace the description of linguistic forms but also their functions (Brown and Yule 1983: 1). While in this approach to discourse includes both text and context, pertinent research nevertheless remains focused on language complexes and excludes other semiotic systems as well as the consideration of extra-linguistic social structures.

The second approach, the one that views discourse as “the sum of socially instituted modes of speech and writing” (Georgakopoulou and Goutsos 1997: 5), especially in interaction with power and ideologies, is more congenial to the present thesis that seeks to analyse linguistic forms to gain access to the underlying structures of ideology and their use in political struggle. The definitions of discourse that have been coined by scholars working with this strand of discourse analysis have a very different emphasis when compared to the purely linguistic ones offered above. Gunther Kress (1985: 6–7) has given a thorough explication of the main concerns of this approach to discourse:

Discourses are systematically-organized statements which give expression to the meanings and values of an institution. Beyond that, they define, describe and delimit what is possible to say and not possible to say (and by extension – what is possible to do and not to do) with respect to the area of concern of that institution, whether marginally or centrally. A discourse provides a set of possible statements about a given area, and organizes and gives structure to the manner in which the particular topic, object, process is to be talked about. In that it provides descriptions, rules, permissions and prohibitions of social and individual actions.

According to the definition, the focus is not on the mere description of linguistic forms in their context of use but, rather, the interpretation of the socio-cultural

rules that give rise to certain forms of language use and delimit others. Language is no longer a passive vehicle for the representation of socially preferred meanings or ideologies; it is the means through which these ideologies operate. Some scholars make the link between discourse and ideology even more explicit, for example Roger Fowler (1991: 42), who defines discourse as “socially and institutionally originating ideology, encoded in language”. Many authors extend the scope of discourse beyond language by claiming that the extra-linguistic features are inseparable from the meanings given to language. For example Jan Blommaert (2005: 3) states that for him discourse “comprises all forms of meaningful semiotic human activity seen in connection with social, cultural and historical patterns and developments of use”.

The many usages of the term have been summarised by Jaworski and Coupland (1999: 3) according to whom “discourse is language use relative to social, political and cultural formations – it is language reflecting social order, and shaping individuals’ interaction with society”. At the same time, Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999: 6) warn that the emphasis on the social importance of discourse does not seek to reduce social life to mere discourse, an accusation frequently levelled against post-structuralist theorists such as Michel Foucault, but only stresses the dialectical nature of the relationship between discourse and the social.

The socio-cultural understandings of discourse have been fully incorporated into the sense in which the term is used in the present thesis. Although discourse is grounded in linguistic expression, the analysis language use in politically contested terrains is not adequate without the incorporation of social and philosophical concerns, above all, the conceptualisation of power and ideology. Therefore the present thesis proceeds from the formulation of the term “discourse” offered by Norman Fairclough (1989: 22) who sees it a social practice, that is, something that does not merely describe the social but constitutes it. In a later work he extends this definition to claim that “discourses not only represent the world as it is (or rather is seen to be), they are projective, imaginaries, representing possible worlds which are different from the actual world, and tied in to projects to change the world in particular directions” (Fairclough 2003: 124). Both of these dimensions are relevant to the project at hand as the anti-feminist reframing of discourse re-imagined the American world of discourse by offering a viable social conservative alternative to the existing social and cultural liberal one and, in doing that, instigated “real” social change. Fairclough’s views and his proposed methodology for language study will be discussed in detail below. These definitions have been placed to the beginning of the chapter to elucidate the direction of the work and avoid the terminological confusion that weakens many texts on discourse studies. However, in order to fully appreciate the version of discourse analysis proposed by Fairclough, it is important to review the philosophical and political conceptualisations of the term and its ideological implications.

2.2. Michel Foucault and the notion of discourse

Much of contemporary scholarship on the notion of discourse is indebted to the French theorist Michel Foucault. The present thesis stems out of and critically appropriates Foucauldian thought in more ways than just borrowing the term “discourse”. In fact, Foucault’s work, with some important caveats, is the basis on which the present thesis has approached power and ideology as well as the use of language in the production of social consent. Therefore, this section will give a short overview of the main concepts developed by Foucault that elucidate the operation of power in society and the role of discursive constructions in the processes. The discussion does not attempt to give a comprehensive picture of the theorist’s work but, rather, introduces features that help to understand the ERA debate to which copious references will be made all through the section. The thesis has benefited more from Foucault’s central terms than his proposed methods of analysis; that is to say, the thesis places the central notions it uses into a framework that is informed by Foucauldian thought but does not follow it blindly. In this, the author is encouraged by Foucault himself who has said that “all my books /.../ are little tool boxes /.../ if people want to open them, to use this sentence or that idea as a screwdriver or spanner to short-circuit, discredit or smash systems of power, including those from which my books have emerged /.../ so much the better” (cited in Mills 2004: 15).

Foucault was instrumental in moving the analysis of the political from the level of abstraction to the level of local acts where the complexities of power relations can be revealed. In fact, it is the focus on the particular and the contingent that makes it possible to localise the operations of power. The ERA debate is a case in point, with its ambivalent assignment and manipulation of power to enact a major political shift in a localised context. An analysis of the localised scope of the discursive shift in the ERA debate leads to a better understanding of the conservative appropriation of language in the American universe of political discourse as a whole. According to Foucault’s mission, as worded by Patton (1979: 143), “one can no longer accept the conquest of power as the aim of political struggle; it is rather a question of the transformation of the economy of power (and truth) itself”. This process is exemplified in the STOP-ERA campaign, which achieved its success by the transformation of the “truth” about gender equality in a clearly demarcated space of one political debate, thereby transforming the economy of power at a national level. Thus, it is not sufficient to study the behaviour of the Republican elites to see a shift on gender in the party’s ideology. Rather, the shift took place in a de-centred form, at the level of grassroots social conservatives, gradually leading to a general shift in the American political landscape. This merits an in-depth analysis of the anti-feminist stance encoded in Phyllis Schlafly’s texts.

Yet, it is also important to point out that the localised focus proposed by Foucault has a tendency towards a descriptive social analytic and normative neutrality which curtails the approach’s ability to engage with the complex

intersections of systemic social arrangements (Hennessy 1993: 20). Since American conservatism, as explained above, is characterised by such ideological complexity, the strictly contingent core of Foucault's oeuvre will be relaxed in the present thesis, complemented by a critical perspective that allows for a more politically committed analysis than the one proposed by Foucault.

The focus on the grassroots is yet another reason for turning to Foucault who argued that power is dispersed, not localised in clearly identifiable sites such as the government or political party hierarchies. Foucault, in many of his texts, rejects the idea of power as a static possession of a selected few. He contests this traditional interpretation of power on two accounts. First, for him power is a productive potential that generates human action. Second, he argues that "power must be analysed as something which circulates, or as something which only functions in the form of a chain. /.../ Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation /.../ Individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application" (Foucault 1980: 98). In this view, power is decentralised and omnipresent because it is "produced from one moment to the next, at every point, or rather in every relation from one point to another. Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere" (Foucault 1998: 93). This definition is both compelling and daunting: on the one hand it democratises power but, on the other, makes it elusive and thereby in a way undermines grounds for political action.

Although the thesis does not want to discount the possibility of the involvement of right-wing elites in the STOP-ERA campaign through financial contributions or campaign guidance, it nevertheless contends that the discursive shift orchestrated by Schlafly was a decentred one and thus a fitting example of Foucauldian net-like structure of power. However, in the light of contemporary developments, especially the power of conservative think-tanks, the present author has considerable reservations with Foucault's claim that power is totally dispersed, with no identifiable hubs of control. By no means trying to foster comforting conspiracy theories about centralised direction of conservative movements, it nevertheless reminds the readers of the extent to which discourse is manipulable to benefit narrowly defined interest groups who have used their influence to ensure the spread of opinions favourable to them.

Yet the Foucauldian notion of dispersed power makes it easier to understand the ways in which people become (unwitting) transmitters of ideologies they need not fully understand or even agree to. Or as Foucault (1998: 95) put it:

The rationality of power is characterized by tactics that are often quite explicit at the restricted level where they are inscribed /.../ tactics which, becoming connected to one another, attracting and propagating one another, but finding their base of support and their condition elsewhere, end by forming comprehensive systems: the logic is perfectly clear, the aims decipherable, and yet it is often the case that no one is there to have invented them, and few who can be said to have formulated them.

Foucault's view of power does not preclude the possibility of human agency in relation to the pervasive power relations. Rather, he states that "where there is power, there is resistance" (Foucault 1989: 95). However, he warns that this resistance, too functions within the omnipresent network of power, and thus need not carry the potential to destabilise the dominant structures. This is a feature to be remembered in the present study as well where many feminist resistances, especially liberal feminist ones, have been incorporated into the conservative discursive formations either through a shared ideological backbone that makes the radicalism of liberal feminism notional only or through the exploitation of radical feminist or academic feminist positions in the conservative universe of political discourse to discredit feminist politics. In short, resistance, feminist or other, need not be dangerous to the structures of power.

In addition to expanding the notion of power, Foucault provides a complex but illuminating view of the multi-layered nature of discourse, a concept for which he has provided several definitions. The often cited but exasperating example illustrates the expansiveness of Foucault's theorisation:

Instead of gradually reducing the rather fluctuating meaning of the word "discourse", I believe I have in fact added to its meaning: treating it sometimes as the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements. (Foucault 1972: 80)

The definition conveys some of the key interpretations of the notoriously polyvalent term. In the first sense, "discourse" refers to all intelligible statements that can be uttered and, as such, has little relevance for the present project. The second meaning, discourse as an "individualizable group of statements" that seem to be regulated by shared rules is the one that is most central to the thesis. The third sense, that of discourse as a "regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements", refers to the underlying rules that produce particular types of discourses. Identifying this underlying conservative discourse, as manifested in the particular instances of discourse is the final aim of the following analysis. Although the author of the thesis finds this definition, with its attempt to indicate the sprawling but elusive nature of discourse compelling, it also believes the use of the same term to refer to three distinct notions is unnecessarily confusing and therefore uses the term "ideology", detached from its limited Marxist definition and defined more precisely in the next section, to refer to the level of underlying rules. The terminological shift is one Foucault would not agree to as he saw discourse as being a broader notion than ideology but the replacement of the term here is deemed necessary for the sake of the clarity of argument.

From another angle, Foucault (1972: 49) has defined discourse as "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak". This productive capacity of the notion of discourse is especially relevant to the project at hand as the thesis claims that anti-feminist discourse formed the anti-feminist

movement, which did not exist prior to the emergence of the anti-ERA discourse. The anti-ERA discourse also contributed to the cementing of conservative consensus in American society by colonising the rhetoric of values. In this process, no single discourse acts alone. Discourses exist side by side and in conflict with other discourses that shape its interpretation of truth. Truth for Foucault is not absolute and he is not interested in discovering which of the competing discourses has a more authentic grip on the real. Rather, his focus is on distinguishing the means by which some discourses rather than others become dominant at some points in time: “I want to discover how this choice of truth, inside which we are caught but which we ceaselessly renew, was made – but also how it was repeated, renewed and displaced” (Foucault 1981: 70). This approach is also in consonance with the aims of the present thesis, although the thesis rejects the relativist undertone of Foucault’s stance. Therefore, the analysis will concentrate on the contestation between feminist and anti-feminist definitions of equality, freedom and even America as encapsulated in the textual corpora analysed.

The thesis borrows an extension to the Foucauldian notion of discourse from the work of Judith Butler (1997: 103–126) who, discussing the role of homosexuality in the American military discourse, claims that although homosexuality is defined as illegitimate within this discursive framework, it is actually necessary for constructing the cohesive heterosexual male community of the army and the masculinist citizen in general. This double strategy of stigmatisation and “Othering” as a means of self-construction is also apparent in anti-feminist discourse that needs the discursively constructed demonised image of the feminist to maintain the cohesion of its own disparate membership. Such examples demonstrate that, indeed, discourse may be productive of identities in the very acts that seek to discipline or restrict them.

Processes of exclusion can be better understood by exploiting another aspect of Foucault’s approach to discourse, the “delimitation of a field of objects, the definition of a legitimate perspective for the agent of knowledge, and the fixing of norms for the formulation of concepts or theories” (cited in Mills 2004: 46). In this interpretation, discourse excludes a wide array of phenomena from consideration or even denies their existence by placing them outside what can be spoken or thought of. Although the present thesis is not comfortable with the absolute claim that there is nothing outside discourse, it accepts that our perceptions of the real are inevitably filtered through discursive constructions and ideologies and that “discursive practices are characterized by the delimitation of a field of objects, the definition of a legitimate perspective for the agent of knowledge, and the fixing of norms for the elaboration of concepts and theories” (Cranny-Francis et al 2003: 93). That is, it is not argued that there is no reality but, rather, that our relationship with reality is discursive.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Judith Butler (1990: 25) has, famously, extended this interpretation to gender, claiming that “there is no gender identity beyond expressions of gender /.../ identity is

It is in discourses that power struggles are acted out or, in Foucault's words, "discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination, but it is the thing for which and by which there is struggle" (Foucault 1981: 52–53). The ERA campaign was rather explicitly a contestation for the right to shape discourse on gender and, by extension, American values. The struggle also took place in discourse, making it a good case for studying the interrelations of the social and the discursive. It is by studying discourse that we have hope to gain access to the processes of forming preferred definitions of reality although, because of the slippery nature of discourse, it is there that they are also in danger of remaining most ambiguous. The present thesis tries to avoid this inherent elusiveness by applying a more rigorous normative framework than that suggested by Foucault.

While Foucault remains abstract in his analyses of discourse, the present thesis seeks to anchor discursive practice in particular linguistic usages where language is used to gain and maintain power and shape people's ideological preferences. Aware of the accusations about the co-optation of postmodernist thought in the maintenance of the late consumer capitalist status quo (see e.g., Jameson 1991, Hawkes 1996: 8–12),⁷⁷ it seeks to foster a dialogue between postmodernist theorisation and social critique that is the foundation of scholarship on ideology. The postmodernist denial of grand narratives has been central to the feminist critiques of Foucault⁷⁸ who, as demonstrated in his own writing, is placed in "the paradoxical position of being unable to account for or justify the sorts of normative political judgements he makes all the time" (Fraser 1989: 42). Foucault's deterministic view of power has also been seen as antagonistic to the emancipatory aims of feminism (Alcoff 1990: 75–76). Feminist analysts also point out that "even though power may be 'everywhere', gendered subjects are affected by it in different ways" (Lazar 2005: 9), a fact that does not find overt recognition in Foucault's oeuvre. Although the thesis posits that Foucault's theorisation of power does create spaces for agency, it also grants that his analysis would benefit from a firmer location within practice-oriented theories of ideology to be useful for collective political engagement, feminist or other.

performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results". She has also adopted this interpretation to her study of language where she, too claims that discourse is a "ritual chain of resignifications whose origin and remain unfixed and unfixable" or "the condensation of iterability that exceeds the moment it occasions" (Butler 1997: 14).

⁷⁷ This point is aptly worded by Hennessy (1993: 6) who states that: "some postmodern discourses contribute to the formation of a subject more adequate to a globally-dispersed and state-controlled multinational consumer culture which relies upon increasingly atomized social relations".

⁷⁸ For many applications of Foucault in feminist thought see, for example, Diamond and Quinby 1988 or Hekman 1996.

In trying to overcome these lacunae in Foucault's work, the thesis follows the model set by Norman Fairclough (1992: 57) who, although indebted to Foucault's conceptualisation of discourse nevertheless problematises the lack of practice as well as the more glaring absence of analysis of actual instances of textual production in Foucault's analysis. Indeed, Foucault (1972: 117) seems to be defining discursive practice as "s system of anonymous, historical rules", that is, in fact, structure. As Fairclough (1992: 57) points out, it is more than problematic to assume that "one can extrapolate from structure to practice" without accessing any actual texts. This and Foucault's reluctance about ideological analyses in Fairclough's opinion reduce the political relevance of Foucault's work, the relevance that he seeks to restore by planting the analysis of admittedly polyvalent discourses firmly into the constituted material reality. Fairclough concedes the value of Foucault's concept of power but seeks to specify the possibilities of resistance by situating his analysis not only in textual practice but also in a specific socio-historical context. According to Fairclough, whether power relations will be reproduced or transformed depends on the "balance of power" between opposing parties in a "sustained domain of practice", a useful starting point for the present analysis as well. Fairclough (1992: 61) concludes that textually based analysis can help social analysts to overcome the schematism of Foucault as well as to "relate general statements about social and cultural change to the precise mechanisms and modalities of the effects of change in practice". This is why the present thesis, too, links the Foucauldian analytic to a more politically committed ideology analysis, before proceeding to the introduction of discourse analysis as proposed by Fairclough.

2.3. Ideology, hegemony and the production of consent

Mills (2004: 26) argues that many scholars have adopted Foucault's concept of discourse to avoid having to employ the notion of ideology, discredited by its associations with Marxist thought. The seemingly apolitical stance of Foucault enables academics to deal with power relations without having to explicitly announce their political affiliation.⁷⁹ Since this thesis seeks to understand the workings of conservative ideology in relation to gender, it will not shun the term and will employ it, side by side with the notion of discourse,⁸⁰ the more so as Jan Blommaert (2005: 158) has argued that discourse has been identified by most authors writing on the topic as a "site of ideology". The term "ideology" is

⁷⁹ The problematic political positioning of theorists who use leftist rhetoric inside a tenaciously abstract and abstruse argumentation has been addressed, for example by Nancy Fraser (1989: 69–92).

⁸⁰ Terry Eagleton (1991: 194) has also seen no contradiction between the terms but sees them interact with each other, with ideology seen as a "particular set of effects *within* discourses".

added to the series of problematic notions employed in the present thesis that requires closer elucidation. In everyday usage, ideology is seen as a specific worldview of a faction (Marxism, liberalism, etc.), perceived to introduce bias or even a blinkered view of the reality. The term, imbued with a strong negative connotation, is frequently employed to suggest nefarious brainwashing, associated with the Marxist notion of false consciousness (Hawkes 1996: 4). The limited and deterministic sense is not the one in which the term “ideology” will be employed in the present thesis.

Rather, ideology is understood more broadly, as the cultural aspects of a particular community, or, in the words of Blommaert (2005: 159) “the ‘grand narratives’ characterising its [the community’s] existence, structure, and historical development”. While the first definition of ideology refers to the beliefs of limited groups of individuals in a society, the second involves those of every member of a community. If the operation of ideologies in the first sense is overt and thus also opposable by those who do not share its definition of reality, ideology in the second sense remains covert as it has become naturalised as the “normal” conduct of affairs within that group and is therefore more difficult to detect and, consequently, also resist. This conceptualisation of ideology, as argued by Fiske (1990: 174), is the more powerful that it works from the inside, rather than outside, “deeply inscribed in the ways of thinking and ways of living of all classes”. Its very omnipresence renders it invisible. This naturalised ideology can no longer be judged to be “true” or “false” as it embraces all consciousness. Thus, it can be said that ideology in this broader sense involves, overall, common-sense behaviours and activities that support the status quo (Gramsci 1988: 195).

However, although all members of a community participate in ideological processes, ideologies have not become more democratic or ceased to serve the interests of the dominant groups. Since in contemporary societies, common sense is forged by persuasion rather than coercion, studies of ideology have increasingly incorporated the study of language and discourse. Scholars who conceptualise the social through the notion of discourse claim that the social acquires its meaning from inherently ideological “frames of intelligibility”, which, constructed discursively, are used in constructing meaning. In Hennessy’s (1993: 14) definition, consequently, ideology is “the array of sense-making practices which constitute what counts as ‘the way things are’ in any historical moment”. As such ideology is embedded in many, if not most, complex operations of power in contemporary world.

Blommaert (2005: 161) makes a distinction between two types of approaches to ideology: the first primarily studies it as a cognitive phenomenon, the second as a social practice. The first approach has been, above all, associated with the work of Teun A. van Dijk (1998: 48) for whom ideologies are “not metaphysical or otherwise vaguely localized systems ‘of’ or ‘in’ society or groups or classes, but a specific type of (basic) mental representations shared by the members of groups and hence firmly located in the minds of its

members”. However, this cognitive location does not make them purely individualised. As van Dijk argues, ideologies are both mental and social, that is, they are sustained in individual consciousnesses but have been constructed in interaction with preferred conceptualisations of the world shared by members of a group and therefore they constitute the basis of group knowledge (van Dijk 1998: 49). Ideologies themselves are relatively stable but their particular acquisition and expressions are variable as well as strategic, that is, “though ideologies are shared with others, people make individual use of them” (van Dijk 1998: 78). These individualised variations, however, do not erase the coherent core of ideologies that sustains the status quo.

In other words, such shared ideologies are types of group schemata, “abstract cognitive complexes located in the minds of members of groups, based on accumulated experience and socialisation, and organising the way in which these members think, speak and act” (Blommaert 2005: 162). The collective frames of perception link individuals and translate between individual experience and social reality. In a line of argument very similar to that of Foucault, van Dijk contends that because of these shared cognitive ideologies people do not need outside coercion but control themselves. As such schemata are shared by members of a group, they ensure that common sense is maintained at a supra-individual level. Although group schemata reside deep in individual consciousness, van Dijk (2001: 97) believes that we can gain access to these deep structures by analysing their linguistic manifestations and deducing the underlying ideologies from them. He does not, however, elucidate the process of creation of ideologies and, in many ways, distances himself from ideological commitments, in the narrow sense of the word.

It is therefore necessary to turn to the second approach to ideology that sees it primarily as a social practice. Underlying group schemata proposed by the first approach to ideology can be compared to the more materialistically positioned notion of hegemony, a central notion of the second approach, as a potential source of the shared beliefs of a group. Coined by Gramsci (1988: 205–206), the term “hegemony” refers to a form of praxis that is created by winning the consent of the governed and overcoming resistances primarily through the construction of common sense. Gramsci (1988: 249) sees hegemony as “intellectual and moral leadership” that resides in civil society and the private sphere and acts in society in combination with the domination of the ruling classes, associated with the public sphere. This leads him to conclude that hegemony is “protected by the armour of coercion” (Gramsci 1988: 235). Yet hegemony is inherently volatile as it depends on a continual (re)winning of consent and, therefore, in the words of Fairclough (1992: 58), hegemony can be seen as “an unstable equilibrium” in which alliances are constantly negotiated and re-negotiated. This hegemonic struggle takes place at the level of discourse.

In the Gramscian system, ideologies become implicit in the practice of individuals, stored in their “common sense”, “a repository of the diverse effects of past ideological struggles, and a constant target for restructuring in ongoing

struggles” (Fairclough 1992: 92). This results in the naturalisation and even automatised of common sense. Another implication of this process is the dispersal of ideology in a broad range of social practices. Therefore, for example, John Thompson, cited in Wodak (2001: 10), has defined ideology as “social forms and processes within which, and by means of which, symbolic forms circulate in the social world”. Although all discourses have the potential to be ideologically invested, not all of them are so to an equal degree (Fairclough 1995: 82). Earlier analyses have tended to over-privilege discourses pertaining to class. However, as Laclau and Mouffe (1984: 86) point out, owing to the multiplicity of subject positions available to people, hegemony cannot be based on class only and should be extended to embrace a wide array of social movements in civil society. This conceptualisation, especially, allows for the use of the term in the present thesis for text corpora created by a social movement where class is not a central subject position offered to its members and where economic relations are conspicuous by their absence. The term “hegemony” is relevant to the present analysis as the ERA campaign was not only ideologically invested on both sides but also acted as a heated site of contestation over the meaning of common sense.

Fairclough (1995: 81) argues that it is hegemony that imposes limits on the infinite discursive options available to people. This naturalised sense of the existing order seems universal and therefore defuses potential resistance. In the words of Fiske (1990: 183), for people who have accepted the common sense “the problem is not how to change the social system but how to insert oneself into it /.../ and how to maintain it”. Usually seen as the near-universal term for soft power used in contemporary societies, hegemony therefore tends to be interpreted as “generalised, even internalised consent” (Blommaert 2005: 167). It is this type of consent that the STOP-ERA movement tried to achieve with regard to gender equality by laying bare the (social and cultural liberal) ideological underpinnings of many of its central propositions and hence demonstrating them to not be “natural”. This, however, was accomplished by the concealment of the ideological positionality of its own stand. The anti-ERA movement claimed the position of a new or, rather, revived old, naturalised common sense as grounds of hegemonic consent to its social policies and the rejection of the feminist ones.

Materialist approaches to ideology have emphasised the centrality of institutions in the maintenance of ideologies. For example, Louis Althusser (1971: 127–186) locates ideological coercion in “ideological state apparatuses”, that is, institutions below the state level that nevertheless serve its interests, including what is usually termed the civil society. If repressive state apparatuses rule through violence, the ideological ones do so by the soft power of ideology (Althusser 1977: 145). For the present thesis, it is not the structure of such institutions that is relevant but rather the situatedness of Althusserian ideology in material practices. Treating ideologies as cognitive structures or mental constructs leaves them dangerously abstract and disconnected from social

reality. (It is to be recalled that even Foucault locates his discourses within a specific episteme and does not conceptualise them as mere floating signifiers.) However, the thesis does not incorporate Althusserian thought fully: it borrows its materialist concept of ideology (Althusser 1977: 166) without agreeing with the position that ideas are purely material.

Another notion borrowed from Althusser is that of interpellation, a process of “hailing” that invites individuals to recognise themselves as particular kinds of subjects (Althusser 1977: 170–177). The process of interpellation is based on the understanding that all communication also involves the creation of social relationships. By accepting the position of an addressee in an act of interpellation we also accept the ideological positioning encoded in the act. Although interpellative acts involve our individual agency, they do not situate all subjects equally and do not implicate them equally in the recreation of the status quo. Judith Butler, too, has engaged with interpellation, contending that interpellations need not always be successful as one can refuse the positionality they offer (Butler 1997: 33–34). The present thesis asserts that Butler gives too much space to individual agency and discounts the fact that one’s refusal of an interpellation does not erase such interpellative acts from public discourse or diminish their harmful potential. Therefore the thesis will limit itself to an Althusserian reading of interpellation. The thesis argues that the interpellative process of subjectivation is central to the discursive strategies developed by Phyllis Schlafly. Her rhetoric interpellated not only housewives who acknowledge themselves as subjects marginalised by the social liberal and feminist discourse. What is more, it can also be argued that the anti-ERA discourses also interpellated feminists, making them accept definitions of themselves the radicalism of which exceeded the reality of their political agenda and hence co-opting feminists in their own demonisation.

Ideology, treated in this thesis as a cognitive group schema that is politically situated and materially realised in political praxis, is above all realised through the use of linguistic resources. Fairclough (1995: 73) has stated that language “is a material form of ideology, and language is invested by ideology”. Because of this dialectical relationship, language is in many ways implicated in the creation of identities and the maintenance of social power. Socially situated language use, or discourse, therefore, is not merely representational but also constitutive as “discourse contributes to the creation and recreation of the relations, subjects /.../ and objects which populate the social world” (Fairclough 1995: 73). That is to say, discourses are material effects of ideology which, in turn, have a considerable impact on the shaping of reality. This capacity of language has become a focus on linguistic interest only in the second half of the 20th century, realised most explicitly in the research agendas of various strands of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

2.4. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

CDA developed out of critical linguistics, a critical approach to language studies developed at the University of East Anglia in the late 1970s which asserted that research into language should be informed by interest in the social structure since language use/discourse is always social and socially situated (Fowler et al 1979, Kress and Hodge 1979). Such research constructed itself against the formalist direction in linguistics, symbolised by Chomskyan generative grammar, but also against abstraction-prone critical theory. What critical linguistics sought to do was to incorporate insights from critical theory to the study of language, especially the language of the mass media, to demonstrate how the use of certain linguistic structures produced a “systematically organised presentation of reality”, one that is, ultimately, ideological as it mystifies the underlying processes of consensus building (Hodge and Kress (1979: 15); for an overview of critical linguistics see Fowler (1996: 3–14)). Critical linguistics became a starting point for an array of socially-informed methods of linguistic research focussing on both language and social power. They are usually included under the loose umbrella label “CDA”, distinct from the more abstract analyses proposed by French discourse scholars such as Pêcheux (1982). This direction of scholarship has flourished in the 1990s and, although still viewed with suspicion by formal linguists, can claim legitimacy within the academia or even the status of an orthodoxy (Lazar 2005: 4).

CDA covers various critically oriented approaches to linguistic research that seek to uncover how discourse is constituted by and itself constitutes social identities and social relationships. The approach seeks to make the covert operation of ideological discursive practices more transparent. In this it is informed by the work of neo-Marxist theorists and Michel Foucault who focus on the importance of culture in the creation and maintenance of power relations. Proceeding from this background, CDA defines discourse as a form of “social practice”, which implies “a dialectical relationship between the particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s) and social structure(s) which frame it” (Fairclough and Wodak 1997: 258). That is, not only is discourse influenced by the social context but it also influences the circumstances around it, including social identities and relationships between people, thus having a direct and/or indirect effect on the real. Theo van Leeuwen (1993: 193) has distinguished between two types of interrelations between discourses and the social: discourse as a social practice, a “form of social action, as something people do to, or for, or with each other” and discourse as “a form of knowledge”, similar to Foucauldian conceptualisation of discourse. Van Leeuwen, like other CDA scholars, believes that we should study both types as discourse constitutes social reality through people’s actions but it also has the potential to be employed as an instrument of control.

Discourse can be both complicit in the maintenance of existing power relations and subversive, contributing to the transformation of the status quo. It

follows that “every instance of language use makes its own small contribution to reproducing and/or transforming society and culture, including power relations” (Fairclough and Wodak 1997: 273). CDA, developing ideas proposed by authors as different as Voloshinov ([1929] 1973) and Foucault (1972), contends that all language use is imbued with ideology that positions individuals as particular kinds of social subjects. Ideology, however, need not be manifested directly but may be filtered through socio-cognitive channels, as demonstrated by van Dijk (1998). This multi-layered engagement with ideology and power relations, including covert ones, is the primary reason why CDA is deemed appropriate to the aims of the present project.

CDA deals with the linguistic and semiotic features of social interaction but does not limit itself to “pure” linguistics, also involving the study of the partially linguistic character of social and cultural processes. That is, the approach is inherently interdisciplinary in order to gain a more adequate view of the social and ideological processes at play in the world. CDA posits that political and social movements are “linguistic-discursive” by nature since they strive to introduce some form of ideology or nurture the exiting hegemony of consensus, doing this through the mobilisation of linguistic resources. The interdisciplinary agenda is especially relevant to the analysis of power relations in discourse and power over discourse, to use Wodak’s dichotomy (1996: 18), that is, the way power manifests itself in specific examples of discourse and dependence of the choice of discursive practices on relations of power in a society. As Fairclough (1989: 15) notes, “language connects with the social through being the primary domain of ideology, and through being both a site of, and a stake in, struggles for power”. This makes language the key instrument to study in order to gain access to covert ideologies and, potentially, to devise ways of subverting them. The centrality of language has only increased in the era of “mediated quasi-interaction” when the “increasing space-time distance enables the exercise of power in more dispersed locations and when people’s self-constructions become increasingly externalised” (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999: 43–44). This is why interest in CDA has increased in recent years.

The focus of CDA is on the representations of the world, social relations between people and people’s social and personal identities. Linguistically, CDA has developed its methodology by elaborating the principles of M. A. K. Halliday’s systemic functional linguistics according to which language has three functions – ideational, interpersonal and textual – which help to classify language structures by their communicative role (Halliday 1978). By taking a functionalist approach to linguistics, Halliday articulated a theory of language that incorporates “the dialectic between the semiotic (including the linguistic) and the non-semiotic social, and the dialectic between structure and action” (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999: 49). That is, it conceptualises language as a tool for realising social processes and relations. Although Halliday was one of the first linguists to engage seriously with the situatedness of language in specific contexts and its context-dependent functions, his analysis lacks a

critical edge required for fulfilling the research agenda of CDA. For example, Fowler (1991: 69) has challenged Halliday's position in what he calls the "free enterprise' model of communication", that is, the emphasis on an individual's personal choice in employing the three functions which for Fowler are clearly socially determined and require an ideological reading rather than just a systematic description. CDA, as already remarked, has been interested not just with language or language use but "with the linguistic character of social and cultural processes and structures", especially with regard to social problems (Titscher et al 2000: 146). Thus CDA has attempted to combine rigorous linguistic description with ideological interpretation with the help of insights garnered from post-Marxist and post-structuralist theories of power and ideology. This background has been especially important for Norman Fairclough, the author mainly relied upon for methodological guidance in the present thesis.

Because of its interest in questions of power and ideology, CDA aims not only to describe the linguistic features of discourse but also interpret and explain them in interaction with the ideologies and social relations that produced them. In the words of Fairclough (1995: 97), CDA "sets out to make visible through analysis, and to criticize, connections between properties of texts and social processes and relations (ideologies, power relations) which are generally not obvious to people who produce and interpret those texts, and whose effectiveness depends upon this opacity". CDA therefore differs sharply not only from formal linguistics but also from quantitatively-oriented social sciences. What is more, CDA argues that no interpretation can be final but can and should be reassessed should new information appear or the same phenomenon manifest itself in a different context. By doing this, CDA surrenders the privileged position accorded to research as the purveyor of final and/or objective truths.

In addition to maintaining a systematic linguistic approach to textual material and methodological rigour in analysing it, CDA openly declares its "emancipatory interests" (Fairclough and Wodak 1997: 259) in disclosing the hidden mechanisms that suppress the disadvantaged and empower the dominant groups, a level of engagement and commitment which challenges the traditional detachment of academic research. In the words of Ruth Wodak (2001: 2), "CDA aims to investigate critically social inequality as expressed, signalled, constituted, legitimized and so on by language use". The approach proceeds from a belief that since discourses co-opted into hegemonic processes are produced by people, they can also be challenged and changed by people (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999: 4). Or, as Wodak (2001: 3) puts it, CDA "makes it possible to analyse pressures from above and possibilities of resistance to unequal power relationships that appear in societal conventions". This ambition to social relevance guides CDA's choice of research problems and specific methods of analysis.

The practitioners of CDA not only make claims about the situatedness of knowledge in the materials they study but also acknowledge their own positionality as scholars and private individuals. For critics (e.g., Widdowson 1995, Schegloff 1998) this open acknowledgement of situatedness in research goals and personal involvement suggests that a critical analysis per se is a contradiction in terms and the results of such work can, at best, be called biased interpretation. Scholars working with CDA counter the accusations by arguing that the explicitly political agenda does not reduce the validity of critical research and only increases its political honesty, in harmony with Jürgen Habermas' (1988) call for greater self-reflexivity in research. It is to be remembered that although the possibility of objectivity in research, including "hard" sciences, has been challenged for half a century, it is still a habit in the academia to maintain the illusion of objectivity as a way of legitimating its privileged status. That is, practitioners of CDA would argue, academic research is in many ways complicit in reproducing the hierarchical power relations in society and they, therefore, detach themselves from this process by making overt their own positioning in the hope of encouraging the de-naturalisation of the existing status quo.

Conversely, CDA has also faced criticism from postmodernists for applying "unsustainable meta-narratives or 'grand narratives' about social life" and, because of its academic orientation, for elitism (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999: 8). The latter accusation seems unwarranted, coming from hyper-theoretical postmodernists whose revolution has been purely intellectual. The first criticism, it is argued here, can also be presented as a strength of the CDA as its groundedness in meta-narratives such as Marxism allows it to escape the potential judgmental relativism of postmodernism and construct a realisable social agenda for change. The thesis believes that the eager postmodernist deconstruction of meta-narratives in no way erases the operation of the latter, as can be seen from the harmonious co-existence of neoliberal market ideology and postmodernist theory. The ideological groundedness and the language of critique that it affords is yet another reason why CDA is appropriate for the study at hand.

The general ideas outlined above are shared by a wide range of researchers who operate under the CDA umbrella. The present thesis has borrowed its approach from the work of Norman Fairclough and Teun van Dijk because their methodological guidelines, in combination, allow for a comprehensive analysis of the complex data studied in this work. The analysis aligns itself with the agenda of feminist critical discourse analysis, as articulated by Michelle Lazar (2005: 1–19). The conclusions of the analysis will be, once again, fitted into a Foucauldian philosophical frame, thus maintaining an uneasy but, it is hoped, productive, alliance between Marxist-informed and postmodernist approaches.

Fairclough (1995: 74) defines discourse as "a complex of three elements: social practice, discursive practice (text production, distribution and consumption), and text" and therefore the analysis also has to be carried out at three

levels to capture the intricacies of all three dimensions and their interrelations. These levels roughly accord to Halliday's three functions of language (ideational, interpersonal and textual), enacted in all texts simultaneously (Fairclough 1995: 131). That is, the ideational function produces certain types of knowledge, the interpersonal function social subjects and their interrelations, but both functions are realised in texts. This multi-functionality requires a multi-level analysis, made the more important because of the inseparability of textual meanings and functions from the context of production and interpretation. It is for this reason that CDA necessarily involves the study of the relationship between particular instances of language use and the social and cultural spaces where they are situated.

Fairclough's analytic approach can be summarised as follows (based on Fairclough 1989, 1992, 1995). He sees each discourse event as having three facets: a spoken or written text that is "an instance of discourse practice involving the production and interpretation of text, and it is a piece of social practice" (Fairclough 1995: 133). The three-tiered analysis consists of description, interpretation and explanation. Description deals with the textual level of discourses and is realised in linguistic description of the particular linguistic forms employed in texts. This includes both the study of content and form that, for Fairclough, are never entirely separable. Under description, analysis looks at lexis, grammar and textual organisation (Fairclough 1992: 75). Interpretation engages with the level of discursive practice, that is, the socio-cognitive processes of production and interpretation of discourses. This includes a detailed explication of the process of production and interpretation of discourses in their discursive contexts and their relationships with other discourses. Fairclough (1995: 132) uses the term "orders of discourse" to refer to the conventions that underlie discursive events, "the totality of their discursive practices" and argues that the boundaries between orders of discourse may become "points of conflict and contestation" and therefore takes special interest in such border conflicts. Explanation engages with the level of social practice and analyses the (dialectical) relationship between the particular discursive practices and wider social practice. A central place is given to questions of power and ideology, usually interpreted through a Gramscian lens.

As a linguist, Fairclough emphasises the importance of textual engagement in discourse analysis for theoretical, methodological, historical and political reasons. Theoretically, he claims that social structures are in a dialectical relationship with social activities of which texts are the most common. Methodologically, the importance of textual material has been accepted in an increasing number of disciplines, especially after the "linguistic turn". From a historical perspective, Fairclough considers texts good indicators of social change and, finally, politically, texts have increasingly come to be used as a means for maintaining social control and thus their analysis can help the emancipatory goals of CDA in general (Titscher et al 2000: 152). It is for this

reason that the present thesis also grounds its claims about a general discursive shift in American public discourse in a linguistic analysis of textual corpora.

As CDA has never defined itself as a strict formal method, but, rather, a perspective on scholarship, it allows for certain latitude in methodology, depending on the requirements of the data (van Dijk 2001: 96). Therefore in the present thesis the form of analysis proposed by Fairclough will be complemented with that of van Dijk. The two models proceed from a similar structure of analysis that starts from a linguistic base and discursive structures: van Dijk distinguishes between the study of local meanings (textual practice in Fairclough's sense), context models (Fairclough's discursive practice) and event models (parallel to but not entirely overlapping with Fairclough's social practice). However, van Dijk has dedicated considerable attention to the socio-cognitive structures and mental models as an interface between the individual and the social (this informs the levels of analysis that Fairclough calls interpretation and explanation). Van Dijk (2001: 111) believes that "discourses are interpreted as coherent relative to the mental models the users have about the events or facts referred to" and therefore such models guide the production and interpretation of discourses. Deeply personal, they are constructed on culturally preferred conceptualisations, acquired by functioning as a member of a community by interacting with texts produced in that culture, and thus can be extended to groups (van Dijk 1998: 79, 84). Van Dijk (2001: 114) claims that "social representations are 'particularized' in mental models, and it is often through mental models that they are expressed in text and talk". Such social representations include knowledge, attitudes and ideologies and, as such, are relatable to frame analysis that has sought to study the organisation of knowledge in a more conscious manner.⁸¹

In the present work frame is seen as a malleable and emergent mental construct, a definition that grows out of the work of Erving Goffman (Oliver and Johnston 2000). The original formulation proffered by Goffman (1974: 10)⁸² has found fruitful development in media research, best worded by Robert Entman (1993:52) who states that "to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation". As such, frames are not merely deeply held cognitive definitions of events but also strategic devices that can be

⁸¹ The concept of frame has also been used by Fairclough (1989: 158–159) who defines it as "a representation of whatever can figure as a topic, or 'subject matter', or 'referent' within an activity". This narrow formulation is not the sense in which the term is used in the present thesis.

⁸² The definition provided by Goffman (1974: 10) reads as follows: "I assume that definitions of a situation are built up in accordance with principles of organization which govern events /.../ and our subjective involvement in them; frame is the word I use to refer to such of these elements as I am able to identify".

actively selected and applied by individuals to meet ideological ends. George Lakoff (2002, 2004) has shown their effective strategic employment in the conservative political discourse. The present thesis argues that in order to succeed in this task, frames have to build on and relate to the cognitive mental models shared by members of groups but that they can be used consciously in hegemonic consensus-building processes.

Because of this emphasis on malleability and manipulability, the thesis uses the term “frame” in the discussion of interpretive instruments constructed with reference to the underlying mental models consciously and strategically used by participants in communication in order to offer preferred modes for inferring what is going on. Frame theory as a whole will not be applied so as not to lose the methodological focus of the analysis. Thus, the explanation phase of analysis in the present thesis will employ neo-Marxist language borrowed from Fairclough, but will also expand into the socio-cognitive dimensions of ideological processes proposed by van Dijk to make use of his insights into the socio-cognitive nature of ideology to gain access to the processes of consensus creation that depend on manipulation with underlying group schemata.

The research programme of CDA, with its overt political stance and emancipatory ambition provides a welcoming context for feminist research and the present thesis falls into the developing body of feminist CDA that adds a “feminist politics of articulation” to the agenda of CDA (Lazar 2005: 3). After all, the aim of the present thesis is not only to study conservative and anti-feminist discourse but to elucidate the role of the discursive strategies developed in the anti-ERA campaign in the reproduction of a social status quo, which contributes to the continued de-privileging of women in the public as well as private sphere. The category of gender is omni-relevant and different from other aspects of identity that it is frequently compared to, as argued by Penelope Eckert (cited in Lazar 2005: 3):

Whereas the power relations between men and women are similar to those between dominated and subordinated classes and ethnic groups, the day to day context in which these power relations are played out is quite different. It is not a cultural norm for each working class individual to be paired p for life with a member of the middle class or for every black person to be so paired up for life with a white person. However, our traditional gender ideology dictates just this kind of relationship between men and women.

Thus gender is intertwined in all social practices in a complex and ambivalent manner, requiring close and context-sensitive analysis, like the one proposed by CDA (for earlier applications, especially regarding identity construction, see Sunderland and Litosseliti 2002: 18–25). Feminist CDA, thus, is more specifically, aimed at the achievement of social justice through a critique of power relations that disempower women as a social group and the deconstruction of gender hierarchies encoded into all social relations.

Both discourse and gender can be conceptualised as social practice (Sunderland and Litosseliti 2002: 7). In fact, gendered identities are largely discursively constituted in particular locations in space and time. This is not to argue that gender is not material but, rather, to point out that gender norms are not “natural” but derive from the socio-cultural circumstances where they are current and that gender hierarchies are imbued with the ideologies of the communities. Thus Cranny-Francis et al (2003: 4) define gender as “the culturally variable elaboration of sex, as a hierarchical pair (where male is coded superior and female inferior)”. The discursive nature of gender is also present in the explanation provided by Connell (2002: 10) according to which gender is “the structure of social relations that centres on the reproductive arena, and the set of practices (governed by this structure) that bring reproductive distinctions between bodies into social processes”. Not only is gender increasingly conceptualised as a social practice, but it is also seen as being inextricably imbricated in the ideologies that extend to the level of language use.⁸³ As can be seen from the definitions, the study of discourse is especially well suited for questions of gender and CDA is an especially promising field of inquiry for feminism. Or, as argued by Hennessy (1993: XV):

conceptualizing discourse as ideology allows us to consider the discursive construction of the subject, ‘woman,’ across multiple modalities of difference, but without forfeiting feminism’s recognition that the continued success of patriarchy depends upon its systematic operation – the hierarchical social relations it maintains and the other material forces it marshals and is shaped by.

The general premises of research overlap to a great degree: both feminism and CDA have been interested in the hegemonic maintenance of ideological dominance that is often achieved through discursive means and both, differently from many postmodernist theorists, do not rush to over-romanticise agency at the expense of societal constraints.⁸⁴ Since ideologies of gender, especially, operate at a cognitive level, the feminist mode of analysis meshes well with the approaches proposed by both Fairclough and van Dijk. This thesis is also congenial with the interdisciplinary ethos and comparativist angle of feminist CDA and the method’s attempt to bridge the divide between first and second

⁸³ The desire to map gender distinction into language use has been recorded and criticised by many linguists, the obsession eloquently summed up in Cameron’s essay “Men Are from Earth, Women Are from Earth (Cameron 2006: 133–146).

⁸⁴ The best example of such feminist over-emphasis has been Butler’s conception of performativity (as defined in Butler 1990) that celebrates performance and, although Butler contests this reading, de-emphasises power relations and limits imposed. The de-politicised nature of such an approach opens performativity up to potential use in the reinforcement of the existing gender status quo. This has led Martha Nussbaum (1999: 37–45) charge that Butler “collaborates with evil” because of her failure to address practical concerns of subjugation or, for that matter, lived experience as a whole.

world all too frequent in today's research (Lazar 2005: 13, 11). In addition to analysis of discursive practices, feminism is also interested in effecting social change that could be equated with the emancipatory aims of CDA. Despite the complexities of questions of equality and difference that have been discussed in detail above, feminism continues to be committed to the ideals of egalitarianism, although through an acknowledgement of difference. This political commitment, as Lazar (2005: 17) points out, is increasingly necessary in a world where neoliberal thought is intertwined with post-feminism, a concept it can be credited with creating.⁸⁵ Imelda Whelahan (1995: 236–237) argues that post-feminism, indeed, calls women to be “streetwise to the new capitalist world order” and has little resemblance to feminist politics. Feminism, as well as CDA, has pervasively not pretended to adopt a neutral stance and has made its political commitments transparent in research. For these numerous reasons, as Lazar (2005: 5) has stated, “the marriage of feminism with CDA, in sum, can produce a rich and powerful political critique for action”. The present thesis hopes to make its own contribution to the larger project.

The quality criteria for CDA differ from those imposed on quantitative research methods. Because of the importance of a multi-layered analysis of the context of use, the data cannot be quantified and the results are necessarily open-ended and non-generalisable (Jaworski and Coupland 36–37). Instead, the CDA practitioners focus on the intelligibility of interpretations and explanations as well as a clear delineation of the researcher's path of analysis. In addition, the research has to have clear social and practical relevance (Titscher et al 2000: 164). These conditions, once again, help to explain the structure of the present thesis. Because one of the central tenets of CDA is the situatedness of meanings, the thesis has started from a detailed analysis of the social and philosophical context of the ERA debate in the USA and has taken care to clearly outline the rationale for all of its arguments. This justifies the top-heavy structure of the thesis and ensures that it meets the strictures of CDA as a method. Fairclough (1995: 135) argues that “the relationship between discourse and other facets of the social is not transhistorical constant but a historical variable”. Accordingly, historical circumstances have been detailed here with great care. CDA has also, from its inception, called for interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research to understand the complexities of social practice and this is the rationale for the employment of a catholic range of resources here too. As Fairclough has stated on numerous occasions, CDA is especially suitable for studying social change. The thesis will also attempt to analyse the conservative shift in the American public discourse. What, above all, justifies the use of CDA in the present thesis is its social commitment: understanding the

⁸⁵ Cranny-Francis et al (2003: 68) argue that post-feminism should be understood as “post-second-wave-feminism” in its ambition to free women from “the ideological straitjackets imposed by some feminisms, enabling them to recognise their differences from other women and so to eradicate the silences within feminism”.

uses of discourse for de-legitimising feminist definitions of equality potentially helps to counteract conservative discursive co-optation of feminist discourse in contexts outside the US as well.

CDA has been one of the few research programmes that has been open about its ideological commitment. Despite the influence of left-leaning critical schools and theorisation, recent academic research, especially in media and cultural studies, has shunned critical ideological readings as too deterministic and/or elitist in their treatment of the general population. Rather, inspired by post-modernist thought, the focus has been on the celebration of difference, the instability of meanings and the capacity of the audiences to resist dominant meanings and create their own, subversive, ones. This preference has led to the flourishing of micro-studies and tacit neglect of hegemonic structures that underpin much of cultural production. After all, if there are no grand narratives or big picture, there is nothing left to criticise.

This lack of a critical edge has been especially notable in the US, as noted by Justin Lewis (1999: 252) and Robert McChesney (1996: 3). In the US, more than elsewhere, the Marxist tenets of the original radical agenda of cultural studies have been redirected to localised micro-projects at the expense of broader ideological readings of the culture or society. There has generally been a relative dearth of critical approaches in the American context that question the operation of the country's main ideological foundations. Hanno Hardt (1992: 219) has noted a similar tendency in American communication studies that offer "narrow explanations of behavioural changes that are set in the ahistorical context of experimental inquiry", shunning, especially, the consideration of the consequences of capitalism and the questioning of the premises of existing social organisation. Postmodernist theorisation has added a seeming critical edge but not social contextualisation, that is, engagement with particular political contexts that seriously reduces its applicability and relevance. As Hardt (1992: 229) has stated, "it is ironic that the preoccupation of American intellectuals with an analysis of popular cultures has created explanations about contemporary society that remain inaccessible to people and therefore tend to lose their political potential".

Numerous authors have observed a similar tendency in feminist theorisation as well. For example, Jennifer Wicke (1998: 401), commenting on an important collection of feminist thought, observed that "what is intriguing as the essays stand together under the rubric *Feminists Theorize the Political* is how intra-academic the political is conceived to be, even where specific struggles, such as abortion rights, are invoked". Hennessy (1993: 11) is even more forceful, in claiming that postmodernist theory is frequently employed to merely celebrate difference, overshadowing the need to analyse the production and reproduction of these differences:

emphasis on the slippage of signifiers in many postmodern theories of subjectivity often merely celebrates a fragmented, dispersed and textualized

subject. Postmodern discourses that stress play of signification and difference or rejoice in the diffuse contingency of social arrangements promote social analytics that discourage or forestall explanation of these conditions./.../ it is precisely this potential for postmodernism to serve as the vehicle for merely updating the symbolic order, legitimizing the continued unequal distributions of power and privilege in the formation of “new” subjects, that feminists interested in the oppositional potential of the postmodern critique of liberal humanism need to be on guard against. (Hennessy 1993: 5–6)

This focus on theoretically construed difference gives the academics their “political credibility” as advocates for the downtrodden without any serious challenge to the status quo. Hennessy (1993: 13) also cogently argues that the usual difference rubrics (race, gender, sexuality) seem to be missing “class” in the American context.

However, such generalisations are bound to remain imprecise and the thesis does not want to blame American scholarship of co-optation. In social and cultural studies there are also scholars who vocally declare their ideological commitment. While many practitioners of cultural studies read media and popular culture texts in order to read them, preferably from a marginalised⁸⁶ perspective, to indulge in an artful display of the floating signifiers of post-modern theory, critical edge is not lost. For example, Douglas Kellner (2003: 28) declares that he is “engaged in reading the culture and the media in order to read the world”, that is, to make citizens aware of the effect of the culture on their behaviour and desires. Moreover, he sees his further aim in discerning “how media culture and spectacle are worldly and perform in the world, how they relate to major social and political issues, and how they have significant effects and potentially productive uses” (Kellner 2003: 29). This shows that the political project of cultural studies has not yet been consigned to the list of historical curiosities. Or, indeed, maybe it shows the revival of such field of study in the era of increasingly blatant hegemonic discourses that have emerged in recent decades.

Although critical theory has been in vogue on both sides of the Atlantic, it has not had a lasting influence across the disciplinary continuum. For example, in linguistics, CDA has found but limited application in the American context, compared to the UK, the Netherlands or even Spain. The main American practitioners of the approach have also chosen somewhat less politicised strands of enquiry: while Norman Fairclough (2004: 103–122) has studied the language of new capitalism and Teun van Dijk (2003: 65–92) the war in Iraq, Jay Lemke (2005: 110–122) has worked on issues such multimedia chronotopes and James Paul Gee (2004) on literacy and learning. This is not to criticise these scholars

⁸⁶ This is not to suggest that dealing with issues of marginalisation is not politically committed act or lacks social relevance. Rather, the thesis wants to point out that there is certain safety in the identity politics translated into an academic jargon that has ceased to be troublesome in political decision-making.

and their important work but, rather, to point out the general tendencies of research in European and American CDA communities. The present thesis, therefore, applies a method of analysis for American data that has found relatively little use in the American academia in the hope of adding new explanations to old textual corpora that shed light on the internal workings of the American public discourse. The outside perspective, it is hoped, may prove additionally productive by revealing structures that may, because of their omnipresence, remain hidden at a short distance to scholars working inside the country.

The gap of perception has especially serious implications in the age where political discourse takes on the character of a popular culture text. The attitude is eloquently summarised in the title of a recent book by Liesbet van Zoonen, *Entertaining the Citizen. When Politics and Popular Culture Converge* (2005). In such a context, focus only on the instability of meanings has serious political implications as the lack of academic scrutiny may lead to the co-optation of the academia in the production of a broad-based consensus that is, ultimately, hegemonic. As Douglas Kellner (2003: 177) warns, “spectator politics, in which viewers/citizens contemplate political spectacles, undermines a participatory democracy in which individuals actively engage in political movements and struggles”. Making sense of these developments requires insights from critical social theory and cultural studies, without the fear of the political commitment that such an analysis entails. The present thesis, therefore, applies a seemingly old-fashioned ideological-hegemonic frame of analysis to its data. Such approaches are increasingly necessary in the world where history has made a forceful return and where the struggle for the meaning of Western democracies has begun anew (Garton Ash 2004). For the struggle to be productive, it is important to understand the structures of the current status quo and this makes it especially imperative to attempt to reclaim central concerns of liberal democracies such as equality.

The next two chapters will study the campaign against the ERA as formulated by Phyllis Schlafly by subjecting two text corpora to a close linguistic reading to detect the methods used to create what later became a shift in the public discourse. As explained in Chapter 1, the ERA was adopted at a national level as a civil rights ordinance in full consonance with the American value system that was to guarantee role equity for men and women. The success of the STOP-ERA movement organised by Schlafly hinged on the re-framing of the debate by emphasis of the purported role change that the constitutional amendment would implement, alongside an increased intervention of the federal government in the private lives of American citizens. In this formulation, the ERA became a threat to the American value system and the American way of life. As the STOP-ERA campaign preceded the pro-ERA one, it had the advantage of setting the frames and terms of debate that pro-ERA forces had to accept, thus, in a way, placing themselves in discursive positions counter-productive to their aims. They were also goaded into adopting a form of debate

that ruled out a serious contestation of ideas by focussing on an emotional replaying of stereotypes on both sides that fractured the already fragile national unity of American women as potential political power.

For the reasons listed above, it is important to study the texts that set such frames. The grassroots anti-feminist movement differed from large-scale social movements in lacking a coherent philosophical background. Instead, it lacked intellectual ambition and operated on an *ad hoc* basis. As a result, it has not produced a sizable body of texts other than the pamphlets that circulated among activists. Since the interest of the present thesis lies in identifying strategies used to mobilise support to social conservative causes, especially the co-optation of anti-feminist rhetoric to appeal to different audiences, the empirical part of the thesis studies two corpora, one directed outside the social conservative activist circle, the second circulating inside it. Both corpora are united by their association to Phyllis Schlafly and her anti-feminist campaign: the first corpus, analysed in Chapter 3, is constituted Schlafly's 1977⁸⁷ book *The Power of the Positive Woman*, the second corpus consists of the ERA-related texts from the *Phyllis Schlafly Report*, the activist newsletter, from the years 1980–1983. The two corpora thus have different target audiences and can thus be used to study the adaptation of social conservative rhetoric for strategic purposes. The corpora are also set apart in time: while the first corpus represents rhetoric from the height of the ERA ratification struggle, the second corpus illustrates social conservative discourse from the final stage of the anti-ERA campaign and the beginning of conservative revolution in the American political scene. The analysis of the two corpora aims to discover whether the rhetoric used inside and outside the conservative grassroots circles exhibits any distinctions in either the linguistic resources employed or the underlying frames conjured up.

The analysis will follow Fairclough's three-tier version of CDA, complemented by the work of van Dijk. The main focus is on the linguistic description of texts. In line with van Dijk's requirement (2001: 99) that in CDA those structures are to be chosen for closer analysis that are relevant for the particular social issue, in the present thesis the analysis will focus on only some linguistic forms. The main feature studied is the collocations used for describing feminist and anti-feminist women and categorisation of women, as well as the ERA, equality and rights, American people and the American government, that is the central agents in the ERA debate. Since every description is also inevitably an interpretation, the lexico-grammatical choices used in the texts are complemented by an in-depth discussion of connotations and metaphorical ranges of the word choices. The focus is on the experiential, relational and expressive values of words, with special reference to the use of ideologically contested use of vocabulary and overlexicalisation. The analysis will also consider syntactic choices, above all manipulation with agency and transitivity

⁸⁷ The year 1977 is in a way deeply symbolic for the ERA as it was that year that Alice Paul, the author of the original ERA proposal, died.

relations but also pronoun use. The latter is considered especially important in the creation of in- and out-groups but also in providing the interpellative force of the texts. In that, the description phase seeks to gain access to structural effects on the level of knowledge, social relations and social identities conjured up in the readers of the texts. The analysis will stay, primarily, on the sentential level but references will be made to interdiscursive features employed that orchestrate a dialogue between orders of discourse, especially in the first corpus. The analysis will not focus on debunking the false claims made all through the text but, rather, on the identification of the linguistic strategies and frames used to present the points made and the underlying mental models they evoke. The results of the analysis should suggest how the textual practice encapsulated in the text corpora accommodates itself into the American universe of political discourse and enters into a dialectical relationship with it by not only reflecting a particular worldview but also moulding the audiences as particular kinds of political subjects.

CHAPTER 3

Critical Discourse Analysis of the anti-feminist discourse on the ERA: Phyllis Schlafly's *The Power of the Positive Woman* (1977)

3.1. Description of the corpus

The Power of the Positive Woman (PPW), dedicated to Schlafly's daughters, is described in its blurb as "a book whose time has come". It, like most texts authored by Schlafly, either printed or featured on the web pages of the organisations she founded, features a prominent portrait of the author on the cover, as the model of the "positive woman" the text describes and, through this description, calls into being. As such, the book can be called both representative and constitutive already by its layout.⁸⁸ The cover design, unlike many conservative tracts published before and after the PPW, avoids the use of attention-grabbing headlines evoking conspiracy theories. The tone is emphatically positive and there is no advance praise from conservative luminaries or overt political self-positioning. In this, the work sets the tone later used by anti-feminists like Christina Hoff Sommers (1994) and Elizabeth Fox-Genovese (1996) seeking to position themselves as the spokespersons for common sense, not the loud polemics of authors such as Camille Paglia (1994) or Ann Coulter (2004). The choice is also marked for Schlafly whose rhetoric has, if anything, been divisive and prone to exaggeration from the very beginning of her public career. Although the book does promise to give its readers "truth that can set you free", suggesting the proclivity of social conservative discourse towards overstatement, it is nevertheless designed to appeal to readers outside the conservative fold and this is reflected in the restraint exercised in its cover layout.

The volume consists of 320 pages 221 of which are dedicated to Schlafly's argument, 48 to notes and index and 44 to appendices one of which details the rallying of supporters for a pro-ERA rally, the other re-prints a NOW manifesto. The remaining pages cover the traditional front and end matter of a book. The present analysis will cover only the 221 pages where Schlafly presents her argumentation; other sections will be referred to merely in a cursory manner, to support claims about specific frames created and the orders of discourse conjured up. The body of the analysed corpus of text is divided into four chapters: "Understanding the Difference", "Choosing Options and Opportunities", "Rejecting Gender-Free Equality" and "Spinning the Fabric of Civili-

⁸⁸ Careful self-representation was one of the key aspects of training for the STOP-ERA movement, as has been suggested by authors who have studied the movement (Marshall 1985: 256–257).

zation". The first chapter is dedicated to outlining Schlafly's position on the question of male-female difference, the second to the life-path options for women in the US, illustrated with a series of individual examples. The third chapter, the core of the book, displays Schlafly's case against the ERA and the fourth chapter outlines her vision for American future. The present analysis will draw on all chapters, although the first and the third yielded the richest crop of data on the ERA.

In the following discussion, the section dedicated to the description of lexico-grammatical choices is organised thematically. All descriptions are complemented with a short commentary to explain their relevance. This will reduce the number of unnecessary cross-references within the chapter and thereby will ease the process of reading. All strategies are illustrated with copious examples from the corpus, except for the cases where exactly the same word or phrase recurs throughout the text. The data will not be quantified, in accordance with the general principles of CDA, because of the context-sensitive nature of the material. The ambivalence of stances makes it possible to categorise each item in a multiple ways, which would render any numerical data produced at best equivocal. Instead, the following sections will emphasise the analyst's reading of the data to support all the arguments. If at all possible, linguistic elements are presented inside the original phrase or sentence context to show why a particular interpretation has been given to the elements studied. The words that are focussed on have been underlined. Any alterations made are given in square brackets inside the quotes. Recurring linguistic items will not be identified with an exact reference, which, however, will be given in the case of longer quotes.

3.2. Description of textual practice in the PPW

3.2.1. Vocabulary

The first covertly ideological terminological choice is the use of the word "women's liberation movement" to refer to feminists and the supporters of the ERA. This is a marked choice in its preference for the label that was reserved for radical feminists in the 1970s who sought to achieve the transformation of the whole patriarchal gender order. Here the term is preferred over "women's rights movement", the label used for liberal feminists who worked within the system and were largely interested in legislative change. As Chapter 1 of this thesis demonstrated, the ERA was the project of liberal feminists that was treated with considerable ambivalence by radical feminists. Schlafly's conflation of the two feminisms and marking the composite entity with the radical label seeks to disprefer the identification of the reader with a feminist agenda. This is achieved with subtlety, without the use of strong lexis that would alert the reader to the ideological processes at work, presenting women's

liberationism as the only possible version of feminism and thus, consequently, radicalising all feminist endeavours and placing them into conflict with the American political discourse.

The noun phrases that characterise feminist women are “militant women” or even “militant radical women” or “militant extremists”, “militant absolutists”, “female chauvinists” and “unisex militants”. That is, in the noun phrases used the negative connotation of a noun is amplified by modifying it with an adjective of an equally negative connotation. In several sections, the limited number of women who identify themselves with women’s liberationism is emphasised (“handful of female chauvinists”) to mark the marginality of the movement in the American field of political activism, although feminism was a considerable political force in the 1970s. Their demands are described as aggressive (“strident”, “militant”, “persistent”, “passionate”), dogmatic (“rigid”, “absolute”, “false”), uninformed (“silly”, “nonsense”, “ignorant”, “strangest”) or deviant (“rabid”, “far-out”, “preposterous”) and even dated (“obsolete”). Occasionally the PPW descends into alliterative rhetorical flourishes that echo the bombastic pronouncements habitual in social conservative discourse, like the following alliterative characterisation of the pro-ERA activists: “a bunch of marital misfits who are seeking their identity as Ms, mistaken about morals, misinformed about history, motivated by the axiom ‘Misery loves company” (p. 212). This range of reference demonstrates that the pro-ERA side is overlexicalised, using ideologically contested vocabulary and thus mapping the field as problematic.

The social conservative woman, equated with the positive woman of the title, appears in uplifting terms, with no adjectival modification in addition to the word “positive”. The words “Positive Woman” are capitalised throughout the book to set them apart from the rest of the text. This lack of diversity in the identification of social conservative women marks their position as unproblematic and naturalised in the PPW. The positive woman is also presented as the agent of actions associated with traditional femininity and characterised by positive overtones (“understands”, “remembers”, “rejoices”, “nurtures”). The words are agentive but do not imply physical action or forcefulness, that is, they maintain “ladylike” decorum and modesty. There is one occasion where this position is evoked with the help of a strong metaphoric representation of social conservative women as formers and maintainers of civilisation, by associating the mission with feminine crafts (e. g., “the Positive Woman accepts her responsibility to spin the fabric of civilization, to mend its tears, and to reinforce its seams” (p. 177)). The only cases when a strong stance is suggested in the representation of social conservative women is when conveying the resoluteness of the implied addressee against gender equality, here defined as merely the critique of difference (e.g., “the Positive Woman rejects the ‘gender-free’ approach”, “the Positive Woman opposes ERA because she knows it would be hurtful to women, to men, to children, to the family, to local self-government,

and to society as a whole” (p. 85), “the Positive Woman will never acquiesce in the face of this attack. She accepts and meets the challenge” (p. 213)).

It is also worth pointing out that throughout the PPW corpus it is indicated that the positive woman can have a career and a life outside the home, that is, the text does not create a sharp contrast between working women and housewives. Rather, an opposition is set up between a social conservative and social liberal worldview. When talking about housewives Schlafly exclusively identifies them as “homemakers”, a noun that stresses their agency and centrality in the family, not their confinement in the house and identification through marital status, as the word “housewives” would suggest. There is a perceptible connotational difference between the nouns “home” and “house”, the respective first nouns of the two compound words. Throughout the corpus, homemakers are depicted as having made the choice about the life they lead, that is, in no place are they presented as passive victims unhappy with their status. This choice is marked and positions itself in direct opposition to the image of a frustrated housewife created by Betty Friedan’s *Feminine Mystique*, although this tacit comparison is not explicitly expressed.

A plaintive tone appears in the representations of “traditional” women in the descriptions of different ill effects of the ERA. On these occasions, wives, mothers and widows are no longer treated as the primary addressees of the text, signalled by the disappearance of personal pronouns. The women are now represented in either third person singular or plural, in passive constructions and in object positions (emphatically so in examples like the following one: “husband wants to divorce her and trade her in on a younger model” (p. 100) where the wife is rendered into a passive object of exchange). Emotional descriptions (“cast-off wife”, “aged and faithful mother”) that emphasise the insecurity and vulnerability of traditionalist women are to evoke pity and compassion. However, direct victimisation discourse is avoided. The alleged anti-family stance of feminism is conflated with an anti-children one (e.g., [women’s liberationist] “dogma that children are a burden from which women must be liberated” (p. 203), another means for creating solidarity between traditionalist women who identify themselves primarily through their familial roles.

The same strategy is used in the case of men. Usually referred to generically as “men”, they are identified as fathers and husbands in the sections dedicated to the supposed consequences of the ERA. The attendant verbal patterns do not present men as atomised individuals but as the supporters and defenders of the family unit, vying with the oppressive influence of women’s liberationism and the federal government (“antifamily and antimen objectives of the women’s liberationists are clearly shown in their concerted attack on husbands” (p. 117), “hatred of husbands as family providers” (p. 117), ERA constitutes “clear and cruel discrimination against a husband and father” (p. 118)). The purported man-hating stance of feminism is emphasised by not just claiming that feminists are anti-men but also anti-husbands and anti-fathers, that is, they are suggested

to attack not just individual men but also the institution of marriage. The words associated with the family also carry more positive connotations than the generic gender marker “men”. Although men appear in the singular, as individual persons rather as a faceless group, and in agentive positions, men’s situation appears precarious against the supposedly superior resources of their opponents. However, these constructions do not shake the position of hegemonic masculinity, especially since men are referred to relatively infrequently within the corpus.

The women’s liberationist is predominantly associated with negativity and antagonism. This is reinforced by the verb choices in sentences where the women’s liberationist appears as the agent. In such sentences the verbs persistently stress aggression and violence, often through strong associations with physical actions that do not fit traditional femininity (“abolish inequality”, “agitate”, “hurl demands”, “wrest from an oppressive male-dominated social structure”, “wage a persistent campaign”, “pushes its proposals”, “hack away at her sense of self-worth”, “eliminate the role of mother”, “working to abolish”, “hurt men”, “waging war”, “making a determined drive against churches and seminaries”, “cram their programs down our throats”). Additionally, feminism is linked to unhappiness (“complain”, “deplore”, “reciting a tiresome litany”) and secret machinations (“concocting mischief beyond the reach of most people’s imagination”). Many of the verbs suggest coercion and actions that seek to erase (common-sense) positions either by sheer physical force or reliance on federal authority (“force us to conform to a gender-free society”, “want all women to be compelled”, “browbeat the media”, “eliminate the differences by social engineering or legislative or constitutional tinkering”, “mandate the gender-free, rigid, absolute equality of treatment”).

An association that appears especially in Chapter 3 of the PPW is that between women’s liberationism and elitism. One suggestion is the affinity between women and the legal establishment. Thus the individualised “traditional” mothers and fathers are opposed by “a battery of high-priced lawyers hired by the women’s liberationism” (p. 118), “women’s liberationists have access to an impressive roster of high-priced lawyers” (p. 165) or “agitating women’s liberationist lawyers”. The legal establishment is shown as infiltrated by feminists or, on other occasions, as being eager to capitalise on the litigation culture that populist rhetoric decries. Another anti-elitist strand runs all through the sections dedicated to protective labour legislation, portraying feminists as women who have it all and want to deny the limited protection there is to women less fortunate than they (e.g., “ERA is an elitist upper-middle class cause that has no relevance to the big majority of working women”, “the patronizing attitude of some business and professional women shows that they neither understand nor represent the needs and desires of women who work in industry” (p. 149)). This is complemented with accusations, voiced through quotes from black women, that feminism is also anti-black (p. 119) and anti-working-class (e.g., “the cloistered attitude of a business or professional

woman”). The elitist project is represented as a temporary thrill sought by women who have nothing else to worry about (e.g., “get their psychological kicks by demanding reverse discrimination” (p. 139), “she can afford her brief high. Her working sisters will have to pay for her ‘fix’” (p. 146), “it comes with exceedingly poor grace for one who sits at a comfortable desk to brush off the legal right of a woman who stands on her feet all day to be provided with a chair” (p. 148)). Thus the feminist women are not only elitist but also uninformed about the needs of women who really need help. The fact that this portrait of a (liberal) feminist conflicts with the overlexicalised representation of a militant activist is not addressed in the corpus where the two types of feminists appear side by side.

Furthermore, women’s liberationism is identified as unpatriotic, if not outright anti-American. This is achieved primarily through suggestions of disrespect for veterans (“women’s liberation movement despises veterans”). This line of argument is worded with great passion and eloquence, designed to reverberate in the patriotic conservative community (even if the argument itself is unfounded): “this animosity stems from the liberationist dogma that men are women’s natural enemies or from a dislike of anyone who served in defense of our country” (p. 119) or “vindictive attitude towards men who have sacrificed so much and served so gallantly in defense of our country” (p. 120). This is combined with accusations of cowardice, in the case of the supposed draft, the hypothetical behaviour of feminists presented with unassailable certainty (e.g., “they will exercise their freedom of choice to avoid military service, but they are willing to inflict involuntary service duty on all other 18-year-old girls” (p. 124)). As a contrast, the patriotic investment of the Positive Woman is never in doubt: “it is the task of the Positive Woman to keep America Good” as “the Positive Woman starts with the knowledge that America is the greatest country in the world” (p. 213). References to national greatness are bound to echo positively among conservatives of all persuasions.

A problematic aspect that is mentioned surprisingly modestly, considering its prominence in the language of religious conservatives, is the suggestion that feminists are anti-religious. There are only two claims regarding this matter, both associated with the use of government authority to achieve secularist goals (e.g., “women’s liberation movement is making a determined drive against churches and seminaries” and “women’s liberationists will litigate to use the power of the federal government to force churches to ordain women” (pp. 164–165)). More space is dedicated to the discussion of the secular humanist stance of the Supreme Court and its decisions as a means of casting doubt on the authority of the institution and its reliability in protecting social conservative concerns.⁸⁹ However, the body of the book closes with a Biblical text: “They

⁸⁹ This concern colours Schlafly’s most recent book on the Supreme Court (Schlafly 2004) and echoes conservative campaign against the Supreme Court detailed by Schoenwald (2001).

that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint” (Isaiah 40:31). This not only invokes the authority of the Bible but also claims the religious community to the side of the anti-ERA forces.

There are also verb phrases and adverbs that suggest an almost pathological nature of the concerns of women’s liberationists (“imprisoned in her negative view”, “women’s liberationists are compulsively involved”, “rabid determination of the militant radicals”, “regulation is illogical, immoral and unauthorized by any reasonable reading”, “alleged oppression that exists only in their distorted minds”, “a measure of the vindictiveness of the militant women”, “unreasoning determination”). The word choices not only present the movement as violent and constructed on negativity but also as being antagonistic to the civilised public sphere deportment characteristic of “real” (American) women. Above all, the overlexicalisation of labels that stress pathology marks the deviance of women identified with the feminist cause. Despite their verbal marginalisation, feminists are also granted considerable influence and power (e.g., “new, militant breed of women’s liberationist has come along and amended the United States Constitution”). While the arguments of the pro-ERA forces are supposed to be false and misleading (e.g., “foolish and deceitful argument used to persuade the general public” (p. 124)), Schlafly herself purports to speak for the common sense. The agenda of the positive women does not get identified at all as a program of action and thus there is also no adjectival modification.

The ERA itself is identified with negative notions, as seen from the paraphrases used for it: “trap”, “double-edged sword”, “constitutional noose”, “fearful weapon of regulation and control”, “a big grab for vast federal power”. ERA, when invoked directly, is shown to be sweeping and radical (“would be grossly unfair” (p. 90), “will be hurtful to all women and especially cruel to widows” (p. 101), “compels the government to care for children” (p. 109), “will bring about radical departures” (p. 114), “will take out of the hands of the state legislatures”, “will hurt men” (p. 116), “requires us to erase the time-honored lines of paternity and legitimacy” (p. 117) or “prohibits schools and colleges from setting and maintaining standards of morality” (p. 162)). On many occasions, it is personified to emphasise its threatening aspects (e.g., “with one stroke ERA would wipe out” (p. 98), “will strike a severe blow at the family unit” (p. 117) or “will swallow the states’ present primary authority in everything that involves the rights of women” (p. 169). Its uselessness is declared without qualifications (“there is nothing whatever that ERA will do to benefit women” (p. 98)). To emphasise that it will not increase women’s rights but will only erode their privileges, it is labelled “Extra Responsibilities Amendment”. Throughout the corpus, the linguistic choices stress the far-reaching effects of the amendment on the institutions most hallowed to the conservative audience (e.g., “would wipe out all state laws” (p. 116), “ERA will seriously affect marriage both as an economic and social institution”). Moreover, the ERA is

presented as an unprecedented expansion of federal power (e.g., “ERA means a tremendous transferral of power from the states to the federal government” or “tremendously far-reaching shift of power out of the hands of state and local governments”).

Many of the central definitions are summoned in the following sentences:

ERA will prevent us forever from making reasonable differences between men and women based on factual differences in childbearing and physical strength. ERA would force upon us the rigid, unisex, gender-free mandate demanded by the women’s liberation movement, and it will transfer the power to apply this mandate to the federal government and the federal courts where the average citizens have no control (p. 170).

This example not only uses absolute statements similar to those repeated all through the text but also attributes extremism to the ERA, presenting it as a menacing and violent force that would destabilise the family and, by extension, American social arrangements by summoning the powers of the federal government. What is notable in the latter case is the fact that, echoing traditional populist tropes, the average citizen is presented as lacking any influence with the central government. As such, the paragraph sums up the gist of the type of argument employed within the PPW.

In the discussion of the implications of the ERA, a new object appears: the family. The institution is represented as being under a concerted attack from women’s liberationists and the federal government, a process which threatens to destabilise the whole American society. This is clearly evident in the testimony cited at length in the text:

Is the Equal Rights Amendment to be the Tonkin Gulf Resolution of the American social structure? /.../ [omission in the original] I would predict that the Equal Rights Amendment and many of the other goals of its proponents will bring social disruption, unhappiness and increasing rates of divorce and desertion. Weakening family ties may also lead to increased rates of alcoholism, suicide, and possibly sexual deviation.(p. 116)

Furthermore, family is explicitly defined as a civilising force, especially of the original animal nature of men (e.g., “family is the institution that has civilised the male” or “man’s role as family provider gives him the incentive to curb his primitive nature” (p. 120)). What is echoed here is the general conservative pessimism about the human nature but also the suggestion that a threat to the present gender order would revert the progress of human civilisation.

The feminist struggle is uniformly described with words that have a strong emotional and negative connotation, menacing enough to rally conservatives to fight against it but weak enough to be defeated. The eventual failure of feminist campaigns is guaranteed by the unnaturalness or silliness of the endeavour (e.g., “doomed to frustration”). The adjectives used to describe feminist actions are similar to the nouns they complement, carrying connotations of desperation and irrationality (“frenetic desire”, “irrational mandate of ‘equality’ at the expense

of justice”). In some more moderately worded positions nouns associated with feminism are seen as introducing social discord (“controversy”) or being built on mistaken assumptions (“fallacy”). Referring to the constitutional amendment as “constitutional tinkering” reduces the seriousness of the legal background of the document by likening the amendment process to amateurishness and also hides the broad public support to the amendment on the national level prior to the ratification round in the states. Suggestion that legislative reform constitutes “social engineering” resonates powerfully in the American context with its implied link to mind control and authoritarianism, features inimical to individual freedom. Such attempts are represented as producing “rupture” in values, once again emphasising violence and physical violation in a way that rules out compromise.

One of the values threatened is American individualism, as the women’s liberationists are accused of fighting for group rights (e.g., “they [women’s liberationists] are pushing for group rights, for reverse discrimination”, “aggressively push for reverse discrimination”). The already potent threat is doubled when modified by phrases that suggest its enforcement by courts (“court-enforced reverse discrimination for women”, “court-ordered reverse discrimination”). The phrase “reverse discrimination”, rather than its positively connoted alternative “affirmative action”, is preferred throughout to mark the non-meritocratic aspect of feminist agenda, often bolstered by claims about the lack of qualifications of female or minority entrants to various positions: “push for an equal number of women in all traditionally male-dominated occupations, regardless of the inadequacy of female qualifications”, “militantly against equality when it comes to qualifications”, “pushing their goals at the expense of effectiveness”, “there is nothing in the ERA that requires any minimum standards”. The incompatibility of group rights and state-enforced equality with the American universe of political discourse is stressed in other ways as well. Equality is even equated with a communist agenda (p. 214) or socialism (e.g., “the Positive Woman will also reject socialism because of its effect on the family through its pursuit of the destructive goal of equality” (p. 217), an ultimate anathema in the fiercely anti-communist conservative context.

The feminist position is continually identified as a “narrow view”, “dogma” or “ideology”. (The latter term is used in the narrow and disparaging sense, not the wide interpretation outlined in Chapter 2 of the present thesis). This, once again, presents feminism as a blind doctrine that has brainwashed its followers and, especially considering the strong anti-Communist background of Schlafly herself, forging a direct link to totalitarian societies such as the Soviet Union. This is particularly evident in the language used in depicting the effect of childcare outside the home: “there are the self-appointed central planners, convinced that they are better able to mold a child’s mind than are his parents and that the earlier they get the child under their supervision, the more thorough the indoctrination can be” (p. 204). A similar theme can also be seen in the representation of the followers of women’s liberationists as “dupes”, denying

the possibility of feminism being a conscious and rational choice. No nominal marker of the ideology of positive women is provided, supporting the claim that we are to accept it as the unmarked common sense view of social arrangements. This directs the reader to accept its frame of reference and reject the feminist one. Similarly, while the pro-ERA campaign is associated with vested interests and a concerted campaign (p. 219), the anti-ERA stand appears as a natural response from individuals, with no suggestion of institutional backing.

Another collocational pattern that recurs all through the corpus is the association of the in-group with realism and the out-group with illusions, sometimes also referred to more softly as “dreams” (“women’s liberationists are expending their time and energies erecting a make-believe world” (p. 13), “such an argument is out of touch with realities” (p. 150)), “errors”, “mistaken belief”, “illusion” or “hypocrisy”, to which the “normal” reaction is “amusement” or an attempt to lead the misled people back to the “right” track. Where the feminist agenda is not presented as a dogma, it appears nebulous (stressed by verbs such as “hypothesize” and the use of conditionals). Equality, the aim of such struggle, is also depicted as “illusionary” or “impossible” but also “unreasonable” (e.g., in the following doubled phrase “foolish search for an impossible equality”).

The representation of women’s liberationists as merely misguided can be seen as a strategy for winning over women who waver in their ideological alignment and who could be driven away by direct abuse (seen in moderate phrases like “ERA supporters simply don’t understand the system of government we have in the US” (p. 167)). This is reinforced by the continuous repetition of the phrase “reasonable men and women” which, automatically, brands the opposition as “unreasonable”, although the word itself is not mentioned explicitly. E.g., “allow for reasonable differences in treatment and separations of activities that reasonable men and women want” (p. 24) or “the Positive Woman believes that it makes no sense to deprive us of the ability to make reasonable distinctions based on sex that reasonable men and women want” (p. 25). The repetitions, without lexical variation, act as a mantra that invites the readers to align themselves with the preferred position to reject the “unnatural” alternatives.

Another notable feature is the lack of references to party affiliations all through the corpus. Both Republican (Nixon, Ford) and Democratic (Carter) presidents are criticised for their support of the ERA and the acquiescence of both parties on the matter defines them as being too intertwined with the Washington elite to help the social conservative cause. The opposition is not between the Republicans and the Democrats but between social conservatives and liberals, regardless of their party affiliation. The word “conservative”, does not appear in the corpus, suggesting the negative connotation the word still had in public discourse and hence its strategic avoidance by Schlafly who sought to expand her circle of supporters. However, the word “liberal” is used, for example in the phrase “liberal dogma”, with all the attendant connotations.

Thus, liberalism, never qualified in the PPW but, judging from the context, referring to social liberalism, is represented with a negative connotation, not only as naïve but also malignant. Thus the PPW states that “liberals remind me of a story told about the philosopher Hegel. When informed by a colleague that the facts did not tally with his theories, Hegel sternly replied, ‘All the worse for the facts’” (p. 181). This suggests the self-willed unreasonableness of those who identify themselves as liberals and their resultant unfitness to lead the US.

The roles of women other than those envisioned by feminists are described as “natural”, “inherent”, “innate”, “proper”, “fundamental” or “essential”, even “normal”, all through the text and the descriptions are extended well beyond the purely biological features, to also cover social arrangements constructed on the binary division of gender roles. While the adjectives listed above usually modify the noun “difference” either in singular or plural, the difference is always one between men and women. Although differences between women (race, class) are suggested in sections that construct feminism as an elite project, the important differences between differently situated women and men remain unarticulated and both appear as unified and universal categories. Difference is contrasted to the equally recurrent noun “uniformity” (frequently reinforced by complements such as “gender-free uniformity”) or adjective “unisex”, words that are treated as antonyms to the words “difference” and “different”. The word “uniformity” is frequently complemented by intensifying adjectives such as “ineradicable” or “absolute”. The recurrent phrase for the changes introduced by the ERA is “role reversal”, suggesting a total dismantling of the existing order. Rules introduced by the ERA and other women’s liberationist campaigns are persistently labelled “arbitrary” (“arbitrary regulations”, “arbitrary federal control”), to juxtapose them with the “natural” laws advocated by social conservatives.

The positive woman is also, as a corollary, a natural woman, implicitly making her opponents “unnatural”, without the word itself having to be enunciated explicitly. On one occasion, it is even suggested that women’s liberation movement is “opposing Mother Nature herself” (p. 87). In addition to suggesting her normalcy (and normativity), the PPW’s description of the positive woman conjures up the frame of women’s moral superiority, a Victorian conception that invests the female role with added responsibility for the moral wellbeing of her husband and children (e.g., “a Positive Woman cannot defeat a man in a wrestling or boxing match, but she can motivate him, inspire him, and have power over him that he can never achieve over her with all his muscle” (p. 17)).

Especially in Chapter 3 of the PPW, the word “rights” appears with increasing frequency as the target and potential victim of both the ERA and the women’s liberation movement. The discussion of rights, although not explicitly identified as such, is limited to individual or states’ rights. For example, “is it just as hurtful to a husband to be deprived of his right to have a wife who is a mother for his children as it is to a wife to be deprived of her right to be a full-

time homemaker” (p. 121). The quote exemplifies the recurrent collocation “deprived of rights” that implies outside agency, made the more menacing by the absence of the agent in the passive construction. The majority of the contexts of use see the phrase applied to most private aspects of life where any encroachment upon rights is seen as especially hurtful. This leads to appeals to absolutes like freedom that the ERA supposedly limits or even denies (e.g. “these organizations [those threatened by the ERA] are entitled to their freedom of association” (p. 156)). The fact that the ERA is also designed to guarantee rights is masked in this discourse with a constant emphasis on the responsibilities and restrictions the ERA would be accompanied with. The effect of this re-framing is the impression that the STOP-ERA forces protect rights, especially traditional American rights, from the encroachments of “militant” women’s liberationists and the misguided federal government, represented as interfering in aspects of life that should not concern them (e.g., “last remaining piece of jurisdiction that the national politicians and bureaucrats haven’t put their meddling fingers into” (p. 166)) The rhetoric suggests that the last stand of social conservatives is a desperate one, once again evoking the need for the readers to rally behind the cause.

Another persistently repeated target is the family that appears in an object position in most sentences and thus is shown as vulnerable throughout the corpus. The threats are not merely the ERA or feminists but also unmarried parents and, especially, homosexuals. A strong homophobic strain runs through all the discussion (for example in warnings against homosexuals working in schools and even in fire departments). The persistent claim is that toleration of alternative patterns of cohabitation erodes respect for the traditional family (p. 117). The traditional family is presented as the only possible “normal” pattern of life as it appears without a modifying adjective, simply as “the family” all through the text. Much use is made of inverted commas as a means of ridiculing feminist or liberal positions, on family as well as other matters.

Common sense is summoned throughout by copious use of the word “obviously” for positions that are neither obvious nor unavoidable (e.g., “obviously, it would be a semantic hurdle of significant magnitude to write a baby book and say ‘he or she’ every time the author refers to the baby” (p. 30) (overlooking the fact that here the hurdle is not semantic at all)). Another recurrent phrase is “majority” or even “overwhelming majority”, summoned to rally opposition to different aspects of the ERA (e.g., “such a radical change would be contrary to present laws, our customs, mores and to the wishes of the majority of American citizens” (p. 121)”, “an absolute rule against discrimination on the basis of sex has consequences that are ridiculous, unreasonable, and unwanted by the majority of Americans” (p. 156), “regulation on sex discrimination is offensive to the big majority of American women and men”, or “the overwhelming majority of American women do not think they were mistreated because they do not have an equal obligation to fight jungle warfare”

(p. 124)). The author also summons common sense explicitly, e.g., “logic, history, and common sense teach us otherwise” (p. 125).

The common sense position of the PPW’s arguments can be seen in the following paragraph: “American women recognize ERA as a fraud. There is no affirmative case for ERA. There is no law that discriminates against women. ERA does not give women any rights, benefits or opportunities that they do not now have” (p. 176). The author presents herself as speaking for all American women, claiming feminists to be both elitist and radical, the incompatibility of the two notions remaining unacknowledged. Her statement about the lack of the ERA’s power, as was shown in Chapter 1 of the present thesis, was acknowledged by feminists as well. The rhetoric, though, is undercut by the rest of the text where the PPW has been emphasising the drastic and far-reaching negative effects of the ERA. The absolute claims are in consonance with the chosen rhetorical frame and the tendencies of social conservative and religious fundamentalist discourse.

The lexical strategy that embraces all of the types of expression mentioned above is the use of binary oppositions and contrastive pairs (male-female, feminist-anti-feminist), with the anti-feminist stance represented in moderate tones, without strong adjectival complements and the feminists described through varied and intense vocabulary with strong negative connotations. The in- and out-group affiliation is extended to bodies associated with both sides. For example, the anti-feminist camp is paired with “common Americans” but also local communities and states while the feminist campaign is allied with the federal government and the courts (e.g., “ERA proponents, armed with the immense power of the federal bureaucracy and federal courts” (p. 163), “any area that Congress has the power to legislate on, the federal agencies have the power to administer and execute, and the federal courts have the power to adjudicate” (p. 166)). This tendency is especially apparent in the phrase already quoted above that claims that ERA “will transfer the power to apply this mandate to the federal government and federal courts where the average citizens have no control” (p. 170). This suspicion of both the women’s liberationists and the federal government is deepened by suggestions that the pro-ERA campaign was financed from taxes (“have been doing this to the tune of tens of thousands of taxpayers’ dollars” (p. 171) or “ERA would have died a natural death by 1977 if it were not for the artificial respiration provided by the pro-ERA media, massive amounts of federal spending, and White House lobbying activities” (p. 176). This continues the populist conservative suggestion of the elitism of the ERA and feminism but also its lack of self-reliance, a feature that places the ERA in opposition to the American value system.

The corpus is characterised by a preference for unqualified and totalising claims: the text abounds with words such as “all” “any”, “every”, “no”, “absolutely nothing” (“every law and regulation”, “any medical benefit”, “no gain for women, for children, for families, or for America”, “program to get all children out of the home”). Moral absolutes such as “right” and “wrong” are used

liberally all through the corpus. Men and women, unless a clear opposition is created with women's liberationists, are treated as all-embracing labels and it is implied that the groups involve all "normal" men and women, that is, everybody who is not feminist. The latter are always marked as an anomaly from the general gender order. This is visible, for example, in the PPW's discussion of the proposed language reform around non-sexist titles (e.g., the sentences "that doesn't satisfy the women's liberationists. They want all women to be compelled to use *Ms* whether they like it or not." suggest that feminists do not fall under the category of all women).

Totalising claims also tap into American patriotism that is likely to be shared by a majority of the readers of the PPW (e.g., "Americans have the immense good fortune to live in a civilization that respects the family as the basic unit of society" (p. 87)). If the reader accepts the first half of the proposition, as she or he is likely to, the acceptance of the more problematic second half of the sentence is facilitated. Many similarly strong claims are repeated almost verbatim throughout the text to increase their effect.

The text abounds with presuppositions that set up a series of seemingly commonsensical statements which are actually a selective set of assumptions that construct a common ground between the author and the reader that promotes a desired mode of interpretation. Although Fairclough deals with presuppositions in the interpretation phase of analysis, they are placed under description in the present thesis as they cannot be divorced from the particular instances of language use. The whole description section detailed above is in many ways a long list of presuppositions that create subject positions for parties in the discourse that a person engaging with the material inadvertently accepts. This starts on the level of noun phrases as phrases "militant women's liberationist" and "traditional family" have in-built claims about women's liberationists being militant and the model of family lauded by the PPW as being traditional. The overall effect of the presuppositions built into the noun phrases and propositions in PPW is the idea that the ERA would introduce radical change in core American values.

3.2.2. Grammatical choices

The PPW uses pronouns strategically. From the opening pages of the book, the text turns to the reader as "you", repeated for a rhetorical effect, equating her with the positive woman of the title and contrasting her to "women's liberationists" who are habitually referred to as "she" or "they" in the text. E.g. the second sentence of the opening paragraph (p. 9): "your outlook on life, your faith, your behavior, your potential for fulfilment, all are determined by the parameters of your original premise" vs. "the women's liberationist /.../ is imprisoned by her own negative view of herself". This classical ideologically loaded discursive pattern is reinforced by the strategies employed to appeal to

the positive self-image of the reader who is addressed as supporting the anti-feminist common sense that is sharply contrasted to women's liberationists whose agenda is persistently described as unreasonable and radical, as could be seen above. Thus, the "Othering" of feminist positions that was achieved by the deployment of different lexical devices is also reinforced at a pronominal level (e.g., "it is clear that a prohibition against your right to make any difference or separation between the sexes anytime anywhere is a primary goal of the women's liberation movement" (p. 24)).

The identification of the reader with the positive woman is emphasised in the fact that the positive woman persistently appears as the agent, that is, the subject of sentences. This stresses her individual agency and independence of mind and action. The positive woman is, emphatically, not presented as subservient to her husband or the public opinion – her lifestyle decisions are based on choice rather than oppression or blind adherence to the social norm. This is in harmony with the American value system that has always valued independent action and has, therefore, found it difficult to harmonise itself with the submissiveness of the traditional feminine role.⁹⁰ Thus the women the text addresses are associated with the discourse of choice, not the discourse of duty that was powerful among the more narrow social conservative women's groups.

Women's liberationists, on the other hand, do not appear as agents in many constructions. When presenting the women's liberationist position, the PPW frequently makes the movement or its "dogma" the agent, indirectly presenting the followers of feminism as brainwashed dupes. This is extended to other social forces that are represented as menacing or threatening to the (social) conservative social order (e.g., "new morality"). In this case, the replacement of human subjects with a "faceless" abstraction dehumanises the position, especially when placed in opposition with the individualised positive woman.

This strategy is further emphasised by the tendency of the women's liberationists to appear in plural, as a group, as opposed to the individualised positive woman. Traditionally the powerless in society are depersonalised by resorting to group label and plurals. This choice is especially marked in the individualistic American context that valorises independence. By making the movement, rather than an individual, the agent, the text associates women's liberationism with collectivism in a manner hostile to the American value

⁹⁰ This contradiction is worded as follows by Susan Douglas (1994: 17): "Our national mythology teaches us that Americans are supposed to be independent, rugged individuals who are achievement-oriented, competitive, active, shrewd, and assertive go-getters, like Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Edison, or Ross Perot. Women, however, are supposed to be dependent, passive, nurturing types, uninterested in competition, achievement, or success, who should conform to the wishes of the men in their lives. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to see that these two lists of behavioural traits are mutually exclusive, and that women are stuck right in the middle".

system (e.g. “women’s liberation movement precipitates a series of conflict situations”).

Interestingly, there are also supposedly powerful groups which appear in passive constructions. This goes especially for employers who are disempowered in their relationship with the state and the ERA (e.g., “employers are being forced to hire and train inexperienced single women to achieve some arbitrary quota” (p. 118)). When they appear in agentive positions, the verbs suggest submissiveness (“employers are acquiescing in reverse discrimination”). Populist anti-elite rhetoric employed in describing the legal establishment is not extended to the business community. There is but one exception in which companies appear in an agentive position: “most companies are delighted with the removal of the protections for women”. However, here, too, the brunt of the critique still targets women’s liberation and makes the businesses beneficiaries rather than active agents in relations to the ERA.

A similar mode is used in the case of the military, another putative victim of the ERA (e.g., “the military would be compelled to place them [women] in combat units alongside men” (p. 122)) or even Congress (e.g., “Congress will be constitutionally compelled” to draft women” (p. 125)). The supremacy of the Constitution, however, is occasionally asserted with the use of nominalised or passive constructions (e.g., “we are constitutionally required to treat men and women with exact legal equality”, “elementary and secondary schools were being compelled”). In the case of such constructions, the pro-ERA activists are endowed with superior power and influence (e.g., “clause was stricken on the House floor at the demand of the pro-ERA militants” (p. 174)), although the PPW has, somewhat inconsistently, claimed earlier on the same page that feminist initiatives were initiated by a “small band of militants” who “stormed up and down the corridors of Congress”, suggesting both irrational aggressiveness and the minority status of such interest groups.

The passive voice is occasionally also employed to conceal the agent. A prominent example is the phrase “ERA has sometimes been called men’s lib amendment” (p. 120) or “what has aptly been called the war on the family” (p. 179) where the passive hides the fact that Schlafly had herself done the same some pages earlier in the text and, as was shown in Chapter 1 of the present thesis, had the habit of doing it in her public addresses. Mostly, though, statements are attributed to either a specific group or even individual (both pro- and anti-ERA), lending an air of specificity and reliability to the text.

The choice of verb tenses stresses the inevitability of changes. Thus, the ERA and women’s liberationists/women’s liberation movement appear as subjects in sentences that use the future or present tense, to stress the finality of their stand and the inevitability of the dire results of their agenda. There is a dearth of modals modifying certainty in the PPW corpus but especially in Chapter 3 of the book that outlines the supposed effects of the ERA. The modals that recur are the ones that stress certainty (e.g., “wives and mothers must be gotten out of the home at all costs”, “ERA would positively make

women subject to the draft”). While the positive effects of the ERA are presented as dubious, the negative ones appear as irrefutable (e.g., “there is absolutely nothing ERA can do”, “there is a great deal of mischief that it would cause”).

The syntactic strategy that is effective in all contexts of opinion formation is to nominalise verbal processes or place the proposition that contains problematic information in a subordinate clause which makes the truth value of such a claim difficult to negate. Thus the reader, by accepting the propositions contained in the main clause, also accepts the more problematic notions encoded in the subordinate one. E.g., “the women’s liberation movement is based on the unproven theory that uniformity should replace diversity – or, in simpler language, the federalization of all remaining aspects of our life” (p. 26) where there are several hidden propositions (that women’s liberation seeks to achieve uniformity, that equality, the notion that is replaced by uniformity, constitutes the opposite of diversity, that the value of equality is unproven) which remain uncontestable because of their syntactic positioning. Another example of the same strategy: “such a radical change would be contrary to present laws, our customs and mores, and to the wishes of the majority of American citizens” (p. 121) where the primary proposition, that the ERA would actually effect radical change, is nominalised and placed in such a position as to be uncontestable within the given construction.

The majority of the sentences in the corpus are in the indicative mood, with no imperatives and very few interrogatives, most of the latter rhetorical questions that are used will skill. They are spaced sparsely all through the text to maintain their rhetorical force and to deploy it at points where the author wants to lend a special emphasis to her argument by summoning common sense (e.g., “does anyone think our nation would be improved if it were made subject to a national divorce law” (p. 27) that clearly invites a negative reply, one that is not commonsensical in the wide social framework but is prompted here by the syntactic pattern).

The oppositional frame that predominates in the corpus is reinforced from the very beginning by defining the feminist movement not through a positive agenda but through the use of negative constructions, stressing its deviance from the norm. The majority of the PPW corpus is dedicated to the lambasting of the women’s liberationists rather than the outlining of the agenda of the social conservative women’s movement. This can be explained through two different strategies. On the one hand, Schlafly avoids identifying the group she rallies as a special social movement that, by definition, would only speak for a narrow interest group. Instead, her text presents the social conservative agenda as that of any reasonable American, the core of a societal consensus rather than the worldview of only one segment of society. On the other hand, the creating of a shared group identity through the demonisation of its opposition is one of the most frequently used strategies which found especially wide application within the multifarious American conservative movement, as was indicated in

the introduction to the thesis and therefore it can be suggested that the pervasive stigmatisations of feminism acts as a movement mobilisation strategy in the PPW corpus as well.

3.2.3. Values attributed to the dimensions of meaning at the level of description

The description phase of the analysis demonstrates the use of linguistic resources to represent contents, relations and subjects that have experiential, relational and expressive values. The experiential dimension of the discursive practices (re)creates certain preferred kinds of knowledge and beliefs about feminism and anti-feminism. For one, while women's liberationism is persistently shown as being engaged in acts of violence and aggression against somebody or something, the lexico-grammatical choices used for their opponents present them in a positive manner, starting from the definition of the "positive woman" herself. She is never described as anti-feminist or anti-women's liberationist. Rather, the preferred choices emphasise her being pro-family or pro-tradition, that is, associated with a positive agenda phrased in words with a strong positive connotation. She is also represented as the carrier of normalcy and naturalness, with her opponent painted as deviant and unnatural. The negative-positive opposition of feminists-anti-feminists is repeated in grammatical choices (nominalisations, use of active and passive voice). Experiential values are expressed in the use of ideologically loaded vocabulary and grammatical choices as well as the strategy of overlexicalisation, the very quantitative prevalence of (negative) labels for feminism showing it as being a site of determined ideological struggle. This contestation, however, is represented unidirectionally in the PPW as the feminist perspective is also provided by Schlafly who thus creates her opponent as well as her desired self-image.

The experiential values of the lexical choices also support the relational values that set up relationships between participants. It is to be noted that the different relations cannot be separated on a textual level as they are in operation simultaneously. The use of ideologically contested and stigmatising linguistic resources in the representation of feminism and its aims also sets up a pre-determined set of relationships for the potential readers, especially those readers who do not identify themselves as feminists. That is, the textual material invites the readers to take up a certain kind of a relationship with feminism as well as with the American universe of political discourse. Although there is a clear anti-feminist stance, multiple other relationships are also offered (relationships with men, with women of other races and life choices, with the American government and legal system, even God and the natural world). The relational values are expressed both in lexis and grammar (modality, modes, pronoun use).

The linguistic resources also offer clearly articulated expressive values that project attitudes and evaluations and thus form the subjects and social identities.

That is, on the basis of the knowledge and beliefs conveyed through experiential values and the social relationships set up in relational values we can derive certain preferred and dispreferred subject positions within the larger ideology of the text that invites the readers to identify with anti-feminism and condemn feminism as a deviation from the norm of the version of the US discursively constructed in the text. This can be seen in the ideologically contested classification schemes that underlie textual practices and create sharp contrasts between two clashing ideologies. The expressive values are evident in lexis but also in grammar (manipulations on the level of propositions and truth/knowledge claims).

Thus in the analysis of textual practice above demonstrates that strong ideological stances have been expressed already at the level of linguistic description, overtly and covertly, showing the investment of the texts in the power relations outside the textual universe. The interplay between the discursive and social context and textual patterns will be analysed in depth below, in sections dedicated to interpretation of discursive practice and the explanation of social practice.

3.3. Interpretation of the discursive practice in the PPW

As Fairclough (1989: 141) states, interpretation is “generated through a combination of what is in the text and what is ‘in’ the interpreter”, that is, it emerges in the interaction of the interpreter’s background knowledge and ideological preferences/common sense they have internalised. The formal elements of texts activate the socio-cognitive resources of interpreters to make sense of the representations. The aim of the interpretation phase of analysis is to “make explicit what for participants is generally implicit” (Fairclough 1989: 162) by showing the connections between the chosen discursive strategies and the underlying common-sense notions. The interpretation starts on the surface of utterances, proceeding to its meaning and links to other utterances, ending with the identification of the main point of the text that will be retained in the memory of the interpreter. The following section will look at the situational context, intertextual context as well as the mental models and frames created in the discursive practice.

3.3.1. Situational context

The situational context determines under what discourse type interpreters define a particular instance of discourse and what keys they then use for interpreting the discourse. Fairclough (1989: 146) suggests that the salient features of this level of analysis are the determination of the activity type and purpose, the involved subjects and the relationship between them and, finally, the role of

language in the processes. As the above discussion has shown, the PPW does not represent a simple case. It can be analysed along at least two differential patterns of situational context, one of them the one preferred by the author and targeted to the implied ideal reader; the other embedded under the first reading and suggesting a greater degree of manipulation with the readers and their perceptions. The two stances cannot be separated and exist side by side or, rather, overlying one another, all through the book, interdependent on each other. However, the analysis of the linguistic resources suggests that this polyfocality and interdependence is to remain hidden from the implied reader whose trust in the truth value of the text is based on its claim to unambiguous common sense. Since language plays a central role in both cases, the linguistic resources will be analysed simultaneously with other features in this phase of analysis.

In the first interpretation of the situational context, the PPW is defined as an extended academically informed essay that, concerned about the lack of information about gender issues, seeks to inform its readers and help them to make choices about their lives. The book is academically informed but written for a lay audience by an author who acts as a friendly mediator between the experts and the readers. The strategy is revealed in the linguistic resources used to construct the argument. This sets up a relationship of trust between the author and the readers, one that is built around a common concern and non-hierarchical by nature. This is stressed by the use of personal pronouns and other linguistic features that create an in-group identity constructed on a shared desire to defend the common-sense value system of America. This mode of reading offers a constrained set of interpretive options for the readers and thus the readers who accept this preferred description of situational context will not perceive the situated meanings of the linguistic features that were analysed in the previous section of the chapter.

The second reading, one that underlies the analysis of the present thesis, is dependent on defining the core features of the situational context differently: the PPW is considered to be an example of a political polemic that seeks not to inform but to persuade the audience. It is informed not academically but politically and this primary orientation motivates the range of discourses drawn on as well as the linguistic form they are cast in. Since the book is not seen as an academic text, it will not be analysed from the point of view of the soundness of the data or the quality of the research the text is based on but, rather, with respect to the way arguments are organised so as to support the central goal. As such, the different interpretation of the discourse type requires a different interpretive frame and quality criteria. What causes concern in this interpretation is the author's masking of her intentions in creating the text, suggesting the desire to manipulate with the responses of the audience. As a result, the author can no longer be seen as a concerned friend but an expert who seeks to hide the hierarchical relationship between herself and the reading public by a carefully designed discursive repertoire. This claim is based on the slippages and fissures

that appear in the first interpretive frame but cannot be explained away within its framework. Whether the author consciously seeks to misinform her readers or whether she merely constructs her text with a careful consideration of a socio-political aim that she herself believes in is, obviously, impossible to tell on the basis of the text. These are but two of the possible interpretations of the situational context and the attendant linguistic resources (e.g., it is possible to read it from an academic or radical feminist frame that would both result in very different definitions of all of the items listed above). The thesis believes that the discussion of linguistic resources provided in the description section of the thesis proves the necessity of double reading as a core element of the analysis of the present ideologically complex corpus.

3.3.2. Intertextual context

An interpretation is always based on the mixture of situational context as well as previous interpretations that circulate in the social universe. Interpretations are therefore intertextual and dialogic by nature. The dialogic character of the present corpus is most interesting in the case of the implicit dialogue with feminist textual practice, as represented in the mainstream press of the time. The whole representational repertoire summoned by Schlafly seeks to create a positive self-image for the homemaker in an implicit dialogue with Betty Friedan as well as other feminist authors who aimed to deconstruct the naturalised American ideal of femininity by revealing the power relations encoded in the social arrangement. Hence the stress on the discourse of choice in the PPW, which represents homemakers as active agents of their own lives, not passive pawns in the hands of social forces. There is also an implicit dialogue with the broader social liberal discourse on the role of the state in the definition of the private sphere of life. This can be seen in the vehement accusations against the federal government. A dialogue is set up with civil rights discourses that are summoned here in order to de-legitimise gender equality as a civil rights issue and re-frame it as a narrow niche-interest of elitist and selfish middle-class women. Moreover, by appropriating the language of rights, Schlafly leaves feminism solely linked to the notion of social transformation, especially role change. Other, less prominent, dialogic elements appear with secular liberalism but also the post-Vietnam re-articulation of American exceptionalism and Cold-War discourses about American identity.

In terms of discourse type, the text primarily follows the mould of a polemic set up as a series of extended argumentative essays. Although the argument ranges quite widely, there are few interdiscursive excursions. The most noticeable is the attempt to include features of academic discourse in the otherwise fact-free argumentation. Thus, in the first chapter, we get references to several “experts”, scholars and popular authors, all identified with the conservative cause. The voices of authorities are there to cement the reliability and truth

value of the claims, reinforced by the extensive use of notes (mostly references to non-academic material).

Yet academic discourse is not used consistently. First, the array of lexical and grammatical choices employed is too emotionally invested to fit the discursive repertoire of the academia. The explicit presence of the author and her opinions also ruptures the discursive unity of the corpus. Characteristics of academic discourse are mixed with the expressive and interpersonal repertoires of media discourse, especially the registers employed in tabloid press and popular magazines.⁹¹ This is demonstrated by the use of “witness testimony” by individualised women with different backgrounds (identified by name, marital or social status, sometimes age and number of children). The features create a kind of a synthetic sisterhood, to use the term suggested by Mary Talbot (1995: 146–147), between the women who do not identify themselves as feminists and to constitute a sense of intimacy between the imagined community that is set up in the PPW. This discourse is also expressed in the preference for exaggerated and emotional vocabulary as well as the use of devices such as alliteration and punning, frequent in the popular press, and what might be termed as elements of ritual diatribe. In these cases, the rhetorical and ideological concerns override the discursive frames of the chosen mode of expression, that is, academic discourse. The employment of more popular idiom and discourse is necessitated by the aims of the text – to gain as wide a readership as possible.

Inconsistency in the use of the scholarly discourse is the most evident in the Chapter 1 of the PPW where arguments that point to gaps in feminist thought are interspersed with emotionally loaded pseudo-factual claims (e.g., “the ‘liberated’ Roman matron, who is most similar to the present-day feminist, helped bring about the fall of Rome through her unnatural emulation of masculine qualities” (p. 21)) and *ad hominem* arguments, for example against Dr. Spock whose adoption of gender-neutral language in his books is lambasted by relying on accusations about his having left his wife (e.g., “Dr. Spock bought the whole bag of ‘liberation’. He walked out on his faithful wife Jane, to whom he had been married for forty-eight years, and took up with a younger woman” (p. 31)). This discredits Spock, a doctor and a child-care specialist, in the eyes of homemakers, as a potential expert whose example in becoming more gender-neutral in his books could have shifted the opinions of his readership. A similar strategy is used in the case of a pro-ERA speaker who is described as “the fourth wife of three-times-divorced former Supreme Court Justice” (p. 85). The same type of labelling is used for the pro-ERA First Lady Betty Ford who gets accused for supporting abortion, fornication and even drug use (p. 172).

In Chapter 3 of the PPW, especially, the discursive focus shifts from experts who argue for essentialism to more legally oriented claims. Here the references are, largely, to selectively chosen state laws and the tone is, accordingly, muted

⁹¹ Features characteristic to the language of magazines have been studied, for example, in McCracken (1993).

towards more dispassionate wording that almost silences the interdiscursive features of popular magazines of the previous chapters of the book. On this particular occasion, desired meanings are created with the help of a selective interpretation of laws rather than overt verbal labelling. Hence, the discussion of the ERA focuses at length on the ways in which the regulations it might usher in would benefit men, rather than women, especially in the abolition of the requirement of a husband to support his wife and the subsequent need for women to enter the labour force. The latter fact is linked to the broader question of national economy as the increase in women workers would, in Schlafly's argument, increase unemployment rates. Above all, though, the section is constructed on the female fear of male infidelity and moral laxity, proving that the implied reader of the text is a social conservative woman who believes not only in the inherent differences of men and women but also in the Victorian notion of the moral superiority of women. The section blends legal arguments with emotionally loaded examples which, however, are not presented in as emotional tones as in Chapter 1 of the book. Rather, fear is instilled in the reader through the choice of information and subtle lexico-grammatical means rather than bombastic rhetoric. Thus, the intertextual context suggests the adaptation of linguistic resources to fit the particular purposes of different sections of the book, although the ultimate aim of the text is not altered.

3.3.3. Mental models and frames

The bi-focal interpretation detailed above is also extended to the mental models and frames created by the PPW corpus. All interpretation of meanings involves a socio-cognitive aspect, that is, the need to resort to our existing knowledge and beliefs on a cognitive level. In other words, our interpretation of discourse requires the application of the mental representations of the world that we have stored in our memories and can draw on to make sense of our experience. As explained in Chapter 2 of the thesis, mental models are individual but, in order for us to be socially competent adults in our social environments, our individual mental models are aligned with those of the dominant interpretations circulating in our societies. Although we may make individual adjustments in the dominant models, we cannot completely escape them, especially since our personal mental models are being continually adjusted to the messages from the surrounding reality that we process on a daily basis. Mental models exist in the brains of individual interpreters of social reality. However, traces of the mental models drawn on in constructing texts and the preferred reading positions suggested for the reader can be identified within the texts. The present analysis accesses underlying mental models through the frames created by the author with the help of linguistic resources introduced in the previous phase of analysis.

Since in the case of corpora analysed in the present thesis, we are dealing with an attempt to use language strategically with the aim of resituating the

audience vis-à-vis the social, the discussion of frame in the thesis will not be purely cognitive but will use the notion of frame in the sense suggested by Entman (1993), as a consciously chosen and selective mode of representing events or objects that seeks to promote a certain causal interpretation and moral evaluation. Lakoff (2002, 2004) has demonstrated that consciously developed frames play an especially central role in conservative discourse in general and values discourse in particular. Hence the discussion in this section will not be limited to the mere mapping of the possible mental models but will also be extended to the discussion of the features that are screened out and the potential social relevance of the choices. Ideologies, conceptualised as common sense, are at work in all interpretation processes unconsciously but strategic frame use makes it possible to suggest that the work performed by the text is also ideological in the narrowly defined sense of promoting a particular worldview. Only frames salient to the analysis of gender and American (social) conservatism will be analysed closely.

The main frames used in the PPW corpus are constructed around division and discord. The primary one defines feminism as an extremist minority interest dangerous to the American way of life and system of government. Extremism is emphasised in the presuppositions that are scattered all through the corpus as well as the adjectival modification of the various noun phrases used to represent feminism and its goals. The danger to the American way of life is derived from the feminist de- and re-construction of the gender order that is suggested to lead to the reconfiguration of all other social relations. The supposed threat to the American political system is signalled by labelling feminism as a dogma and associating it with mind-control as well as collectivist tendencies. At the level of argumentation, Schlafly frequently uses the “straw-man” arguments where she first constructs her opponents by exaggerating some aspect of their ideas and then proceeds to attack the devised position. This strategy enables her to create implicit links between feminism and many ridiculous propositions (e.g., feminism is against breastfeeding) within the larger frame of feminism as an extremist project. This strategy is evident in the choice of examples to illustrate her claims. Thus, for example, in arguing against the social constructionist position, she only remains at the level of physical strength where men and women are clearly differently positioned and that could be accepted as common sense; the idea is then extended to examples not derived from feminist rhetoric but her own interpretation of it (such as men and women would be required to compete against each other in athletics or play in the same football teams).⁹²

A sub-frame of the general frame of feminist extremism is created by equating feminism and women’s liberationism, defined as a war against men. This is in a dialogic relationship with feminist discourse, subverting the

⁹² This seemingly unexpected focus could have derived from the much celebrated 1973 tennis match between Bobby Riggs and Billie Jean King, titled the “Battle of the Sexes” in the media of the time, that King won.

strategic self-appellation of the NOW, the central organisation of liberal feminism, as the National Organization for Women and its explicit inclusion of men as welcomed movement members. The uncritical antagonism to men attributed to all feminism is bound to prove untenable for the majority of Americans but also the majority of feminists. The conflation of all feminisms and their identification through the most militant group has a clear strategic aim: to alienate any potential sympathisers from the cause. The claim of an anti-male stance is made even stronger by the use of words with positive affective connotations (father, husband) and by exaggerated examples of the supposed wrongs of patriarchy (e.g., “this functional role [breastfeeding] was not imposed by conspiratorial males seeking to burden women” (p. 11)). This frame of a purportedly unconditional feminist war against men co-exists with arguments that ridicule feminist deconstruction of the patriarchal dividend and its inclusion of men among people suffering from the ills of patriarchy (p. 18), dismissed in the anti-man framing as an attempt to emasculate the American male.

This frame is also reinforced by a normative view of masculinity, embodied in the figure of a securely employed married father, portrayed as representative of the majority of Americans, and whose position is supposedly threatened by the ERA (e.g., “ERA will be tremendously hurtful to the overwhelming majority of men who are decent, law-abiding, moral and family oriented”). In opposition, the PPW also paints a picture of the pro-ERA man: “It is true that it [ERA] will provide some liberation for the offbeat and deadbeat male – that is, to the homosexual who wants the same rights as husbands, to the husband who wants to escape supporting his wife and children, and to the coward who wants to get out of military service by giving his place to a woman” (p. 120). Thus, the PPW is also addressing the meta-frame of a hegemonic masculinity (Connell 2005: 212–216), one that is in accordance with the hypermasculine ideal of populist social conservatism, as demonstrated in the Introduction to the thesis. Moreover, this frame decreases the chances of men identifying themselves with the ridiculed figures depicted in the PPW and thus de-legitimises male support to the ERA.

Another frame included from the very beginning of the book equates feminism with lesbianism, which is, indeed, defined as a goal of feminism (e.g., “lesbianism is logically the highest form of the ritual of women’s liberation”). Lesbianism was a divisive matter among different feminist groups (see e.g., De Hart 2004: 609) and its extension to all feminism not only distorts the facts but also serves to mark the whole movement as deviant. The suggestion of alternative sexuality was especially incendiary for religious groups who saw it as a sin and a symbol of the damage wrought on the American moral fibre by the permissive 1960s counterculture. The association with lesbianism is the more potent that the positive woman, as an embodiment of “natural” reproductive sexuality is linked to the figure of the “Divine Architect” (p. 11). God as the ultimate arbiter is also invoked on other occasions to stress the

naturalness of the anti-feminist and the unnaturalness of the feminist position (e.g., p. 87).

Lesbianism is not the only frame constructed out of a critique of sexual permissiveness in the PPW corpus. The frame of conservative sexuality, somewhat surprisingly, denounces the sexual revolution through the problematisation of heterosexual male desire. Potentially derived from the Puritan roots of America, it deplores the whole sexual revolution for releasing male sexual appetites from the control of civilisation, embodied in the superior morality of women (e.g., “the new morality isn’t just a ‘fad’ – it is a cheat and a thief. It robs the woman of her virtue, her youth, her beauty, and her love – for nothing, just nothing” (p. 16)). In this, the PPW almost echoes Robin Morgan (1970: XXXI), a leading radical feminist of the period.⁹³ Arguments in Chapter 2 of the PPW are constructed on a distrust of men and their motives. There is also the suggestion that sexual permissiveness would invade American schools, an attempt to pin another change that had already taken place on the ERA (e.g., “prohibits schools and colleges from setting and maintaining standards of morality among their students” (p. 162), “even prohibits schools and colleges from refusing to admit prostitutes, homosexuals and lesbians” (p. 163)). The stance is strengthened by the insinuation that the pro-ERA campaign is partly financed by the pornography industry (p. 203). Thus, pornographic magazines are listed as supporters of the ERA, to prove the moral laxity of gender equality, a major stigma for the social conservative camp.⁹⁴ This frame also enables the PPW to accuse feminism of hypocrisy for not defending women from symbolic violence, that is, of being not only anti-man but also anti-woman.

The gender-related frames are constructed on an underlying naturalised mental model of the dichotomous gender order that is perceived to be natural and, therefore, also normative. The dichotomous order is derived from biological difference that is seen as the source of all male and female characteristics. Consequently, any attempts to de- or re-construct this order appear as disruptive but also irrational. This mental model is a powerful one as it is also inscribed in cultural traditions and practices of many people, especially social conservatives, their revision rendered impossible for the given target group by the irrefutable argument of divine will.

The frame that is even more powerful for social and religious conservatives is the one that defines the ERA as a vehicle for achieving constitutional guarantees to “abortion on demand” (e.g., “based on the dogma that a woman’s susceptibility to becoming pregnant is the most oppressive inequality that women can suffer, the women’s liberation movement is compulsively oriented toward abortion on demand, financed by the government and made socially

⁹³ The surprising harmony of radical feminist and conservative women’s positions was discussed at length in Chapter 1 of the thesis.

⁹⁴ It may be worth pointing out that there is a great difference of opinion among feminists on pornography and the need to legislate it.

acceptable any time, any place” (p. 206–207)). This link is made very clear, both by the use of vocabulary that not only contains the implicit claim that feminism sees the ability to bear children as a form of inequality and that abortion on demand is a feminist aim (or that it is compulsive) but also stresses the commitment of the Supreme Court and the federal government to effecting laws that deny the conservative view of the sanctity of life. That is, this frame sets up an opposition between social conservatives, defined as the “normal” majority of Americans, and a coalition of women’s liberationism and the American federal government structures.

A frequently repeated frame equates feminism with the desire to erase all gender difference. The PPW does not prove this as a feminist claim, but places it into the position of a naturalised common-sense assumption or presupposition. This is done with the help of bold assertions: “an effort to eliminate the differences by social engineering or legislative or constitutional tinkering cannot succeed, which is fortunate. /.../ they as wrong as efforts to make a left-handed child right-handed” (p. 22). This erasure of difference is implied to be a primary goal of the women’s liberation movement. The conflation of equality and uniformity strategically repeats the false dichotomy often used in discussions of gender equality, as shown in Chapter 1 of the present thesis. As can be seen from the discussion of the word choices above, the phrases that refer to the eradication of difference and institution of a unisex world crowd the text and this functions as one of the main rhetorical devices in the PPW.

Another strategy is to present the proposed legislation as being nonsensically literal (e.g. “the regulation is already starting to cause endless mischief by mandating a fifty-fifty coed ratio” (p. 160). This frame is reinforced by the repetition of the assertion that such legislation aims at radical gender role reversal. The word choice here is significant as it implies not just an attempt to change roles but cause of a fundamental reconfiguration of the existing gender order. The imputed coercion by agencies of state (laws and, by implication, institutions of law and order) makes the “irrationality” of this project especially glaring, especially in the American context that is prone to suspect federal government. This can be seen in lines where local self-government is listed right next to the family as the institutions threatened by the ERA: “ERA /.../ would be hurtful to women, to men, to children, to the family, to local self-government, and to society as a whole” (p. 85). Such statements support the frame that creates a coalition, if not a conspiracy, between feminists and the American federal government against social conservatism, defined here as the position of the majority of “normal” Americans.

Such strategic conflation of claims is a recurring device. For example, “the women’s liberation movement is based on the unproven theory that uniformity should replace diversity – or, in simpler language, the federalization of all remaining aspects of our life” (p. 26). The second claim clearly is not merely a paraphrase of the first, but, rather, makes a logical leap from the problematically worded definition of equality claims to their enforcement by federal government

that is described as total so as to foster existential fears in the potential readers about the shift of the United States towards authoritarianism. This is especially effective as it binds the idea of gender equality that could be treated as positive by economic liberals and neoconservatives with increased government interference in the lives of private individuals, a stance they cannot accept.

The PPW extensively dwells on women's participation in the military, especially the question of draft, as a core example of the feminist-governmental campaign against the "natural" gender order. Here the stress is on the potential drafting of mothers and young girls, two groups who, because of cultural tradition, seem especially inappropriate for military service. Interestingly, while many of Schlafly's arguments can still be seen in American conservative rhetoric, the position on women in the military is one in which there has been a radical turn-around among conservatives: their presence in combat no longer evokes comparable controversy among conservative circles (for a longer discussion see Pöldsaaar 2005: 234–246).

This leads to another central frame, that of the suspicion of the federal government, both as a source of unnecessary coercion and inefficiency (e.g., "it is hard to see why anyone would want to put more power into the hands of federal bureaucrats who cannot cope with the problems they already have" (p. 26)). Thus, it is claimed that the ERA campaign itself is untenable because of the involvement of federal money or the threat of Big Government (e.g., "the long arm of federal money reaches into their operations", "ERA proponents, armed with the immense power of the federal bureaucracy and federal courts" (p. 163)). Emphatic invocations of the common sense, defined as anti-statist, are an effective means for rallying support behind the STOP-ERA campaign. A similar strategy can be found in the association of the ERA with tax increases, a powerful device in any country, despite the shakiness of the general premise (p. 106). Another claim ties the anti-statist sentiment to the populist paranoia about an alliance between the federal power and the media establishment. By combining different agents purportedly dangerous to the social conservative way of life, the PPW doubles the effectiveness of the argument that summons the readers to action in support of a vaguely defined set of conservative aims.

Core American values are present in all of the frames presented, constituting a loose mental model of their own that centres on the irrefutable claim of American greatness, inscribed in the cultural tradition and individual values rather than in the officialdom or federal government. It is important to point out that the frame of "traditional" gender order that underpins the frame of erasure of difference is one that avoids suggestions of hierarchy and, in many ways, stresses the universality of moral standards that should apply to all Americans. These norms seem to be embedded in the Puritan sense of self-restraint and American individualism (e.g., "the public display of fear, sorrow, anger and irritation reveals a lack of self-discipline that should be avoided by the Positive Woman just as much as by the Positive Man" (pp. 18–19)). This is an important point, also demonstrated in the description section of the chapter, as the PPW

combines belief in fundamental physical differences of men and women with the rhetoric of individual choice derived from the American value system. This results in the representation of men and women as equally positioned agents of their life choices and enables the discourse encapsulated in the book to also embrace the women who choose roles other than that of the homemaker.

What is achieved by the set of frames produced in the text is a sense of threat from the ERA to a powerful combination of mental models associated with the binary gender order and the American value system. This is evident even in seemingly trivial cases expanded upon in the corpus, for example in the representation of the campaign to neutralise textbooks (here referred to as “neuterizing”). This is a potent choice on two counts. First, it suggests intervention in matters that have usually been defined by states, schools and parents, not federal decree, that is, it fits the anti-statist frame. Such policies are identified as censorship to stress their incompatibility with the American value system. Second, the representation of the “traditional” nuclear family in textbooks is bound to be a weighty matter for social conservatives, especially in the context of an already ongoing and irreversible shift in gender roles, especially in the increased labour force participation of married mothers. As such, the argument taps into the frame of feminism as a project of radical gender role reversal. This would sound a special alarm in women who had chosen to be homemakers and who saw this as an attempt to de-legitimise the life choices that for them were divinely ordained and therefore sacred. The combination of the two threats makes the chosen discursive strategy the more effective, which explains the seemingly inordinate space dedicated to the issue.

The frames employed, which centre on the destabilisation of the gender order and the American value system, evoke anxiety and insecurity in the interpreters, thus creating a larger mental model of existential threat on an individual as well as societal level that demands immediate action from the audience. The sense of danger was made the more effective by the particular context of situation that had revealed the vulnerabilities in the USA that had to come to terms with the need to correct its previously proud self-image. The combined ramifications of the Vietnam war that humbled the USA’s military might, the oil crisis that revealed the USA’s economic vulnerability, the Watergate scandal that showed rifts in the USA’s political structure and the after-effects of the socio-cultural shift initiated by the tumultuous 1960s created an atmosphere where any suggestion of additional change was likely to be met with strong suspicion, especially if it heralded further erosion of the status quo and the already weak American ethos.

This context explains the disproportionate attention given to topics that have symbolic value but that cannot be presented as being central feminist political goals, especially as they have created considerable division among feminists as

well (e.g., the language reform)⁹⁵, textbook reform or inclusion of moral instruction in schools. This also helps to explain why Schlafly dedicates the majority of Chapter 4 of her book to lauding the role of women in saving civilisation, employing an urgent emotional tone and metaphors derived from domestic crafts and associated with traditional femininity (e. g., “the Positive Woman accepts her responsibility to spin the fabric of civilization, to mend its tears, and to reinforce its seams” (p. 177)). The contextually reinforced existential threat could be identified as the point of the text corpus, the underlying formulation of the interpretation that is stored in the memories of the participants and summons them to action.

3.4. Explanation of the PPW as social practice

The rationale for the phase of explanation in Fairclough’s analysis is to connect the discursive practice to the social universe in which it exists and with which it is in a dialectical relationship. In his own words, the stage of explanation “is to portray a discourse as part of a social process, a social practice, showing how it is determined by social structures, and what reproductive effects discourses can cumulatively have on those structures” (Fairclough 1989: 163). The stage of explanation is especially relevant in the case of texts like the ones that constitute the present corpus as they are intended to influence the social discursively as well as in terms of political actions. The explanations suggested in the present analysis have the benefit of hindsight that enables the thesis to comment on the durability of the discourses created by the PPW.

The discourse espoused by the PPW had real-life effects in multiple ways. The thesis cannot prove conclusively that it was Schlafly’s texts that called the anti-feminist movement into being as a political entity distinct from the overall conservative movement and yet as a part of it. However, the material presented in the PPW was important in disseminating the ideas outside the immediate activist circle and thus projecting the social conservative women’s voice, thereby offering essential linguistic and other elements of identity creation for women as well as men who shared the worldview offered. As such the discourse is both representative in conveying the concerns of anti-feminist groups and constitutive in helping people with anti-feminist ideas to identify themselves as politically situated individuals and come together in a coherent movement.

As was noted above in the description phase of analysis, Schlafly’s position is non-partisan in avoiding direct association with a political party and thus the PPW acts as a discursive bridge between individuals who might belong to different political parties but united by their social conservative views. As such, the book is one of the harbingers of a conservative consensus that replaced the

⁹⁵ The problems of feminist language reform have been discussed, for example by Cameron (1995) or Ehrlich and King (1998).

liberal one of the 1960s and led to the emergence of segments of population like the so-called “Reagan Democrats”, the traditional Democratic voters who crossed over to Republicans under Reagan, who was seen as a better champion of the values of “Middle America”, focussing on national security but also social conservative goals such as the protection of morality (e.g., in campaigns against abortion or pornography). The discursive tactics used in the PPW focus on a specific political goal and ideology rather than a clearly defined political organisation and, as such, summons a wider range of supporters than the texts produced by party machinery.

As the analysis above demonstrates, Schlafly created this new conservative consensus in her book by re-framing both conservatism and feminism. As was shown in the Introduction of the present thesis, conservatism was identified with backwardness or extremism in the 1960s, especially after the rabid anti-communist campaigns of McCarthy and Goldwater. This is the frame that Schlafly tackles at length in the present corpus, where the label of radical is persistently attached to the feminist movement: as the description phase of the thesis showed, this was the area of most extensive overlexicalisation, a sign of intense political struggle. Feminism appears as radical but also unnatural and the same designation is transferred to other liberal causes related or relatable to feminism, which translates into their being defined as the new radicalism. This cognitive frame shift on a societal level is also supported by the social circumstances of the time that saw the adoption of more violent and subversive tactics by the civil rights and other protest movements in the 1970s, feeding the alienation of the middle classes from social and cultural liberalism that they had supported earlier. Another factor that led to the increased suspicion of liberalism, especially social liberalism, was the shift in the socio-economic circumstances of the US that, in the context of an economic slump and oil crisis, did not feel as comfortable with federal spending as it had in the more affluent post-WWII decades.

The strategy of creating a new American consensus around conservative ideas can also be seen in the redefinition of the role of federal government. Not only is feminism stigmatised as radical and disruptive but, as a result of a clearly articulated link between the feminist movement and the federal government, also to the executive power under presidents Nixon, Ford and especially Carter. Thus the PPW shows that if the government supports the radicalism of feminism, it must be radical itself or, alternatively, impotent, if it welcomes such influences. As represented by the PPW, the federal government acts against the needs of the majority of the population and, thereby, against the needs of the USA. By claiming that the American government ignores the American needs and American values, the PPW calls Americans who identify themselves as patriots to take action not only against the ERA but also against other government policies. The spectre of additional government control was especially menacing in a context where the incompetence of the government could be seen in matters of defence (Vietnam), economy (oil crisis), social

affairs (public riots) and even in questions of ethics and morals (Watergate). This stance is constructed on the American anti-statist tradition and the pervasive patriotism of the country that are, to an extent, contradictory, a fact that is, however, overshadowed by the sense of imminent threat pervasive in the corpus. By defining social liberalism as a coercive and radical creed that is, ultimately, unpatriotic, the PPW leaves (social) conservatism as the only option for the responsible American citizen.

Schlafly's book captures the shifting *Zeitgeist* and itself becomes one of the agents that engineers this shift in which conservatism becomes the natural stance for an American. This claim is also supported by the fact that the word "conservative" does not appear in the corpus. This suggests that conservatism is the naturalised background notion that pervades the fabric of the discursive and ideological universe of the text, invisible because of its ubiquity, the only "normal" choice the reader can make if he or she wants to belong to the American community. In this, the book is not only constitutive of a certain image of the United States and American values but also of a normative subject position of a responsible American citizen who, in order to maintain the greatness of the nation, is invited to reject liberal social policies (of which gender equality is but one) and embrace a clearly defined set of norms that span from ideas about family to national security. The set is social conservative in its inclination but, as presented in the PPW, framed in the language of individualism and choice, derived from the American value system, opposed to the supposed dogma and restrictions of social liberalism. In this re-configuration, normative traditionalism is presented as espousing choice, while permissiveness and tolerance of social and cultural liberalism are depicted as limiting it, especially by encouraging the intervention of federal government in the private lives of citizens. In the socially insecure times, the re-centralisation of the "old" American values as a means of returning to the past glory of the nation was appealing to social groups outside the immediate activist circle who also accepted Schlafly's interpellative discourses. This demonstrates that although Schlafly herself was primarily interested in reversing certain government policies on gender and morality, her stance builds on and simultaneously helps to create a wider conservative ideological stance that links a wide array of concerns.

Nevertheless, PPW as a social practice has the greatest implications in questions of gender. The designated audience of the text extends beyond the immediate conservative circle and thus the appeals extend themselves beyond the narrowly defined agenda of social conservatives. The notions of gender, outlined in the PPW's image of the positive woman, are couched in the language of American values, especially that of individualism and choice. Here, too, the ERA and other similar feminist initiatives are presented as restrictions on freedom and vehicles of inequality for men and women, as well as a threat to the meritocratic basis of American society. This can be seen in the care taken to avoid the stigmatisation of women with successful careers in fields traditionally

not perceived to be feminine or women who choose to not have families. The crux of the argument here is not the espousal of a particular family model but the defence of American meritocratic individualism that feminism and federal government supposedly seek to erase. This, together with the demonisation of feminist goals, seeks to win support in circles beyond traditional homemakers.

It is the homemakers, though, who are the primary addressees of the PPW. In their case, existential anxiety in the changing social universe was the greatest and the book offers them subject positions that provide the women with agency and importance in the universe of political discourse as well as a central role in the wellbeing of the nation. Again, the present analysis cannot conclusively prove the primacy of the textual material analysed here in the identity creation but the interpretations provided in this thesis accord with the subject positions expressed by the women interviewed in Klatsch (1987) and Mathews and De Hart (1990). The interpellative acts offered by Schlafly were thus recognisable to the women and harmonised with their own desired image of themselves, thus helping to sustain it, even if they did not give rise to it in the first place. Therefore it can be claimed that PPW potentially plays an important role in creating and sustaining the group identity of social conservative women as political agents and politically aware subjects.

The frames detailed above have persisted in contemporary political usage, as do the forms of discursive practice suggested, especially as the conservative consensus that Schlafly helped to bring about has now reached political ascendancy. The previously unstable and uneasy conservative consensus was solidified around the combination of social conservative agendas and support for American patriotism. The twin emotional engines of conservatism have led to a situation where many Americans support political forces that act against their economic interests (see Frank 2000 for an impassioned discussion, also Frank 2006 for a further development of the argument). It is impossible to tell on the basis of textual evidence whether interest groups in business use social conservative rhetoric strategically to achieve their goals but there is ample evidence to suggest that the conservative consensus created with the help of the emotional urgency of social conservatism has greatly benefited business interests at the expense of those of the employees.

It is not argued that Schlafly's text represents the core of this change but only that her work is one of the nodes that led to the prominence of social conservatism as a coalition building mechanism inside American conservatism. Schlafly's own commitment to the political agenda or her sincerity are not an issue here. What is relevant is the way in which her campaign to gather support for an aspect of social conservative agenda is linguistic and discursive as well as how the strategies she used have gained currency outside her Eagle Forum network. This in many ways proves the Foucauldian reading of power as dispersed in social practices outside the loci of institutional power.

However, there is one aspect of the Foucauldian analytic that the present analysis wants to question. Foucault claimed that where there is power, there is

resistance, arguing for the power of subversion. The present corpus has reasons to doubt the possibility of feminists to refuse the frames offered by Schlafly. Even if they had been thinking about their strategies on a discursive plane, it would have been strategically impossible to not engage in the debate with the other side as that would only have strengthened the anti-feminist arguments. Inserting themselves into the anti-feminist universe of discourse that had been pre-created on the state level, feminists inadvertently accepted their interpellation in a conservative frame. The feminist definitions had never been an easy match with the American universe of political discourse and the social conservative reading offered a possibility of ousting them from the American mainstream at the level of substance while retaining its surface signifiers to mark the egalitarian and meritocratic self-image of the country without a threat to the substantial inequalities of the system. As such, while many of Schlafly's concerns have largely disappeared from American public discourse (e.g., on language reform and women's involvement in the workforce the results have been the opposite to what she imagined in her 1977 book), the discursive universe itself persists in demonising feminist equality projects.

CHAPTER 4

Critical Discourse Analysis of the anti-feminist discourse on the ERA: ERA-related texts from the *Phyllis Schlafly Report* (1980–1983)

4.1. Description of the corpus

The corpus of texts is derived from the *Phyllis Schlafly Report* (PSR), the newsletter published by Phyllis Schlafly and distributed within the Eagle Forum and among other pro-family groups. The PSR was and is published on a monthly basis and mailed to the subscribers who are also invited to become volunteer distributors of the newsletter. It is thus spread within a network of social conservative activists rather than by using commercial channels of distribution. The marginality of the publication in the American public discourse is marked by the fact that it was not collected by major US libraries in the initial years of publication and earlier issues are available only in the private archives of the Eagle Forum (current issues are also available electronically). Therefore, the PSR stands in contrast to the PPW, which was published by a mainstream publisher and, accordingly, had a readership that extended beyond the social conservative movement circles. For these reasons, the PSR provides a different universe of discourse and therefore an appropriate comparison to the previously analysed corpus.

The period chosen for analysis covers the last phase of the ERA ratification struggle and overlaps with the first years of the first term in office of Ronald Reagan, the president who is often identified as the symbol of the conservative revolution in the USA. Thus the period is significant on two counts: it shows the methods used to maintain activist engagement in the final phase of the anti-ERA campaign and the extent to which the discursive strategies used reflect the shift in conservative discourse as the once marginalised ideology was becoming the new central paradigm. Therefore, the PSR is different from the first corpus in its target audience, temporal perspective and discursive universe, acting as a source for the identification of underlying frames and mental models shared within the social conservative universe of discourse.

The corpus was collected by perusing the print copies of all of the issues of the PSR stored at the New York Public Library. Each newsletter has two unbound sections of four pages. The head features the portrait of Phyllis Schlafly in a round medallion in the upper left-hand corner and the image of the bald eagle, the US national emblem and the logo of the Eagle Forum, in the upper right-hand corner, with the title of the newsletter positioned in between. The portrait of Schlafly is changed four times in the three years studied; the eagle emblem remains unaltered. This visual representation provides twin frames that

emphasise two core elements of the corpus. On the one hand, as was also stated in the case of the PPW, Phyllis Schlafly is the figurehead of the movement she set up but also an example of the combination of traditional femininity and activism to be followed by other women she encourages to join her campaigns. The eagle, the symbolic representation of the USA, marks the newsletter's self-positioning as a patriotic publication. The themes of gender and patriotism dominate in all texts of the newsletter.

Most issues of the newsletter are dedicated to the one particular topic, containing either one long or two to three shorter pieces. Many of the published texts are not articles commissioned for the PSR but reprints of congressional testimony, speeches or documents that the target audience would not be able to access easily otherwise. Other texts could be identified as articles; they do not bear the name of the authors and represent an anonymous editorial position. Thus, the corpus has considerable genre variation that leads to discursive discontinuities and the proliferation of heteroglossic elements. The newsletter does not use colour and the majority of issues have no visuals but for the head. However, occasionally texts are accompanied by caricatures or photographic material. Since these instances are marked by their rarity, they will be analysed separately below.

The corpus includes all texts on the ERA or related issues published in 1980–1983. Such texts appear in 18 issues of the 36 published in the chosen period, testifying to the centrality of the topic for the Eagle Forum and Schlafly. The total number of texts in the corpus is 25: 10 articles, 10 testimonies to various congressional committees, 2 speeches, 1 court decision, 1 report and a reprint of a programme of the NOW (full list of the texts that comprise the corpus have been provided in Appendix 1). The NOW programme will be excluded from the close linguistic analysis as it does not constitute an example of conservative discourse and its publication will only be discussed as a tactical choice. Similarly, the reprinted court decision will remain outside close analysis in the description and interpretation phase as it is an example of legal discourse rather than the conservative or the liberal ones and its linguistic repertoire cannot be directly compared to other material studied.

The standard length of an article is four A4 pages; testimonies run from one to two pages and the two speeches in the corpus cover half a page each. The single report in the corpus spans two pages. Because of differences in authorship and genre, the analysis will treat two sub-corpora separately: that of articles, and that of testimonies and speeches. The report, as a somewhat anomalous genre in the present case, will be grouped with expert testimonies because of the similarity in function: both text types are modified transcripts of written texts delivered orally in Congress. A separate section will be dedicated to the analysis of multimodal texts: caricatures (a total of seven in the corpus, of which six illustrate a long article analysing Section 2 of the ERA) and photos (one three-page photo essay on the women's liberationist movement to mark the tenth birthday of the ERA). Because of the variation in corpora, the organisation

of the following sections will differ from that of the previous chapter in its greater number of subdivisions; otherwise the analysis follows the same pattern, covering linguistic description, discursive interpretation and social explanation. In this corpus, too, the discussion inside the description of lexical and grammatical choices is organised thematically, with linguistic examples immediately followed by a discussion of their implications in order to increase the lucidity of analysis and decrease the need to include numerous back-references. Linguistic examples are presented inside their context within the sentence or clause to support the interpretations offered by the author of the thesis. The particular lexico-grammatical features discussed have been underlined where necessary.

4.2. Description of textual practice in the PSR

4.2.1. Articles

4.2.1.1 Vocabulary

The PSR corpus includes a number of clusters of ideologically contested vocabulary. The range of references to feminism exhibits two trends. On the one hand, feminists and people sympathetic to feminist causes are the primary targets of “Othering” in the corpus. Feminists are identified as “feminists”, “women’s liberationists”, “ERA-feminists”, “alternate lifestyle advocates” but also as “abortionists”. On one occasion, it is also revealed that the authors make a distinction between the women’s liberation and feminist movement, supporting the claim made in Chapter 3 of the thesis that the conflation of the two in the PPW was a conscious strategy (e.g., “one of the major objectives of the pro-ERA, women’s liberation, feminist movement” (PSR14)). Although the three stances are conflated to an extent later in the same text to suggest their unity (“ERA-feminist-women’s-lib ideology”), this is done preserving all three labels and a potential divergence of opinions that this suggests.

There are group labels that do not appear in the PPW corpus and that reflect the concerns of social conservative women avoided in the text targeted to a general readership. For example, the use of phrases like “anti-family and anti-life pressure groups” invests the feminist movements not only with negativism (stressed through the use of the prefix “anti-“) but, more importantly, constructs them as being against notions sacred in the mental universe of social conservatives and, in this wording, also in that of human beings in general. The preference of the labels over the alternatives “same-sex marriage” and “pro-choice” used by the feminist and gay liberation movements or even relatively

neutral options like “pro-gay-marriage” or “pro-abortion” is marked and serves the function of demonising the feminist goals as inhumane⁹⁶.

On the other hand, the analysis of the corpus also reveals the disappearance of massive overlexicalisation of feminism/women’s liberationism that was evident in the PPW corpus. The range of targets has become more dispersed and now increasingly includes the Supreme Court and the political establishment, although the use of colourful labels is still mostly reserved for feminism. Feminists tend to be marked as a group, even if not directly identified with feminism/women’s liberationism (e.g., “radicals who promote ERA”, “cadre of ERA supporters”), modified with adjectives with strong negative connotations (e.g., “militant groups”, “the breed of strident militants”, “militant ERAers”) and associated with aggressive actions (e.g., “heckling and picketing by the National Organization for Women” (PSR8), “their violent and disruptive tactics designed to ride roughshod over the constitutional amendment process” (PSR21)). This forcefulness is extended to feminist policy-making (e.g., “the feminists want to move all women into the labor force for their entire lives” (PSR11), “one of the major objectives of the pro-ERA, women’s liberation, feminist movement was to force the drafting of women” (PSR14)). The corpus also suggests that feminism is a minority concern (e.g., “a handful of sour-grapes feminists” (PSR8), “a little group of highly educated working women” (PSR11), “a few strident feminists” (PSR14)). The descriptions contain many in-built opinions, exemplified by the identification of NOW as “the militant feminist organization” and its definition as “radical pro-abortion, pro-lesbian, pro-ERA National Organization for Women” (PSR4), creating an instantaneous association between the organisation and three issues that are antithetical to the worldview of social conservatives.

Unexpectedly, feminists are also accused of the hypocritical adoption of girly or flirty behaviour when campaigning in the states (e.g., “the pro-ERAers often ridiculed the argument, evaded the issue, giggled in a feminine way to avoid answering questions, or accused the anti-ERAers of ‘raising an emotional issue’” or “the public would be sweet-talked into believing that this was *only* [emphasis in the original] registration” (PRS14)). In this case, the text stigmatises its opponents by associating them with behaviour that was actually characteristic of social conservative women in public debates (Rhode 1989: 72–75). In addition, the example suggests a comparison of the federal and state authorities, tacitly suggesting that the federal government is more gullible than the local ones (e.g., “in hearings before State Legislatures, however, the ERAers could not get by with such tactics” (PRS14)).

While there was no social conservative women’s movement alternative to feminism in the first corpus, it is explicitly present in the PSR. Predominantly, social conservatives are defined not as “anti-feminist women” but as “pro-

⁹⁶ The politics of such evocative words in political discourse is discussed, for example, in Lakoff (1990: 261–262) or throughout Lakoff (2002).

family Americans”, that is, associated with a positive agenda, not negative critique of their opponents. This phrase extends the circle of people potentially referred to and associates it with notions with a strong positive connotation and universal appeal (“family” and “America”). The word “family” is extensively used in the corpus, logically for the newsletter of a self-designated pro-family organisation. Its connotational power and elevated position on the social conservative value scale, especially when represented as being under attack, as it is in the set of texts under consideration, serve to mobilise groups of people who have previously remained outside the political process.

The explicit presence of social conservative movements in the corpus aids movement building, that is, it is both descriptive and constitutive. Showing the strength and effectiveness of the groups, it also, through this very representation, maintains the enthusiasm of the members (e.g., “Ronald Reagan won both the nomination and the election because he rode the rising tides of the Pro-Family Movement and the Conservative Movement” (PSR8)). The sequence does not appear accidental in the context. The text stresses the importance of the movement organised by Schlafly in the American political arena (e.g., “STOP-ERA put together something entirely new in American politics – a coalition of Catholics, Protestants, Mormons, and Orthodox Jews working together to defeat the Equal Rights Amendment” (PSR8)). The particular article from which the examples are derived is clear in emphasising the non-partisan nature of the support that legitimises it as the representative of the majority opinion (e.g., “STOP-ERA won the support of Legislators of all denominations, Republicans and Democrats, conservatives and liberals, union and business, male and female, old and young, married and single, black and white” (PSR8)).

The pro-family movement is shown as agentic and effective (“has been beating ERA”, “scored smashing successes”, “won a spectacular victory”, “was a tremendous factor in Reagan’s campaign”, “worked effectively to bring out the pro-family vote” (PSR8), “swung into action fast” (PSR14), “resolved to lead the battle to protect young women from the draft” (PSR14)). This is specifically emphasised in the case of the defence of wives and mothers, the two female roles the readers are most likely to identify with (e.g., “Eagle Forum defends wives and mothers” (PSR11), “Eagle Forum defends women from draft” (PSR14)). The word choices rely on an implicit war metaphor (e.g., revealed in words and phrases like “campaign”, “tremendous victory”, “defend” but also in the more violent emphasis of the words like “beating” or “smashing” or quotes like “Illinois was the front-line battleground of the ten-year debate over the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment” (PSR21) or “the anti-abortion forces /.../ collected an impressive list of scalps” (PSR8)). The actions are represented as having considerable influence on the legislative branch of government (e.g., “Eagle Forum had made the issue too dangerous” or “no Congressman dared to vote for drafting women except the Representative from Guam. (There is no Eagle Forum chapter in Guam.)” (PSR14)). The use of the *post hoc propter hoc* argument in the latter case underlines the power of the

organisation and helps to recruit new members. This type of display of social conservative power is absent in the PPW where social conservative women appear as symbolic representations of the social conservative agenda, at an individual level.

The references described act to flatter the readers' self-image and call them to further action (e.g., "readers of the PSR were well-informed about the plan and members of Eagle Forum were ready to take action. Eagle Forum members were articulate and effective in testifying in defense of the wife's and the widow's benefits" (PSR11) or "there was one thing, however, that the ERAers had not counted on: the political effectiveness of Eagle Forum whose leaders worked out their counter-strategy" (PSR14)). The corpus demonstrates that the in-group is constructed against the "Othered" out-group (e.g., "we were prepared for the Congressional battle because we always knew that the feminists would eventually try to force women into the army" (PSR14)). This position is expounded at length on several occasions:

Eagle Forum had the vision to identify the problem and define the issue, the political savvy to put together the Coalition, the grassroots membership to mobilize the American people, the articulate leaders to present the arguments on the platform and in the media, the legal expertise to fight the battle in the courts, and the willingness to contribute and raise the necessary funding in order to complete the task. If there had been no Eagle Forum, 19- and 20-year-old girls would be subject today to the draft registration law, and girls of any draft age tomorrow would be subject to induction. (PSR14)

Such quotations present a detailed picture of social conservative power and its effectiveness before reaching the conclusion that it was only this coalition that prevented some calamitous event from happening. Occasionally the discursive group-building strategy also includes direct address to the readers, for example when presented through a quote by an anonymous admirer (e.g., "while a number of us played our parts, you⁹⁷ and the magnificent ladies of the Eagle Forum made the difference" (PSR14)). This tendency stands in stark contrast with the practice in PPW where the conservative women do not display a proclivity to organised action, in comparison with feminists who are represented as an aggressive group.

Yet, the two corpora agree on their basic opinion of women's liberation and feminism that are represented as "dogmas" or even "false dogmas", with their propagation being called "indoctrination", thus activating connotations of totalitarian control and brainwashing. Feminists are claimed to resort to the use of covert manipulative strategies (e.g., "concocted a new strategy", "secret strategy meetings", "devised a three-step scheme"). The actions proposed by feminists and their supporters are condemned as either misguided (e.g., "naïve notion", "oddball idea", "feminist nonsense", "one of the most ridiculous briefs

⁹⁷ The "you" here seems to refer to Phyllis Schlafly. Similar direct and indirect praise of Schlafly herself can be seen all through this corpus.

ever presented”), irrational (“irrational sex-neutral society”, “this nuttiness of women’s lib”, “phony argument”, “both claims are completely false”) or extreme (“radical notion”, “radical change”).

Many of such statements are worded in strong language and by resorting to scare tactics (e.g., “the notion that American women should be drafted to fight the Soviet army that is 99.5 percent male is simply repugnant to a civilized society” (PSR14) or “the legal consequences of ERA and the social and political goals of the ERAers are radical, irrational, and unacceptable to Americans” (PSR15). The latter quote demonstrates that supporters of the ERA are excluded from the group of “normal” Americans. This is made especially explicit in contrasting feminist views with those of unidentified other people, embodiments of the common sense (e.g., “many people refused to believe that the ERA-feminists were so strange that they could actually want [emphasis in the original] women to be drafted” (PSR14)). However, in an interesting example, the word “ideology” that has generally been used in the pejorative sense in both corpora acquires a neutral meaning and is used to designate the social conservative views as well (e.g., “the military issue has always been the cutting edge between the ERA-feminist-women’s-lib ideology and the pro-family ideology” (PSR14)). This one instance proves the awareness of the author of the text that social conservatives represent a particularised worldview, not the common sense. Such slips, however, are exceptional.

Feminists or feminist organisations appear as agents of aggressive actions (e.g., “they [feminists] want increased federal power in order to force the rest of us to accept their objectives”, “they want to deny society and the courts the right to use moral factors” (PSR4), “provide deliberate incentives to propel all women into the paid labor force as soon as possible” (PSR11), “trying to force on the Armed Services” (PSR14), “trying hard to wipe out the dependent wife who is in her nursery or kitchen and may not have the skills to defend herself” (PSR11)). The latter quote is especially evocative in its opposition of the aggressive feminist and the defenceless homemaker. Yet it is notable that the forceful actions described are modified by the verb “trying”, suggesting the aggressive intent but not necessarily desired outcome of such actions. The same effect is achieved by the repetition of the phrase “they want” (PSR4) or “they hoped” (PSR14) that also enable the author to stress the gap between feminist desires and the outcomes of their actions. Feminist are invested with considerable influence in Congress but also in the public sphere in general at the national level, possibly to increase their perceived threat (e.g., “all such clauses were defeated on roll-call votes by the ERAers who wanted to be treated just like men” (PSR14)). However, the field is not as overlexicalised as in the case of the PPW, suggesting a certain reduction of urgency of the campaign against feminists as a general target in the early 1980s and the redirection of energies to other issues. Also, the stigmatisation of feminists is already part of the social conservative common sense and does not require additional explication.

The ERA is also designated as the agent that will effect a series of undesirable outcomes. This is emphatically put in a paragraph that uses repetition to achieve a greater rhetorical effect:

ERA would transfer from the states to the federal government the full power to force us all into the unisex gender-free society. ERA is anti-family because it wipes out the rights of wives, mothers and widows to financial support from their husbands. ERA is anti-family because it denies the child the right to a fulltime mother in the home. ERA is anti-family because it would make women equally subject to the draft and to military combat duty, thereby ignoring the moral reasons, the family reasons, and the pregnancy reasons for our traditional difference of treatment between men and women in the military (PSR4)

Although the ERA was characterised in a similar way in the previous corpus, the present one singularly stresses the family connection that was less salient in the appeal to the general public. This motif is also repeated in less emotional terms (e.g., “the Equal Rights Amendment (federal or state), and other gender-blind or sex-neutral laws, would do absolutely nothing to alleviate the real economic inequality of the wife, since the problem does not result from laws treating men and women unequally but from laws that do not take account of their differences in economic behaviour” (PSR19)). This statement shows, as pointed out in Chapter 1 of the present thesis, that social conservative women share the position of radical difference feminists and implicitly argue that the legal system is male-centred in its gender-blindness.⁹⁸ However, this argument itself is not articulated directly in the present corpus and there are no references that could be construed as critical of men, unlike in the PPW, possibly because of the underlying assumption that the target readership has internalised hierarchical gender order and would reject any attempts to critique it.

What has remained unaltered is the suggestion of force and violence in the purported radical changes to be produced by the ERA (e.g., “ERA would compel the drafting of women” (PSR14)) as well as its malevolent intent behind it (e.g., “ERA was designed to bring about the drafting of women and their placement in combat jobs” (PSR14), “the leading lawyers of the ERA movement intend to use the ‘equality principle’ of ERA to bring about vast changes in our legal, political, social, and educational structures – and that they are working hard with our tax dollars to do it either [emphasis in the original] by constitutional mandate *or* by legislative changes *or* by judicial activism” (PSR15)). Powerful rhetorical effects are achieved by the use of repetition:

It [*Sex Bias in the U.S. Code*] proves that the “equality principle” of the Equal Rights Amendment will bring about more extremist results than anyone has yet imagined. *Sex Bias* proves that ERA is extremist in its anti-

⁹⁸ Suspicion of the legal and political language of rights among religious fundamentalists has also been pointed out by Mathews (1993: 144).

family objectives and extremist in its trivial nonsense. *Sex Bias* proves that ERA is extremist in its assault on our moral standards and extremist in its attack on the combat effectiveness of our armed forces. (PSR15)

The repetition of the word “extremist” helps to reinforce the idea of the radicalism of the ERA in the readers and the recurrent use of the word “proves” masks the fact that the text that the cited paragraph concludes did not contain proof but simply emotionally presented claims and allegations.

The negative connotations of feminist agenda are transferred to other cultural liberal proposals. Since the ERA would be entered into the US Constitution, the coercive intent is also extended to the document as a symbol of federal power (e.g., “the Constitution forbids our laws to make any difference of treatment between men and women” or “if the ERA were in the Constitution, the Court would have had to have held that women must be drafted” (PSR14)) as well as to the military (e.g., “not only would women, including mothers be subject to draft but the military would be compelled to place them in combat units alongside men” of “the military would then be required to assign drafted women to all tasks” (PSR14)). The ripple effect of feminist actions is extended from a threat to the traditional family also to danger to the national security of the US (e.g., “ERA-feminists were misusing the Armed Services as a vehicle to achieve their feminist and sex-neutral goals (thereby diverting them from their primary mission of defending America)” (PSR14)). The latter example is interesting in its avoidance of direct criticism of the military, in keeping with the patriotic meta-frame of the conservative discourse. As a result, the text discreetly avoids raising the question how the military that is so malleable can protect American interests abroad. One possible answer is provided by suggesting that American defence capacity has been reduced by an excessive influence of the civilian leadership, especially the Carter administration (e.g., “the Carter⁹⁹ Pentagon witnesses, including the military officers who believed that their careers depended on toadying to the Commander-in-Chief’s prejudices” (PSR14)). This example combines two tropes of conservative discourse, patriotism and distrust of federal government.

Initiatives inspired by goals similar to those of feminists, for example the White House Conference on Families, are represented as consciously deceptive (“charade”, “subterfuge”, “totally fraudulent subterfuge”, “chicanery”) and non-inclusive (“going through the motions of some grassroots participation”). Differently from the PPW, there are numerous instances of discourses that emanate from a paranoid frame of reference.¹⁰⁰ Feminists are accused of being both socialist and elitist (e.g., “social engineers and elitists who want to substitute the government for parents” (PSR4)). The underlying sense of conspiracy is occasionally made explicit, for example in the description of the

⁹⁹ The text was published during the first administration of Reagan.

¹⁰⁰ Paranoia was identified as a feature of conservative discourse by Hofstadter (1967) already.

purported secret scheme used for the selection of desired candidates for the White House Conference on Families (e.g., “have devised a special procedure”, “kept under control /.../ by workshop facilitators specially trained in group dynamics”, “until the government welfare advocates are sure they are in total control”, “lure the pro-family delegates down the primrose path” (PSR4)). It is worth pointing out that the lengthy description concerns an event that is yet to take place at the time of publication and it is unlikely that the social conservative observers were invited to monitor the secret planning. However, by referring to a wide-ranging plan that threatens the social conservative *raison d’être*, the PSR increases the sense of imminent threat that helps to rally people to public action.

Collusion is also suggested between the pro-ERA forces and the media, echoing the general conservative lament about the predominance of liberal views in the media (e.g., “despite enormous media pressure to force it [Republican National Convention] to endorse ERA” or “all those who endured the pro-ERA media pressure in Detroit in the summer of 1980 have been vindicated” (PSR14) or “the NOW women and their friends in the media have carefully cultivated the false impression that NOW is principally concerned with women’s rights and discrimination against women” (PSR20)). The media are consistently represented as being either misguided or against the values of Middle America, defined as being exclusively socially conservative (e.g., “the media never understood what was happening because it never occurred to them to look in the churches or synagogues or homes or private schools” (PSR8)). There is also an in-built opposition between the media and the conservative constituency represented by the PSR (e.g., “when the media orchestrated a national campaign designed to prove that Reagan was careless with the facts, this fell on deaf ears” (PSR8) or “when Carter and the media charged that Reagan is too conservative or a warmonger, the public was not impressed” (PSR8)).

The media conspiracy is countered by social conservative activists in general and the PSR in particular. Thus the exposés that the newsletter publishes extensively make use of the verb “to reveal” and similar constructions (e.g., “readers of the *Phyllis Schlafly Report* were well-informed about the plan” (PSR11) or “this report reveals how our nation would be dramatically changed if ERA ever became part of the U.S. Constitution” (PSR15)). Another paranoid theme emerges in connection with homosexuals who are implied to have covert influence as well as a carefully considered strategy for a take-over of the public sphere (e.g., “it would be ridiculous to believe that the smart and aggressive homosexuals would pass up the chance to finance a Supreme Court case under ERA” or, especially, “the homosexual community has been smart enough not to bring a case under the state ERAs because that would expose ERA too soon” (PSR16)). The threat of covert actions of the gay community whose lifestyle choices many conservatives consider sinful is likely to cause in the target readers special alarm about the American moral fibre.

Metaphors of danger are used to present legal or political actions inimical to social conservatives (e.g., “worst abuse of judicial power”, “an outrageous assault on our women, our culture, the combat-effectiveness of our armed services, and our constitutional separation of powers” (PSR9)). These choices maintain a sense of danger that is necessary to reaffirm the commitment of the movement members to the cause, especially since the objects that need protection are beyond the individual concerns of people, extending to the whole nation and its way of life. This leads to use of hyperbole and overstatement (e.g., the claim that drafting women is worse than abortion as one is not forced to have an abortion but is subject to compulsory draft, illustrated by images like the following: “unwilling 19- and 20-year-old girls (or perhaps girls age 18 to 26) will be forced into basic training, taught to kill, and sent into battle” (PSR9)). The texts also make use of business metaphors but only infrequently (e.g., “it recognizes the wife as a partner in the family enterprise” (PSR19)). The initially surprising dearth of business discourse that prevails in American life in general can be explained by the secondary role economic considerations play for social conservatives, especially social conservative women whose lives tend to focus on the private sphere of life that is governed by emotional rather than utilitarian considerations.

The vocabulary used to describe the actions of federal government is hostile and has strong connotations of control (e.g., “federal control of wages”, “federally controlled ‘development’ for pre-school children”, “federal intrusion”). Coercion is also suggested in the recurrent noun “demand” and the verb “force” that suggest imposition from above, rather than democratic consent. The controlling actions of the government may also take a softer but no less intrusive form (e.g., “Federal bureaucrats serve as Big Papa and Big Mama” (PSR4)). This personification of federal power conjures up two images: an ironical version of the nanny state and its overprotectiveness (especially in the reference to the “Big Mama”) alongside with the more totalitarian threat of the omnipresent Orwellian Big Brother.

The government and its officials (“federal bureaucrats”, “tax collector”, “social planners”) appear as agents, especially in actions suggesting control (e.g., “government takes anywhere from one-fourth to two-thirds of her income”, “taking control away from parents”) or aggression, especially with regard to the rights of citizens (e.g., “eliminating the dependent-wife’s benefit in Social Security”, “pushing more millions of housewives and mothers out of the house”, “punishing the traditional family” (PSR4), “punish the woman who chooses to be a dependent wife” (PSR11), “deny us the right to make rational differences of treatment between male and female sex, and between moral and immoral sex” (PSR4)). The last example is especially telling as the government is directly accused of infringing upon the rights of citizens, in this case even the right to determine the moral standards in the personal sphere. This leads to accusations of government arrogance as well as insinuations about the untoward use of tax money in campaigns related to gender equality (e.g., “they have the

colossal effrontery to use our tax dollars to pay for their schemes to change the pro-family standards and to finance anti-family goals” (PSR4), “the White House Conference on Families is a propaganda ploy designed and controlled by the Spenders and Receivers of taxpayers’ money, two groups which work together to squeeze more blood out of the turnip (i.e., more taxes out of the taxpayers)” (PSR4), or, in an especially explicit case, “*Sex Bias in the U.S. Code* was actually written by Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Brenda Feigen-Fasteau (who were paid with tax funds under Contract No. CR3AK010” (PSR15))¹⁰¹. These methods present the government as coercive and liken it to authoritarian ones. This position is well represented in the following quote: “White House conferences are the closest thing to national planning that the socialists have been able to foist on a free America” (PSR4). This paranoid frame explicates the difference in the representation of the anti-statist position in the two corpora studied in the present thesis: while the PPW was also critical of the actions of the federal government, its arguments did not extend to explicit use of the conspiracy theory discourse. The latter is, however, pertinent in the PSR as such rhetoric is one of the characteristic features of social conservative discourse and thus the references establish the social conservative credentials of the PSR and assure the readers that it speaks the same language as the social conservative tradition.

The texts also explicitly forge an alliance between the federal government and the feminist movement (e.g., “both factions have been in bed together (ideologically and organizationally) /.../ and their goals promote and assist each other. The bottom line of what both groups want is increased federal power to force their special-interest goals on the rest of the country at our expense” (PSR4)). This suggestion not only “Others” the government by affiliating it with the already “Othered” feminist movement but also implies that the unholy alliance, supported by taxpayer money, seeks to increase federal control, thus associating themes that extend across of the conservative constituency. The use of courtship metaphor carries special significance in the context where one of the contested issues is the extension of privileges of marriage to homosexual partnerships. The use of such metaphors is marked on all occasions (e.g., “President Carter has been wooing the ‘alternate lifestyle’ advocates” (PSR4)). The administration is also accused of acting against the needs of the majority of Americans (e.g., “the Carter Administration lawyers have refused to make any of the sound, persuasive, traditional, physical, cultural, psychological, religious, moral, or social reasons for our consistent American policy of exempting women from conscription” (PSR9)) as well as wasting taxpayers’ money for these dubious goals (e.g., “Jimmy Carter’s Social Security Administration launched a massive campaign to sell this radical notion to the American people” (PSR11)). This represents the administration’s actions as being contrary to

¹⁰¹ The book mentioned is a feminist analysis of discrimination against women in American laws, written by prominent lawyers.

common sense and the interests of the USA, here equated with the aims of conservatives.

Yet the primary problem of the federal government for social conservatives as expressed in the PSR is not so much the institution as the incumbent. The tone changes perceptibly on the election of Ronald Reagan, represented as the champion of conservatism (e.g., “staunch anti-ERA position”, “deserves our thanks for never retreating from his anti-ERA position despite such harassment” (PSR8)). The corpus suggests an alliance between Reagan and social conservatives against political establishment (e.g., “the Pro-Family and Conservative Movements are knowledgeable and have a definite scale of priorities. They are more worried about the major mistakes of Carter than any alleged minor slips of tongue by Reagan”¹⁰² (PSR8)). Reagan’s term is perceived to bring a new promise for the US (e.g., “Ronald Reagan and the new conservative Senate have the greatest challenge of our time and the opportunity to lead America to fulfil its true position of greatness, morally, militarily, and economically” (PSR8)). What is notable in the previous quotation is not only the strong emphasis on American patriotism but also that the victory described is presented as that of conservatives rather than Republicans.

In fact, the PSR corpus contains frequent barbs against the purportedly liberal Republican establishment, explicitly contrasted to conservatives (e.g., “the eastern establishment tried its best to force on Reagan a political strategy designed to court the liberal Republicans and the country club set in the northeastern states” (PSR8), “liberal Republicans, however, are just a shrinking majority” (PSR8)). As can be seen from the above examples, the PSR corpus relies on populist frames of reference that contrast the pragmatic elites to the moral majority of the grassroots voters (e.g., “pollsters don’t understand the moral and social issues, they understand only economic and political issues” (PSR8)). This anti-elitist stance is linked to the celebration of the non-partisan reach of (social) conservative ideas (e.g., “the mood of the country has shifted so dramatically that the nation is probably more conservative and defense-minded than Reagan himself” (PSR8) or, especially, in the following example “the Pro-Family Movement, with its cross-Party appeal to Democrats, independents and no-voters, was able to harvest the votes in states where liberal Republicans have no influence” (PSR8)).

Special attention is dedicated to the ERA’s Section 2 that gives the federal government the right to enforce the amendment.¹⁰³ Four pages of PSR16 are dedicated to this part of the ERA, labelled “Pandora’s box of Federal mischief”. The text overuses the word “power” that appears in almost every sentence, in collocation with verbs that suggest direct action (e.g., “power to define”, “power to take any relevant means to achieve it”, “power to knock out state

¹⁰² The last example refers to a \$4 billion mistake Reagan made in talking about the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

¹⁰³ For the full text of the ERA, see Appendix 2.

laws”, “power to pre-empt state law”, “power to enforce laws that are discriminatory”, “power to force the states to submit all changes in their own state laws on particular subjects to the U.S. Justice Department”, “power to make certain administrative decisions which cannot be appealed to the courts”). This long list creates the impression of the arbitrary authority of federal government and its incursions into the affairs of states, thus triggering an anti-statist response that is central to the American tradition, embraced by conservatives of all persuasions. This is emphasised further by suggesting the defencelessness of states and state laws (e.g., “family law is one of the most vulnerable targets for Federal takeover”) as well as the exaggerated scope of federal powers (e.g., “opportunities for the mischievous exercise of Federal power are endless”), emphasised through the use of the verb “to force” (e.g., “Massachusetts is now forced by court order to pay state tax funds for abortion” or “force the employers to pay equal wages”). Although the anti-statist theme is expressed less eloquently in other texts of the corpus, it recurs in connection with most of the issues discussed.

The American people are frequently placed in opposition to the government and the noun phrase appears in an agentive position (e.g., “American people will not permit taxes to be increased” (PSR4)). The corpus makes a direct reference to liberals and, thus, indirectly also summons conservatives, bearers of the naturalised common-sense ideology of the PSR (e.g., “it is obvious to most Americans that the liberals’ policies of tax and tax, spend and spend, have brought America to the brink of national failure – economically, politically, and militarily” (PSR8)). Interestingly, the critique of liberals is couched exclusively in terms of their fiscal policies, not their social agenda. In fact, both conservatives and liberals, Republicans and Democrats, are criticised for their too permissive stance on the concerns of social conservatives. Thus, social conservatives whose fears are echoed in the PSR do not equate themselves with any of the established political groupings and see them all as failing social conservatives in moral questions.

The articles present themselves as the voice of America (e.g., “if the Supreme Court rules that our young women must be drafted involuntarily into that life in the name of ‘sex equality,’ the uproar in America will be far greater than that evoked by the Vietnam War” (PSR10), “this is an unacceptable assumption for American policy” (PSR11), “a tremendous victory for women, for families, for morality, for the combat-readiness of the American armed forces – and for Eagle Forum” (PSR14)). This is especially evident in the declaration that Eagle Forum helped to turn the whole country to the right:

Under Eagle Forum’s leadership, the entire country reversed its field and rejected this nuttiness of women’s lib. Because of Eagle Forum’s leadership, sound strategy, and dedicated grassroots action, all three branches of the Federal Government have now rejected the feminist-women’s lib demands for a sex-neutral military and have re-accepted the traditional premise that we

must have different roles for men and women in the American Armed Services. (PSR14)

This image of the federal government as the prodigal son that rediscovers its social conservative background is significant as it points to the realignment of the PSR to the conservative administration in Washington, which cannot be demonised as easily as that of President Carter.

Traditionalist women as distinct from the pro-family movements discussed above appear in object positions to emphasise the threat of government and feminist action to their chosen lifestyle (e.g., “pushing more millions of housewives and mothers out of the house” (PSR4), “induce most of the wives and mothers out of the home” (PSR4)). In these cases, the use of the collective depersonalising reference creates a sense of the predominance of such women in addition to the desired suggestion of their potential victimisation. It is notable that in these instances the text uses group labels with strong positive connotations (“mothers”, “wives”, “young girls”, “babies”), not more neutral reference to “women” as a generic group. This colonises the family roles for singular social conservative use, suggesting that their opponents cannot be considered proper representatives of mothers or wives. Such constructions are also frequent in the texts of the corpus that are written in a more formal register (e.g., “community property laws in all 50 states would provide a measure of economic protection for wives that is often needed and that, in any case, is deserved” (PSR19)). The grammatical positioning is the more significant that the texts seek to present themselves as impartial and their situatedness is only revealed in subtle lexico-grammatical choices.

The passivisation of the traditional woman is eloquently presented in the more expressive parts of the corpus (e.g., “a little group of highly educated working women /.../ trying hard to wipe out the dependent wife who is in her nursery or in her kitchen and may not have the skills to defend herself” (PSR11)). The last quote illustrates the sensitive nature of such positioning. On the one hand, the corpus seeks to evoke alarm and protectiveness for the “endangered” traditional women but, on the other hand, cannot render them, the primary readers of the texts, into helpless victims as that would go against the American value system that valorises independence and action-orientation. The present quote solves the dilemma by emphasis on skills that homemakers could also acquire, not an inherent inability or unwillingness to take independent action.

Attack against the feminist position is formulated as the defence of the freedom to make choices, a basic American right (e.g., “we are not willing to accept a public policy which denies the daughter’s right to choose the career of fulltime wife and mother” (PSR11) or “to eliminate the dependent wife’s benefit would strike a mortal blow to women’s economic ability to choose a traditional family lifestyle” (PSR11)). This is also implied in the claim that the ERA is a misnomer (e.g., “the misnamed and ill-fated Equal Rights

Amendment” (PSR20)). While the ERA and feminists are presented as coercing the public and limiting their freedoms, the social conservatives are presented as expanding them.

The texts make ample use of the words “normal” (e.g., “normal and abnormal sexual activities”), “rational” (e.g., “rational differences of treatment”) and “self-evident” (self-evident truth which is so obvious in a civilized society”) but also “real” (“real problem”), appealing to the common sense of the reader. In addition, these words have an in-built suggestion that the opinions of the opponents, even if they are not identified explicitly, are abnormal or irrational. A word that does not directly belong to the above set but functions as a positive label for social conservatives is “traditional”, appearing all through the corpus in various collocations (“traditional family”, traditional homemaker”). Common sense is also constructed by emphatic and emotional vocabulary (e.g., writing about the purported change in Social Security, “no single issue is so compelling. It is difficult to think of any proposal so unpopular, so volatile, or so politically dangerous to any President or Congressman espousing it” (PSR11)). The vocabulary is highlighted by repetition, in the pattern of three frequently used in political speeches. The use of repetition is especially marked in the following example:

The proposal to eliminate the wife’s and widow’s benefits should be identified as what it is: a radical feminist proposal to punish the woman who chooses to be a dependent wife so she can care and nurture her own children; an anti-family proposal which would put such financial penalties on the traditional family lifestyle that it would tend to drive it out of existence; a financially costly proposal which would further reduce the birth rate and tend to bankrupt Social Security; an economically risky proposal which would increase unemployment; and a foolish proposal which would result in high social costs in terms of neglected and institutionalized children. (PSR11)

The repetition and use of evocative phrases helps to conjure up a tangible sense of peril, increased by supporting the main proposition, the essentiality of the traditional family for the survival of the US, with references to social conservatism and neoliberalism, that is, by extending its appeal across the whole spectrum of American conservatism.

The social conservative stance is reinforced by references to religion (e.g., “Eagle Forum members prayed that the Supreme Court decision would be right”, “we thank God the Equal Rights Amendment is not in the U.S. Constitution”, “we thank God for the dedication, the vision, the perseverance, and the sacrificial efforts of the men and women of Eagle Forum” (PSR14)). The corpus consistently uses emotional rhetoric and explicit statements. This is especially notable in the cases that talk about contested issues such as abortion or the draft. On such occasions notions that are habitually designated by a neutral or euphemistic label are re-defined, without openly indicating the ideological nature of the re-positioning (e.g., abortion is defined as killing babies and the opposition to abortion is represented as “the right to life of the unborn

child” (PSR4)). The purported unmasking of euphemisms becomes an imposition of particular kinds of readings on other people’s statements (especially clearly demonstrated in PSR15, entirely constructed of ideologically positioned commentaries or, rather, distortions, of feminist positions, analysed in detail below).

There are numerous instances of large figures being mentioned to emphasise the breadth of movements or the expense of programmes (e.g., “multi-billion dollar agency”, “more millions of housewives and mothers”). This type of reference suggests the overwhelming majority social conservatives constitute in the American public sphere (e.g., “it was moral issues that moved millions of Americans into political process” (PSR8)) and, as such, helps to maintain in-group solidarity of the organised social conservatives but also to recruit new ones. Figures are also presented from a particular perspective (e.g., “despite the media attention given to these changes, about half of American married couples still live in a lifestyle in which the husband is the primary breadwinner and the wife is the primary homemaker” (PSR19) that emphasises the seeming dominance of the traditional lifestyle and not the fact that the other half of Americans are living in non-traditional family arrangements). These references are complemented with totalising statements (“all women”, “any mother”, “anyone”, “no mother”).

The lexical choices used resort to the use of absolutes, characteristically to conservative, especially religious fundamentalist discourse, as demonstrated by Mathews (1993). The absolute statements and clear-cut oppositions emphasise the clarity of social conservative positions. This oppositionalism as well as the naturalisation is a fixture in the presuppositions that abound in the PSR, as can be seen in almost all of the examples listed above.

4.2.1.2. Grammatical choices

Personal pronoun use is strategic in the texts. The first person plural is extensively used to suggest a common-sense unity between the audience while also suggesting that this unified in-group embraces the majority of the American people, excluding feminists and representatives of the federal government (e.g., “the Equal Rights Amendment, which would give the federal government and courts the power to deny us the right to make rational differences of treatment” (PSR4), “increased federal power to force their special-interest goals on the rest of the country at our expense” (PSR4)). These pronominal identifications also serve as a means of rallying social conservatives together behind a shared cause (e.g., “if we are silent about what a family is and what it is not, we will by that very silence have drawn a circle and included the ‘alternate lifestyles’” or, especially evocatively, “we must demand that our tax dollars not be spent to kill babies” (PSR4) and “for the protection of our young women, our families, our religion, our culture, and the combat effectiveness of our armed services” (PSR9)). The last example is a good illustration of how the

social conservative in-group is expanded into one that is intended to cover all Americans. The extensive use of the third person plural for feminists increases their differentiation from the naturalised “we” that embraces the whole American population. This is evident in cases where the inclusive “we” unites mothers against feminists, suggesting that the two categories are mutually exclusive (e.g., “mothers want their daughters to have at least as many opportunities as we had, and we are not willing to accept a public policy which denies the daughter’s right to choose the career of fulltime wife and mother” (PSR11)).

Direct address of the reader with the second person is less frequent in this corpus, although there are also instances of pronominal use that invite a direct response from the audience (e.g., “obviously you must assume that it *is* [emphasis in the original] permissible to put women in those roles or tasks just as long as it is not ‘routine’” (PSR10), “If [emphasis in the original] you really want a society in which the Constitution forbids our laws to make any difference of treatment between men and women” (PSR14)). Such usage is occasionally accompanied by imperatives that seek to guide the actions of the reader (e.g., “now go back and reread the sentence” (PSR10)).

Although most of the sentences in the corpus are declarative, there is a higher incidence of interrogatives and imperatives than in the PPW. The interrogatives tend to be rhetorical questions with a clearly suggested “common-sense” response and they are used freely (e.g., “how are all these expensive services to be financed?”, “how can we talk about families if we deny the right to existence of its smallest member?” (PSR4), “how do the social planners intend to induce most of the wives and mothers out of the home?” (PSR4)). Many of the rhetorical questions are implicitly calls for action (e.g., “what can we do to stop such judicial arrogance?” (PSR9), “how could you possibly send ERA back to the States so that these radicals can disrupt the State legislative process again?” (PSR21)). Occasionally the rhetorical questions also take a warning tone (e.g., “does Reagan know who elected him?” (PSR8)).

The PSR corpus contains imperatives that take various syntactic forms (e.g., “if pro-family Americans don’t want their rights and responsibilities transferred to the federal government, the time to speak up is now” (PSR4)). Declarative sentences may also act as imperatives (e.g., “it is time for pro-family and taxpaying Americans to call a halt to such arrogance. It is time for pro-family Americans to speak up in defense of traditional family values, responsibilities and successes” (PSR4)). The corpus also contains a few exclamations (e.g., “that’s right, NOTHING! *Sex Bias in the U.S. Code*¹⁰⁴ proves that ERA will do absolutely nothing in employment!” (PSR15)), heightening the interpersonal and expressive aspect of the text.

The PSR also uses conditional sentences but in the function of conjuring up a warning and stressing the importance of resistance (e.g., “if there had been no Eagle Forum, 19- and 20-year-old girls would be subject today to the draft

¹⁰⁴ See footnote 101 for an explanation.

registration law, and girls of any draft age tomorrow would be subject to induction” (PSR14), “if you really want a society in which the Constitution forbids our laws to make any difference of treatment between men and women, then the Armed Services pose the ultimate test, because that is where we traditionally have had sharply-defined and different *roles* [emphasis in the original] for men and women” (PSR14)). The constrictions, once again, make use of the interpersonal value of such statements and yoke them to the task of building group cohesion.

Modality is central to the PSR mode of argumentation as well, especially the use of strong forms that suggest obligation (e.g., “to achieve a ‘sex-neutral,’ gender-free’ society, women must be drafted just like men” or “we must be neutral as between morality and immorality” (PSR14)). Similar strong modals are employed to describe actions to be taken by social conservative groups. Earlier texts in the corpus express little hesitation or hedging and there are few modals suggesting tentativeness. By 1981, when it was increasingly clear that the ERA would not be ratified, the corpus also starts to use weaker forms when talking about the ERA (e.g., “ERA, if ever ratified, would make male-only laws unconstitutional” (PSR14)). Yet in cases like this, the tentativeness suggested by modal forms is overshadowed by the use of emotionally charged lexis or rhetorical structures in the preceding or following phrases and thus the emerging pattern of altered modal reference does not eliminate the dominant focus on the inevitability of the radical changes to be effected by the amendment or other liberal policies.

As was also noted in the vocabulary section above, feminist groups and the government tend to appear in agentive positions in active sentences that stress aggression, discord and intervention (examples have been listed above). Social conservatives, when representing the American people, also tend to be presented as agents, although they can, strategically, also be placed into a passive object position to incite them to action (e.g., “pro-family delegates should not be intimidated into silence” (PSR4)). The passive voice is also used in cases when the agent of some action designated as undesirable by the PSR is a person or an institution that the text cannot criticise explicitly (e.g., “or perhaps girls age 18 to 26 will be forced into basic training, taught to kill, and sent into battle” (PSR9) or “obviously designed to promote public acceptance of this notion and the eventual repeal of the last remaining legal barriers that exempt women from the front lines of warfare” (PSR10) where the hidden agent is the military who the patriotic conservatives would not want to make the target of their criticism).

The corpus extensively uses nominalisation to create presuppositions. For example the phrase “demand that Federal bureaucrats serve as Big Papa and Big Mama” (PSR4), placed in a subordinate clause of a long sentence, contains the nominalised claim that the federal government demands that bureaucrats serve as notional parents. There are numerous other examples of the same strategy. The sentence “Jimmy Carter’s Social Security Administration launched a

massive campaign to sell this radical notion to the American people” (PSR11) presupposes the radicalism of the ERA. The title “Eagle Forum defends wives and mothers” (PSR11) is built on an underlying assumption of their being attacked. Another title, “Community Property Laws – Justice for Wives” (PSR19) suggests that wives currently face injustice. The phrase “we are not willing to accept a public policy which denies the daughter’s right to choose the career of fulltime wife and mother” (PSR11) presupposes that the ERA, indeed, would deny this choice, in addition to the suggestion that homemaker’s role constitutes a career. Such presuppositions appear in all texts of the corpus, serving to reinforce the positions detailed above that associate feminist aims with government interference and attempts to reconfigure the existing gender and moral order, with use of force and coercion and, simultaneously, the social conservative groups as being the (only) vigilant defence against such encroachments. Since many of the examples have already been discussed in connection with vocabulary choices, they will not be repeated here.

4.2.1.3. Textual features

The articles are primarily constructed as a tacit response to an opposition whose voice is not heard. The position of the other side is filtered through the perspective of the author, illustrated by selectively presented quotations and paraphrases. While the texts accuse the other side of having insufficient factual evidence (e.g., “not a shred of evidence for such an allegation was offered” (PSR10), “she gave no logical arguments at all for her radical and shocking proposal” (PSR11)), not much is provided in the articles to support the social conservative stance either, except for rhetorical reassurances. This absence is masked by an extensive use of the phrase “the fact is” to suggest that while the pro-ERA speakers “claim” things, the anti-ERA group, as a repository of “truth”, has the hard facts.

There is also an extended example of skewed interpretation of the position of the opponents in the exegesis of the pro-ERA claims presented in PSR15. The ordering of topics in this article presenting social conservative criticisms of the ERA is suggestive: it addresses changes in the military, the family, moral standards, education, social security and language, in the listed order. It is interesting that the longest section is dedicated to the changes in moral standards (hypothetical changes in laws about sexual consent, rape laws, integration of prisons), followed by changes in the family (redefinition of the concept of family, child-care, paternity leave, retention of wife’s name in marriage) with but passing mention of changes in Social Security regulations. Indeed, in the article the brief paragraph concludes with the phrase “ERA should have no effect on Social Security”, thus contradicting the vehement arguments made in PSR12 and PSR13. This sequence and spatial distribution illustrates the centrality of symbolic issues on the social conservative agenda that underpin the traditionalist conceptions of family and gender roles rather

than legal or economic arguments that belong to the discursive universe of the public sphere that is juxtaposed to the private sphere, the focal point of life for the readers of the PSR.

In the following table, the anti-ERA arguments presented in PSR15 are placed alongside with quotations from supporters of the ERA. This repeats the pattern employed in the PSR where a quotation from the pro-ERA source is followed by an explanation from the PSR. However, the commentary in these cases not only translates the formal language of the pro-ERA claims into plainer English but also crucially, one might say blatantly, alters the emphases of the texts by changing modality and/or conflating ideas. Some examples will be presented below.

Pro-ERA claim	PSR interpretation
The need for affirmative action and for transition measures in particularly strong in the uniformed services.	Affirmative action must be applied to equalize the number of men and women in the armed services
Because entrance to the academies enables a person to obtain the education necessary for officer status and advancement opportunities, the equal rights principle mandate equal access to academies.	We must recruit an equal number of women into the military academies.
The increasingly common two-earner family pattern should impel the development of a comprehensive program of government-supported child-care-	The Federal Government must provide comprehensive government child-care.
U.S.C. #152 might be changed to allow double occupancy by two “consenting adults”.	In the merchant marine, provisions for passenger accommodations must be sex-neutralized.
Societies established by Congress to aid and educate young people on their way to adulthood should be geared toward a world in which equal opportunity for men and women is a fundamental principle. In some cases, separate clubs under one umbrella unit might be a suitable solution, at least for a transition period.	All-boys and all-girls organizations must be sex-integrated because separate-but-equal organizations perpetuate stereotyped gender roles.

In the first instance, the interpretation makes the claim considerably more specific than suggested in the original and the verb “must” is used to suggest obligation. The same happens in the third example. In the second case,

mandating equal access to education is transformed into the suggestion that the regulation would require the admission of an equal number of candidates of both sexes. In the fourth example, the weak modal verb “might” is replaced by a strong “must”. The fifth instance omits the mention of a stipulation about the possible desirability of the single-sex organisations. In all of the instances, the interpretation excludes the contextualisation provided in the original claims and thus deprives them of supporting argumentation. Similar minor shifts in focus or emphasis produce a strong overall effect of presenting the pro-ERA position as radical and misguided, especially after a long section dedicated to the recommended language reform, allegedly an aim of the ERA, here equated with censorship. Thus, although the text purports to set up a dialogue between the pro- and anti-ERA voices, marked by an extensive use of quotations with full page-number references, the references mask the selectivity of the presentation. Instead of hearing a dialogue of two voices, the reader is presented with a monologue with some dialogic features. The treatment of the article is comparable to the selectively excerpted NOW programme presented in PSR20.

The rhetorical device of conflation of claims and propositions is used in other texts of the corpus as well. For example, PSR16 cites a pro-ERA report from Ohio:

Women who are mothers need to enjoy the same freedoms and opportunities as men who are fathers. Mothers who desire to engage in activities outside the home, either on a full or part time basis, must have access to child care services so that they can fulfil these professional, educational or personal goals.

Although the report emphasises that child care is targeted to families who need such services (“mothers who desire to engage in activities outside the home”), the PSR claims that its aim is the indiscriminate imposition of universal child care on all families. A similar conflation is achieved in the same issue of the PSR in the case of the putative provision of federal funding for abortion and support to same-sex marriage. Both symbolic issues are central to the self-definition of social conservative women. Such statements use overstatement to avert potential challenges (e.g., “it would be ridiculous to believe that the abortionists, backed up by the extensive legal talent and the finances of the ACLU, would pass up the chance to take a new abortion-funding case to the U.S. Supreme Court under ERA” (PSR16)). In this example, the fact that the statement contains two hypothetical claims is masked by the unequivocal use of the adjective “ridiculous” and the description of the overpowering force of the pro-abortion side.

4.2.2. Other verbal texts in the PSR

The section will look at texts that fall into three genres: testimonies and speeches delivered at various sessions of Congress and a report. The first two are spoken formats, but, in the case of the testimonies, the elements of spoken language are absent as the published testimonies are, in effect, written texts read out in Congress and thus retain the features of written texts. The speeches, too, although having a more detectable element of the spoken, nevertheless have been reproduced in a manner that erases the specific features of spoken discourse (repetition, unfinished sentences, short sentences). What distinguishes speeches from other genres analysed here is their focus on the interpersonal function of language but the difference is not large enough to necessitate their analysis in a separate section. Although the corpus formally has dialogic and heteroglossic features, it maintains a great degree of ideological coherence as the accessed voices represent the same worldview, unified by the lens of editorial choice. The potential exceptions such as a pro-ERA testimony have been selectively excerpted and thus still represent the same perspective as the texts authored by social conservatives or people sympathetic to their cause. Therefore the texts, despite their generic fluctuation, are considered as a coherent corpus in the present thesis and analysed together.

Seven texts in this corpus are dedicated to the question of women and the draft, two to social security, one to abortion and one to the effect of the ERA on private schools. There are two composite texts that summarise different arguments against the ERA. This thematic limitation explains the prevalence of certain lexical choices and frames in the corpus that are more varied in the article corpus studied above.

4.2.2.1. Vocabulary

Women and men tend to be referred to as undifferentiated groups. Both are shown as independent agents and makers of choices about their lives. This involves the choice to serve in the military and, significantly, women seeking a military career are not stigmatised as deviant from the normative gender roles even if they are presented as exceptions (e.g., “there are some women who like the military, like to live and work with men, and have given an excellent performance in certain non-combat positions” (PSR1, PSR18), “women now volunteer for military service and are assigned to most military specialities” (PSR5). Yet the representations of men and women depend on a dichotomous view of gender that is constructed on biological difference (e.g., “fitness is attained /.../ by developing through training a natural inborn physical strength normally found in men but not in women”, “women by nature are smaller, slower, physically weaker” (PSR1)). It is suggested that women’s participation in fields traditionally considered male is rare and caused only by the most dire need (e.g., “have been inadvertently drawn into combat activities in defense of

their country” (PSR5)). This reliance on the valorised binary gender order can also be seen in the use of emotional vocabulary like “sanctity of womanhood”, marked in this corpus of official texts.

When women appear as a group, especially in roles traditionally perceived to be feminine, they have a tendency to become non-agentive and frequently appear as vulnerable and in need of protection, especially so in the case of mothers, wives and widows, placed in a position of powerlessness vis-à-vis the government or feminists with the purpose of evoking compassion (e.g., “the dependant wife would be given /.../ a lot of jargon to deceive her into believing” (PSR12)). The women, however, are granted agency in fulfilling their “traditional” roles (e.g., “the dependent wife and mother – who cares for her own children in her own home – performs the most socially necessary and useful role in our society” (PSR12)).

The prevailing disempowered female image also includes women in the military who appear as not only physically weaker than their male colleagues but also as potential victims of sexual assault. This is emphasised by the repetition of the word “trouble” or “liability” when women appear in agentive positions (e.g., “female soldiers have trouble”, “the woman soldier becomes an even greater liability” (PSR18)). They may be both agentive and weak, in accordance with the stereotypical gender roles (e.g., “women soldiers refused to service generators in the dark for fear of being attacked” (PSR18)). In passive constructions, the women are represented as lacking control over their actions or fate (e.g., “women are drafted” (PSR1), “they will be subject to combat” (PSR18), “many women will be brought into the close combat units” (PSR18)). The most expressive examples of passivisation see the women as not merely non-agentive but as dead (e.g., “the burden of sending scores, hundreds, or even thousands of American women home in body bags” (PSR3)).

The group of women distinguished as a special category is feminists. The choice of labels varies: they are identified as women’s liberationists but also as feminists and ERA proponents and, on one occasion (PSR22), as abortionists and pro-abortion movement. The collocations diverge within the corpus. Women’s liberationists appear in agentive positions, but not only in the case of acts of aggression (e.g., “a few aggressive groups of women /.../ have ganged up”, “have recommended wiping out” (PSR12)) but also in acts of speech and thought (“state”, “have in mind”). Collocations with strong negative connotations that prevail in the PPW corpus are much rarer, owing to the formal context in which the testimonies were delivered. There are but few examples of such references in group labels (e.g., “disgruntled groups of women’s liberationists” (PSR18)). Yet the corpus also includes instances of personal identification where the characteristics of individual feminists are extended to all (e.g., “the Bella Abzugs and Gloria Steinems in our society” (PSR3)) but without resorting to direct stigmatisation, enabling the audience to allocate a positive or negative meaning to the reference, depending on their worldview.

Feminists are attributed misguided notions about gender and society as well as tenacity in pursuing their goals at the expense of social good (e.g., “I believe their [feminists’] motives are not to improve national defense, but to satisfy other interests” (PSR2), “whose principal objective is social change” (PSR2), “single-focus feminists” (PSR3), “these roles do not satisfy the objective of the women’s liberation movement – to gain total equality with men in all sectors of military activity, regardless of the damaging effect it has on our defense structure” (PSR18)). In addition, it is persistently stressed that feminism is a fringe movement with a limited membership and represents but a minority viewpoint (e.g., “small group not representing a majority viewpoint”, “a few aggressive groups of women”). What is more, the position is presented as being contrary to its own stated aim of promoting women (e.g., “no matter how hard the feminists try to achieve total equality in the armed forces, the most they can hope to become is second class men” (PSR18)).

The feminist position is also implicitly associated with elitism (e.g., “college-educated mothers have been shown to reduce their child-care time by only about 25 percent when they go to work in paid employment – while high-school-educated mothers show much larger reductions in childcare” (PSR13) where the statement implies that the perspective offered by feminist is formed by their middle-class background and cannot be generalised to the female population at large). This point is also linked to an insinuation about a potential elitist conspiracy (e.g., “it seems that those paid to provide you with guidance on this subject have mixed their values about preferred lifestyle with their research” (PSR13)). Thus, at times, feminists are also invested with immense influence (e.g., “single-focus feminists who in the White House, the Department of Defence, and the Service Secretariats, have combined to turn much of our armed forces into a day-care center” (PSR3)). The infiltration of feminists into the federal government is here effectively blended with the metaphor of nanny state.

As in the case of the PPW corpus, the feminist perspective is frequently voiced not by individual feminists but by the depersonalised women’s liberation movement. On other occasions, the ERA becomes the personification for feminist positions or a tool for realising feminist agendas (e.g., “ERA is to establish a legal equality which will force our women into the armed forces and subject them to combat” (PSR18), “pro-abortion lawyers will use ERA as a major argument to persuade the courts to force taxpayer-funding of abortion” (PSR24), “this simple, direct language of Section Two is to deny to the states and their legislative bodies any lawful role in some of the most vital, far-reaching aspects of social policy” (PSR25)). The power of the ERA is implied to be as great as to subdue the will of the federal legislature, as is suggested by placing the latter in a passive construction (e.g., “this proposed Amendment would mandate that the Congress exercise the power, even if the Congress chose not to do so” (PSR25)). The argument can be assumed to be effective

when presented to a congressional audience who are unlikely to desire the curtailment of its authority.

The ERA collocates with nouns and verbs that suggest aggressiveness (e.g., “would make unconstitutional”, “prevent”, “force”, “prohibit”, “require”, “does not permit”, “mandate”, “compel”). Many of the words are repeated inside a paragraph to increase their force. The ERA is implied to result in far-reaching changes (e.g., “would nullify all exemptions” (PSR24), “the ERA would create great difficulty in dealing with married couples that have children” (PSR25), “the Equal Rights Amendment will almost certainly eliminate such flexibility and greatly reduce such diversity” (PSR23)). The latter example is especially interesting as it uses several hedges to modify the claims but the very potency of the nouns borrowed from the American value system defuses their effect, resulting in the ERA being implicitly accused of being rigid and aiming at uniformity, features shunned in the American context. It is also suggested that the ERA would threaten the fundamental rights of Americans (e.g., “if ERA were ever added to our Constitution, it would give the government a fundamental overriding interest in eradicating sex discrimination; and this interest would override the First Amendment rights of religious schools” (PSR24), “conscience laws which have been enacted by various jurisdictions to protect the religious freedom of choice by nurses and physicians called upon to participate in or to perform abortions will probably not pass constitutional muster under the ERA” (PSR25)).

Interesting word choices emerge in relation to the representation of the federal government. As in the case of the PPW corpus, there are also suggestions in the PSR, in the part of the corpus derived from the pre-Reagan era, that the administration is in an alliance with feminists and/or the media in a campaign against the “traditional” and “normal” Americans (e.g., “used by our top defense officials and the media as a mechanism to mislead the American people into believing” (PSR1)). The conspiracy frame is suggested in this corpus in tones more insistent than in the PPW but more subdued than in the article corpus analysed above. It is implied that federal officials are misguided and incompetent (e.g., “no one who has seen real combat could believe that our Congressmen and governmental leaders would talk about drafting women and placing them in this nightmare” (PSR1), “our leaders have lost their sense of proportion” (PSR18)). The stance against the federal government is especially clear in suggesting that it, after the passage of the ERA, will deprive the states of their rights (e.g., “this simple, direct language of Section Two is to deny to the states and their legislative bodies any lawful role in some of the most vital, far-reaching aspects of social policy” (PSR25)).

There are also more direct accusations that associate the federal government with cowardice (e.g., “those in the Executive Branch of the government who /.../ know better, but don’t have the political guts to blow the whistle on the single-issue feminists” (PSR3)) or even with a lack patriotism or American values (e.g., “they [Congressmen] move steadily in this direction with no regard

for the sanctity of womanhood or our national security” (PSR1)). This stigmatisation of the federal government can also be seen in the verb choices that implicate them in volition and agency in acts considered problematic by social conservatives. While the military are treated with respect and not made targets of overt criticism, different civilian structures of government are open to attack, especially since they are seen as curtailing the actions of the military, a symbolic embodiment of American patriotism (e.g., “the Defense Department has ignored the army’s request to put these abnormally large female quotas aside and continues to work fervently toward increasing the size of the woman contingent in our military forces” (PSR18)).

However, there are also testimonies that take a more subdued approach to the actions of federal government, using softer phrases and modals to suggest a potential for reform and adjustment of positions (e.g., “it would be a tragic mistake for Congress ever to adopt any public or tax policy which encourages mothers to assign child-care to others” (PSR12)). There are also instances where the government appears in a passive and vulnerable position, not corrupt but merely weak (e.g., “our form of government is vulnerable to concentrated pressure from lobbies which do not always act in the public interest” (PSR2)). A similar powerless position is also occasionally granted to the military (e.g., “the Army becomes an ideal vehicle to be used by a small group not representing a majority viewpoint” (PSR2)). In the latter example, however, the disempowered representation averts the need to criticise the military, something the patriotic PSR does not desire to do explicitly.

Interestingly, the tone of the testimonies does not change sharply after the beginning of the Reagan administration, friendly to social conservative needs (e.g., as stated quite explicitly “to date, under the present administration, I have seen no change in the Pentagon’s policies with respect to this matter” or, even more clearly in the following: “in spite of President Reagan’s assertions that he is against ERA, his Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, who is known to be liberal on social issues, enthusiastically promotes the feminist objectives of the Carter administration” (PSR18)). This suggests that the stance against federal government is more deeply rooted in the conservative world view than sympathy for a political party or a president. There is also an implicit warning to the Republican administration from the social conservative voting block that helped to elect it about the need to persist in its advocacy of social conservative priorities.

Testimonies also invoke a persistent suspicion of the courts, especially the Supreme Court (e.g., “this is significant not only because it shows that the ERA movement’s scholars and advocates are virtually unanimous in their belief that ERA will ban ‘pregnancy-related’ discrimination, but also because it reminds us who [emphasis in the original] will be interpreting the ERA”, “judiciary is quite capable of finding an even broader right to abortion and abortion funding in the ERA” (PSR22) or “Congressmen who oppose taxpayer-funding of abortion should not give the Supreme Court this opportunity to overturn every vote”

Congress has ever taken” (PSR24), “it would be irresponsible to leave all these sensitive issues for the federal courts to decide” (PSR24), “the Equal Rights Amendment will be interpreted and enforced by federal judges who in a great number of cases have shown strong sympathy for the ideology of abortion” (PSR25)). As explained in the Introduction of the thesis, concern about judicial activism has been central to conservative movements, especially after the liberal decisions taken by the Warren court.

The corpus of testimonies is more cautious about suggestions of conspiracies than the articles from PSR but several instances surface, as has already been noted above. In addition to accusations of the government, the media and the courts, the corpus also includes one instance of a homophobic conspiracy theory (e.g., “one would have to be blind, deaf and dumb not to be aware of the political activism of the homosexual community and their attempts (usually unsuccessful) to legislate their ‘gay rights’”, “to hypothesize that they would not litigate under ERA to get everything they have failed to get by legislation would be unrealistic” (PSR24)). The same text also creates a strong link between many fears of the heterosexual community about homosexuality (conjuring up images of damage to public health and child abuse, among other things) and the force of the ERA. This strategy increases the existential anxiety among the social conservatives and incites them to action against the ERA. It is worth pointing out that the stigmatisation of feminists is never as abusive as that of homosexuals.

Because of the nature of testimonies as a genre, the speakers position themselves to represent the American people (e.g., “I do not want to believe that the American people want to see our national security weakened for the sake of a social experiment” (PSR1), “draft is not in the best interests of this Nation” (PSR7)). In these cases, the subjective nature of the statements is subdued by the position of expert authority established by the speakers that gives them the leave to speak on behalf of the American public (e.g., “I will simply record my strong impression that Americans now seem to share this sense that sexual differentiation should not be regarded with the same intolerance as race discrimination” (PSR23)). These references exclude the “Othered” groups or at least deprive them of the right to speak on behalf of the polity.

The discourse resorts to the divergent use of abstract notions. For example, “equality” appears in agentive (e.g., “absolute equality disrupts every aspect of good morale” (PSR18)) as well as non-agentive positions (e.g., “equality is unobtainable in the armed forces”). Its occurrences in the corpus are relatively rare, considering the fact that it is one of the key words in the title of the ERA. Its appearances are accompanied with presuppositional claims suggesting its unviability, for example in a case where the phrase “presumed equality” is used when talking about the Soviet Union and its 60 years of efforts in the direction of the equality of men and women. This reference not only challenges equality as a realistic social goal, but also links the notion with Soviet ideology, further ostracising it from the American value system. Independently, gender equality

is described as “ridiculous” or as a “fad” or even a game (e.g., “this ridiculous game of equality, on the basis of equity” (PSR6)).

A false opposition is set up between equality and difference, as is habitual in conservative discourse (e.g., “how ridiculous can we get when we cannot recognize anymore the popular fad of the times, that we are going to try to have unisex and make everybody equal, that we cannot recognize that there are basic fundamental physical and biological differences between men and women?” (PSR6), “I regard it as being essentially a directive that government shall not at any level, in any circumstance, have regard to or recognize differences between men and women” (PSR25)). These references, not coincidentally, overlook the fact that the opposite of equality is inequality, not difference.

Another noun phrase that is frequently used in an agentive position is “national security”, alongside other noun phrases referring to defence structures. Endowed with a considerably more positive context of usage than equality, it tends to appear in non-agentive positions to suggest threat and vulnerability, a powerful notion in the conservative circles concerned about the USA’s ability to project its power internationally (e.g., “I need not tell you what this will do to U.S. national security” (PSR1), “after seven years of shaping our military structure to conform with feminist goals, the result has been a weakened combat efficiency and a reduced deployment capacity” (PSR18), “it is contrary to good sense and jeopardizes our national security interests to compel the integration of *all* [emphasis in the original] units on the basis of sex” (PSR25)). National security is represented as being threatened by the drafting of women, one of the key concerns of the corpus, and, by extension, cultural liberal policies in general (e.g., “would leave the actual performance of sexually mixed units as an experiment to be conducted in war with unknown risk – a risk that the Committee finds militarily unwarranted and dangerous” (PSR5)). Thus, equality goals are seen as antagonistic to the military might of the US. The importance of this point is reinforced by suggestions of global instability that would need US intervention as well as explicit references to Vietnam. It can be concluded that the social conservative view of international affairs is too bleak and Manichean to allow for integration in the military.

As the testimonies have been selectively excerpted, they demonstrate a great consensus of opinion and agreement on the undesirable nature of changes that are represented in strong language in both testimonies and reports (e.g., “sweeping implications”, “unprecedented strains”, “unpredictable reactions”, “radical change”, “palpably, grotesquely incorrect [decision]”) that implies both the extent and radicalism of the changes. The same effect is achieved by stressing the scope of the resultant transformation (e.g., “no nation has gone so far as to compel the integration of its front line forces” (PSR25)). The testimonies use strong adjectives in conveying personal experiences, especially those about combat (e.g., “weary marches”, “relentless heat”, “bitter cold”, “torrential rains”) but also graphic descriptions (e.g., “stench of human carnage”) to emphasise the unsuitability of the military environment to women,

especially to women who have chosen to be homemakers. The message is especially potent to mothers of daughters. The use of strong wording can also be seen in the testimony regarding abortion but there are numerically fewer instances of such references because abortion is the focal point of fewer texts in the corpus. Although some phrases in testimonies seem to act as hedges or qualify the reference (“I believe”, “it is my belief”), they can also act to strengthen the claim for the implied readership because of their established authoritative subject positions for speaking on the topic.

Some testimonies seek to achieve the same effect by the employment of dispassionate rhetoric of research (e.g., “inducing mother into the labor force who would otherwise have chosen to stay at home will adversely effect the quality of childcare and child development” or “has negative social, emotional, and cognitive effects on children as a result of mother-child discontinuity” (PSR13)). While such rhetoric lacks the emotional urgency of other testimonies printed in the PSR, it taps into the readers’ mental image of the expert scholar whose dispassionate statements have the double value of purported objectivity and the suggestion that the evidence presented is “hard” data. There is only one text – PSR23 – in the testimonies presented where the author chooses to use qualifications traditional in Anglophone academic discourse (e.g., “private institutions may be much more seriously and directly affected by the ERA than their public counterparts”, “this may leave room”) and even in this text mode does not prevail. Tentativeness is reduced by the choice of illustrations of the putative effects of the ERA (“this probably means that from kindergarten to post-graduate training all classes will have to be sexually integrated and all school-sponsored activities as well: gym classes and athletic programs, classes on ‘health’ or on ‘women’s issues’ or on religion or fatherhood, baking clubs and ‘consciousness-raising’ groups and so on and so on” or “sexually differentiating ‘dress codes’ or counselling services may be considered ‘sex discrimination’” (PSR23). Although the author adds a disclaimer, the radicalism suggested by the examples overcomes the force of this seemingly neutral academic self-positioning. This is especially clearly shown in the author’s conclusion on the effects of the ERA on private schools: “unconventional private schools and colleges will suffer the stigma of public quarantine, treated as tainted, in effect, for any contact or cooperation with public institutions”.

The corpus has a great number of adjectives that summon common sense notions on gender roles, such as “natural” (“natural roles for women”, “inborn” (“inborn stamina”), “proper” (“proper role of women”), “traditional” (“traditional family”) or “sensible” (“the sensible course of action”). These features are reinforced by the use of adverbs such as “obviously” or the phrases “of course” or “in fact”. Tradition is also invoked by references to God (e.g., “this country was based on the family unit and a belief in God, and a belief in religious heritage of whatever denomination” (PSR6)). The texts extensively and consistently use absolutes and totalising claims (“totally alien to womanhood”, “all women”, “no woman”, “any registration”, “no country”).

4.2.2.2. Grammatical choices

The testimonies and speeches extensively employ pronouns, especially the first person singular. The speakers/writers use their own experience as support to their claims and/or recommendations (e.g., “my expertise in speaking on this matter stems from experience”, “I only wish those parents who cannot see the difference between sending their daughters and sons into combat could see it as I have” (PSR1)). Although none of the texts is directly produced for the readership of the PSR, the strategy also works in the case of the reading audience, possibly ensured by an editorial filter. The use of the first person singular personalises the encounter between the speaker and the audience, increasing the reliability of the positions presented (e.g., “I have personally participated in hand-to-hand combat and have seen men fight and die on the battlefield” (PSR1) or, from a very different perspective “by bearing and nurturing six children, who have grown into educated and well-adjusted citizens who will pay decades upon decades of taxes into the Social Security system, I have done vastly more financially [emphasis in the original] for the social security system than any worker who pays taxes into the system all his or her life” (PSR12)).

The strategy is especially pronounced in the case of emotional appeals of the speeches by social conservative senators (e.g., “maybe I am old-fashioned, and I am sure some people will accuse me of living in the 18th or 19th century, but I was brought up to believe that the basic fundamental unit of Government in this country was the family” or “yes, I am old fashioned, I am traditional, and I am proud of it” or, especially, “a father cannot replace a mother and that closeness. I tried. I tried. I did not do nearly as good a job of it” (PSR6)). The latter instances that employ a plaintive confessional tone are likely to find a welcoming audience among social conservative women who see their own life choices confirmed by a man in a position of political power. Such forceful first-person appeals are especially effective when placed side by side with the views of anonymous opponents (e.g., “some say that the ERA would not overcome the constitutionally based right to privacy, and that recognition of such privacy interests would tolerate appropriate gender-based job assignments. I believe this argument misconceives the nature of the right of privacy” (PSR25)).

The testimony sub-corpus also features the use of ambiguous first person plural pronoun (e.g., “we wonder also how much respect an enemy will deal with captured women prisoners”, “we recommend an amendment which would make ERA abortion-neutral”). The context of use suggests the pronouns are inclusive, creating a bond with the audience extended beyond Congressional floor and involving them in the same common-sense frame of reference (e.g., “we must be honest and face up to a situation we have existing” (PSR7), “we must understand what is at stake” (PSR18)). Another instance of a similarly ambiguous use of the first person plural can be found where it not only suggests agreement between the speaker and the audience but also the unity of the nation

as a whole that is, furthermore, opposed to the government or the judiciary (“we are on an unexamined ‘slippery slope’ and have been placed there by those in the Executive Branch” (PSR3), “it reminds us who [emphasis in the original] will be interpreting the ERA” (PSR22)). In these instances the texts assume the voice of the nation (e.g., “our public and tax policy should encourage strong families” (PSR12)). Pronoun use decreases in reports and documents where the preferred mode of reference is through a noun in singular (“the committee”, “the report”), enabling the authors to present their individual opinions in a depersonalised manner that lends authority to the statements (e.g., “the committee remains convinced”, “the Committee has expressed serious concern”(PSR5)).

The testimonies occasionally also directly address the audience, presumably one present in the room where the testimony was delivered but extendable to the reading public, with the use of second person pronoun. Because of the peculiarity of English, it is impossible to distinguish between the singular and plural form and thus the address can simultaneously turn to the audience as a whole but also address every listener/reader individually (e.g., “if you have been lulled into satisfaction”, “you should take another look” (PSR18). Such address may also be realised through the use of a noun phrase that indirectly addresses the people present (e.g., “Congressmen who oppose taxpayer-funding of abortion should not give the Supreme Court this opportunity to overturn every vote Congress has ever taken” (PSR24)).

Because of the urgency encoded in the testimonies, they have a tendency to use modality extensively to express positions categorically (e.g., “I do not believe that any woman even as a volunteer should have the right” (PSR1), “my strongly held view that women should not serve in combat positions” (PSR2)). As already noted, there is only one text – PSR23 – among the testimonies presented in which modals are used to hedge and express doubt about the scope of the claims (e.g., “private institutions may be much more seriously and directly affected by the ERA than their public counterparts”, “this only the beginning of the difficulties that the ERA is likely to pose”, “it seems inescapable that all single-sex institutions must be denied tax exemptions”, “this probably means”). The majority of statements in the testimony sub-corpus use indicative mood and bold statements (e.g., “ERA is definitely connected to our national security” (PSR18), “pro-abortion lawyers will use ERA”, “the effect of ERA on the draft and on military duty is certain” (PSR24)).

Voice becomes an important consideration in this corpus as well. In testimonies that focus on the drafting women as a threat to national security, the nation itself becomes disempowered in passive (“we have been placed on a ‘slippery slope’” (PSR3)). The same happens with national security (“our national security [is] weakened for the sake of a social experiment” (PSR1)). Although the passive voice is usually seen as a marker of powerlessness of the object, it can also be used to emphasise the power of the invisible opponent (e.g., “the ERA /.../ will in fact be used to sweep away the minimal protection

of unborn children that the courts currently allow” (PSR22) suggests an invisible but powerful agent who will make the potential threat of the ERA a tragic reality). At times the passive serves to place information that the speaker seeks to emphasise into a rhematic position (e.g., “there is an attempt today to liberalize the armed forces and unisex the society through the women’s movement” (PSR18)).

The corpus demonstrates some variation in sentence types. Although the majority of sentences are declarative, there are also imperatives, in contrast to the more sedate PPW. Here the imperatives act as warnings or pleas (e.g., “Don’t put women in military combat” (PSR1)), heightening the emotional power of the texts and their interpersonal function. Especially speeches, but also some testimonies, make copious use of rhetorical questions to elicit desired reactions from the audience (e.g., “do we take a woman away, leave a 6-month-old child with a father?”, “how far do we carry this ridiculous game of equality, on the basis of equity?” (PSR6)). Many of the rhetorical questions have great emotional urgency, the rhetorical pattern reinforced by emotionally charged vocabulary, seeking to elicit a strong response from their audience (e.g., “who will take care of the child when mama must go off to war?”, “are they ready to see their daughters and wives exposed to the wrath of the enemy because they could not dig into the hard ground in time for protection?”, “have the ERA proponents thought about what our women would suffer from the dregs of our own army alone, not to speak of what the enemy would do to them as POWs (such as a soldier attempting to have sex with a dead old Vietnamese woman)?” (PSR18)).

There is a distinct difference between grammatical usage in two types of testimonies. The first type that is highly personal and favours the use of first person singular primarily employs the active voice. The second type is more similar to written reports and thus also employs many features of written language as used in formal texts, including the passive voice (e.g., “college-educated mothers have been shown to reduce their child-care time by only 25 percent when they go to work in paid employment” (PSR13)). This, on the one hand, creates the impression of an increased objectivity but, on the other hand, masks the selectivity of the information and the positioning of the author with regard to the subject at hand.

The corpus has numerous instances of arguments nominalised and positioned in the sentence so as to preclude their contestation (e.g., “I do not want to believe that the American people want to see our national security weakened for the sake of a social experiment” (PSR1) where the idea that gender equality is a social experiment and that it would lead to the drafting of women and, through that, the weakening of national security are all presuppositions embedded in the sentence so that the focus of the sentence shifts to the imminent threat to national security, a powerful motivator for the conservative constituency.) Presupposition may also be used to imply threat (e.g., “in order to prevent ERA from substantially hurting veterans, an amendment should be added” (PSR24)

claims that ERA would have hurt veterans and, as such, invites the readers to take action to prevent such a threat from becoming a reality). Such presuppositions can also be created without the explicit presence of the agent. For instance, the ERA occasionally appears as an implied agent, present notionally but not expressed in words (e.g., “rise above the peacetime ‘trend’ and to prohibit, by law, any deliberate exposure of female service members to the numbing horrors of combat” (PSR3) where the ERA, the implied agent, is presupposed to deliberately expose women to combat. Examples of presuppositions can be found in all texts of the corpus and examples can be found in the previous section dedicated to the lexical choices in the texts. They will not be repeated here for considerations of space.

4.2.2.3. Textual features

There is one feature of textual organisation that differentiates the testimony sub-corpus from the articles published in the PSR and the whole PPW corpus. Testimonies begin by framing the following narrative, usually by establishing the expertise of the speaker and their authority to speak on the given matter. All of the testimonies that choose to do so begin by a personal experience narrative (e.g., in PSR1 Brigadier General Gatsis speaks of his long military career and combat experience, in PSR2 Mary Lawlor introduces herself as both a member of the military and mother whose children have chosen a military career, in PSR12 Schlafly positions herself as a mother of six children). The personal narrative opening and the increased use of interpersonal features such as direct address are the only feature in which the testimonies differ from the articles: they continue to present an argument, in a linear fashion, and end with a coda that repeats the main point, very similarly to articles studied. The testimonies, because of their formal context of presentation, are more focussed and have a lesser tendency to digress into mere emoting than the articles. Thus, despite their increased interpersonality, they also maintain greater formality and informativeness on an experiential plane of meaning than the lengthier but more fluid articles.

4.2.3. Multimodal texts

4.2.3.1. Caricatures

Caricatures appear in two issues of the corpus. The first one is placed at the end of PSR3. It uses the image of Uncle Sam on a poster in the centre of the caricature looking in the eyes of the audience, pointing his finger at it, with the line that reads “Stand by” placed under the image in bold upper-case letters. The reading of the image depends on the intertextual resources of the interpreter as the poster in the caricature recycles the famous army recruiting poster where Uncle Sam is positioned similarly but where the text reads “I want you for the

US Army”. This intertextual cue also suggests that the person addressed with the image and text “Stand by” is not any member of the audience but a male one. The answer to this change in text can be found on the wall to the left of the Uncle Sam image where an alternative poster, this time without a pictorial representation, reads as follows: “Aunt Samantha wants you, girls”. The first interesting transformation in the caricature is the creation of a feminised representation of the US in Aunt Samantha, a curious exception in the masculine iconic universe of the USA as a nation (Põldsaar 2005: 135). The image potentially suggests the threat of a nanny state and the attendant weakening of American national muscle and moral fibre. That is, the caricature is not an act of creative gender subversion but, considering the target audience, an example of perceived gender perversion that needs to be righted, the potential for which is suggested by the presence of the reassuring figure of Uncle Sam. The second significant feature is the lack of a visual representation for Aunt Samantha, a telling choice for the author of the caricature does not wish to shown disrespect for the US or US Army and thus cannot produce a ridiculing image to represent the country, even if one in drag, but a positive image would not meet the ideological aims of the caricature, that is, the argument that women’s place is not in the military. Hence the use of only verbal text in the second poster, side by side with the bi-modal Uncle Sam poster that features both verbal and visual text. This imbalance, indirectly, also suggests the normativity of the central image and the deviance of the other, already marginalised, one.

All other caricatures appear in the same issue, PSR16, to illustrate a long essay on the effects of Section 2 of the ERA. The caricatures are placed immediately under the titles of all six subsections of the article. Thus the reader’s interpretation of the verbal text will be guided by the visual material that precedes it. The first caricature illustrates the ERA’s requirement that state laws be approved by the Justice Department. The image creates an opposition between the Justice Department, personified by a stout man in dark suit and glasses sitting behind a heavy desk topped with a pile of paper under the label “disapproved”. The desk serves to create a barrier between the bureaucrat and the supplicants, rushing in from different directions with various state laws. Interestingly, all of the states represented in the image are Southern states (Florida, Oklahoma, Georgia and Virginia). The cartoonist has also chosen to represent half of the states as men, half as women but here the assignment of gender is not emphasised.

The second cartoon is dedicated to the issue of federal child care. Here the image is crowded with seven children in various degrees of unhappiness and/or misbehaviour and an overwhelmed teacher who is shown to faint, tears in eyes because of her inability to control the children. The chaos in the image (two boys fighting, one trampled under feet, one climbing out of the window, three children bawling, sitting in a puddle of urine in an untidy room with various objects strewn on the floor) is to issue a warning about the chaos that would accompany any attempts to offer institutionalised child care. The distraught

teacher is, in a way, also a stand-in for the nanny state and her consternation predicts that of the federal government, were the ERA to be passed. The position of the social conservative, it can be surmised, is represented by a teddy bear that smiles knowingly, perched on a shelf above the mayhem.

The third cartoon illustrates the claim that homemakers would be doubly taxed after the ERA. This image, too, creates an opposition between the federal government and the private individual. The first is represented as a large bodiless arm with the words “Internal Revenue agent” written on the arm in upper-case letters. The hand alone is half the size of the homemaker and thus emphasises the imbalance in powers between the federal government and the individual citizen. The powerlessness of the individual is further stressed in the particular representation of the homemaker who is almost childlike, with big eyes, open mouth and a girly hairdo, wearing a frilly apron over a dress. She is represented standing at the open door of her home, open purse in hand from where she surrenders dollars to the arm of the government. The open door suggests further vulnerability of the home to future incursions of the government.

The fourth cartoon opens the section dedicated to abortion and, considering the passion that usually surrounds the topic, is, surprisingly, the least evocative of the set as it just shows a door with the sign “quickie abortions” and a windfall of federal money, represented by \$100 bills. The only suggestion of human agency in the image is two hands that extend from behind the door to grab two bags of money, hypothetically representing abortionists who dare not show their faces. This restraint is marked in comparison with the corpus as a whole that treats the matter of abortion with great emotional urgency.

The fifth cartoon is dedicated to same-sex marriage and is intended to ridicule the proposition. The cartoon is divided into two. First there is a bald man, standing with his back to the viewer reading from a book, supposedly a representative of the state conducting a civil marriage ceremony. The other half of the cartoon, facing the viewer, shows two couples to be wed: two men, one of them wearing a long dress and a veil, made the more incongruous by his handlebar moustache, and two women, one of whom is wearing jacket and trousers. Thus, although the image purports to represent same-sex marriage, it reinforces the binary gender order and, by placing same-sex couples into the heterosexual wedding frame, emphasises their ridiculousness and deviance.

The final image illustrates a section on federal wage control through the ERA’s demand for equal pay for work of comparable worth. The image once again juxtaposes the federal government and the citizen. Here the federal government is represented by a woman judge, with a stern demeanour, sitting elevated above the other persons in the cartoon, her authority underscored by the American flag, open statute book and a gavel. The citizens, a woman in a nurse’s uniform and a man bearing the tools of a plumber, stand with their backs to the viewer, with an equals sign between them, with the implication that

the equalising mandate comes from the judge to whose authority the two workers bow.

4.2.3.2. Photos

There is one issue of PSR that contains a series of photos representing pro-ERA groups and their actions (PSR21). The 18 photos cover 3.5 pages of the 4 pages of the issue. The photos are introduced by a short essay and a brief description that directs the reading but the images themselves lack captions or commentary, probably being considered eloquent enough in themselves. In this case, like in some of the verbal texts introduced in the PSR, the editor leaves the impression that she allows her opponents to speak for and “condemn” themselves, masking the strict selectivity of the images presented.

The first photo depicts three women, all wearing trousers, spraying blood on the floor of the State Capitol of Illinois, in front of a crowd of onlookers, most of whom are men in suits and ties. This is one of the images introduced in the text above, as otherwise the meaning of the actions would be hard to read from the low-quality black-and-white image. The choice of this photo that is twice as big as the other photos to open the issue is significant as here the women are engaged in symbolic violence not just against decency but also about the symbolic shrine of the American civil religion. Thus they not only subvert traditional gender roles but also publicly defile the government they are supposed to be in rational dialogue with. This de-legitimises feminists as appropriate partners in the political process and defines them as a public nuisance.¹⁰⁵

The images on the second page of the issue show a series of banners from pro-ERA meetings and, in this case, it is only the verbal text that deserves closer discussion. All of the slogans evoke themes antagonistic to social conservative worldview. “Socialist revolution can smash lesbian oppression” conjures up not just the typical equation between feminism and lesbianism but also the spectre of socialism, a theme that bound to be especially offensive to the patriotic conservatives in the Cold-War climate. A similar notion is suggested by “ERA-Yes. Fight for revolution”, with the association between the ERA and the disruption of the existing social order, suggested by word “revolution”, with its strong overtones of communist influence. The third slogan, “Defend abortion rights”, creates a link between the ERA and abortion that the PSR consistently emphasises. The fourth photo has two slogans: one on the foreground (“No war – no way. Ratify the ERA. Workers’ World Party”) and another in the

¹⁰⁵ It is worth pointing out that Schlafly’s own group also used tactics borrowed from guerrilla theatre, but in accordance with the traditional gender roles she sought to project. That is, they avoided anything that was “unladylike”, confirming their alignment with order. In order to differentiate themselves from the demure self-presentation of social conservative women, feminists had to opt for more subversive acts which, however, helped to increase the perception of feminism as an extremist movement.

background (“Women’s liberation through socialist revolution”). Both link the ERA with military metaphor, placed within an ideology inimical to the American value system. (It is worth pointing out that the Communist Party of the USA opposed the ERA and labour unions were late in backing the amendment.) The fifth and sixth images repeat the association between the ERA and lesbianism (“Lesbian task force”) and abortion (“Smash the anti-abortion movement”). The posters and banners on which the slogans are featured are held both by women and men.

The third page continues the same themes, with groups of people holding banners with slogans associating the ERA with homosexuality (“Gay revolutionary discussion group”, “Radical fairies for feminists”), radicalism (“Radical feminists”) and socialism (“Unite to smash the Right. Revolutionary Socialist League”, “Ratify the ERA. The Socialist Workers”, “Women’s liberation through socialist revolution”)¹⁰⁶, many also suggesting aggression or violence. Above all, they convey a sense of an unholy alliance of social and sexual radicals gathered behind the ERA.

The final page of the issue differs from the previous two in depicting a series of radical actions by women in confrontation with representatives of law and order. The first photo shows a group of ten women kneeling on a marble floor, chanting, with their hands raised, watched by a group of men in suits and ties. This is the most peaceful image of the set. In the second, third and fourth images a woman is being lifted out of a state building by two uniformed police officers. Interestingly, in the third image the police officer lifting the upper body of a woman in dungarees is also a woman, thus creating a clash between two women, one representing order and the other disorder. The final image of the set shows a group of women, potentially the same group featured on the first photo on the page, being stepped over by a man in a suit and a tie, with another man waiting to do the same. This image creates a metaphorical reading suggesting that the ERA can be stepped over as easily as pro-ERA protesters.

The effect of the set of images is the creation of an extremist, anti-government and even anti-American impression of the pro-ERA movement that has to be opposed by responsible citizens who respect order, in gender roles and social life. The PSR thus invites its readers to take direct action. This idea is reinforced by a small advertisement in the bottom left-hand corner of the last page that features a list of anti-ERA materials that can be ordered from the PSR (a list of issues of the PSR, fliers, fact sheets, booklets but also PPW and the biography of Phyllis Schlafly) to help in the campaign against the ERA and other similar proposals.

¹⁰⁶ All of the slogans are written in upper-case letters.

4.2.4. Values attributed to the dimensions of meaning at the level of description

The elements described above, both in the case of articles and testimonies, show the use of linguistic resources to express experiential, relational and expressive values. The experiential plane of meaning forges clear notions of gender and gender equality, especially with regard to military recruitment. The experiential meanings are couched in a binary and biologically determinist view of gender roles, echoed also in testimonies about abortion and family. Another set of clearly articulated knowledges addresses the appropriate role of the federal government – limited in domestic affairs but assertive in international ones. Because of the thematic distribution of texts in this corpus, the concern for national security supersedes any other functions of the government. Because of greater emotional urgency in the PSR corpus, especially the articles, the texts further the belief that the traditional (gender) order of the US is under severe threat and needs protection. The texts also offer preferred knowledges about feminism and the ERA, both of which appear as aggressive and potentially powerful, especially when associated with the federal government, here represented as manipulable and/or infiltrated by people dangerous to social conservative aims or social stability in general. In this case, feminism is represented as being not only anti-family but also anti-life and endangering traditional morality (by its purportedly wholehearted support for homosexuality) and the national security of the US (by its readiness to accept draft for women). Unlike the PPW corpus, the PSR corpus also instils the awareness of the strength and influence of social conservative movements as potential protectors of the American way of life. Thus the experiential level of texts creates a more combative universe of discourse than the PPW, with two comparable sides meeting in a contest of equals, a struggle that has strong apocalyptic overtones.

These experiential meanings directly translate into relational values projected in the texts that prescribe desired subject positions to the audience more forcefully than the PPW corpus. The emotionally charged and ideologically contested vocabulary choices, reinforced by grammar, especially pronominal reference, position the reader against feminism and the ERA but also the government and the courts, and invite him or her to join the pro-family or conservative movements. The relational meanings show only limited changes after the election of Ronald Reagan: while he is personally identified with the social conservative agenda, federal government and political establishment remain in a suspect position. Despite the reduction of overlexicalisation of feminism and the inclusion of purportedly feminist or pro-ERA texts (the selective version of NOW programme, a photo essay of pro-ERA marches), the relational positioning against feminism is more assertive here than in the PPW corpus because of the urgency of tone achieved by the use of different lexical and rhetorical choices. The relational values directly translate into unambiguously articulated expressive values that offer evaluations and

prescribe desired attitudes to its readers. The expressive values are most emphatically formulated with regard to family and the sanctity of the traditional gender order, that is, symbolic issues that stem from an essentialist interpretation of gender roles, here defined as the very foundation of a stable universe and a healthy America. The patriotic and anti-government stances are equally present but less prominent than in the PPW. The expressive level of meaning also offers the readers direct avenues for political action.

Thus, as the above discussion demonstrates, the PSR corpus is rich in ideological positioning that is manifest explicitly and implicitly in the linguistic choices of the texts. The interaction of lexical, discursive and social planes of meaning will be explicated further in sections dedicated to interpretation of discursive practice and the explanation of social practice.

4.3. Interpretation of the discursive practice in the PSR

4.3.1. Articles

4.3.1.1. Situational context

The situational context is relatively homogeneous in the case of the articles as they represent the same activity type and purpose, involved participants and their interrelationship but, as in the case of the PPW corpus, the reader is offered two discourse types under which to interpret the situational context. The two stances are not entirely separable but are intermingled throughout the corpus, with the ambivalence as an inseparable part of the ideological layering of meaning. Language plays the central part in creating these differential reading potentials.

In the first interpretation of situational context, the PSR articles are to be read as informed essays that seek to enlighten the audience about the potential threats to their lives and to the future of the USA as well as the methods that the readers can use to take action to protect themselves and their country. The interpretation is supported by extensive references to official documents, testimonies and even the positions of the opponents, all presented to the readers so that they can form their own opinions about the issues. This choice suggests the impartiality of the editors who, in accordance with the traditional American value system, respect their readers' independence and agency and do not seek to impose particular readings on them. The interpretation also sets up a specific relationship between the author(s) and the reader that guides the interpretation of the situational context. In this, the author is presented both as an expert and as a concerned insider, that is, straddling two discursive universes and acting as a mediator between the outside world and the audience with the aim of helping them understand legal and policy documents. The relationship is non-hierarchical, reinforced by the extensive use of pronominal reference, direct

address to the reader and the focus on relational meanings. This is the preferred interpretation of the situational context, as probably intended by the author(s) in their conceptualisation of the target audience, one that can be understood by the interpretation of discursive strategies on the surface of the text.

Yet the textual material lends itself to another reading of the situational context, supported by the slippages revealed in the description of linguistic resources used in the corpus, suggesting the presence of more meanings than the surface one. The interpretation of underlying meanings leads to an alternative interpretation of the situational context. In this case, the texts in the corpus represent instances of political persuasion the aim of which is movement building. That is, the intention of the texts is not so much to inform but to persuade the audience and call them to action. This reading is supported by the selectivity in the use of information and linguistic strategies that do not give the readers the freedom to form their own opinions but place them before pre-selected data presented in a manner that offers its version as the common-sense. This conscious positioning of the readers is supported by the omission of the name(s) of the author(s) and the fact that the principles of selection are not elucidated to the audience. In this interpretive context the relationship between the author(s) and the audience is hierarchical and the use of solidarity-building linguistic strategies becomes an instance of strategic use of discourse.

Within the present corpus, because of the homogeneity of the audience and the awareness of the author(s) of their ideological preferences, it is possible to state that the texts are bolder in using linguistic resources to foreground the first reading, without resorting to the more intricate masking strategies employed in the PPW. On the other hand, this very fact makes the second interpretation more probable in the case of readers who do not belong to the community of practice of social conservative grassroots movement.

4.3.1.2. Intertextual context

The texts in the corpus can be divided into two on the basis of the intertextual repertoires they employ. The first and more prevalent type (8 of the 10 texts) is written in an expressive style, with high incidence of interpersonal features and emotionally charged vocabulary. The texts borrow features from academic discourse (references, use of figures) but this is done only at the level of thematic positioning and lexical choices. Here it is personal testimony and experience narratives that support the claims, not numerical data. The choice of support is appropriate to the target audience and the topics handled – when entering a discussion about issues of great symbolic value, the audience would not be persuaded merely by academic research or statistics. However, the articles still seek to appropriate the legitimating stance of expert objectivity borrowed from academic discourse and hence present the personal and expressive features within a discursive frame of argumentative essays.

The second type is written in a formal style that has the legitimising force of formal register associated with the academia and public institutions. The articles maintain their discursive placement in the public domain in lexico-grammatical choices as well as the range of references and the seemingly objective authorial stance. However, these texts also contain slippages in register and usage (e.g., cf. “our laws should provide a just way to recognize the fact that the homemaker’s economic contribution to the marriage is essential not only to current income but to the breadwinner’s increase in earning capacity” as against “it is clear when it comes to the matter of justice for wives, ERAs are a fraud and a delusion” (PSR19)). It is these inconsistencies that confirm the strategic use of language and make them comparable to other texts in the corpus in the primacy given to emotional appeal and subjective self-positioning. The seeming detachment of the author is the more effective in conveying a selective reading of the facts offered and thus is a potent means for creating and maintaining hegemonic consent. However, reading such texts demands concentration and thus does not fit the general aims of the newsletter. Also, as such texts create a hierarchical relationship between the author and the reader, one that would be unfitting inside a close-knit social movement, their number remains low in the present corpus.

The intertextual context places the present corpus into implicit and explicit dialogues with other texts and meanings that circulate in the given universe of discourse. The articles contain, above all, references to discourses of feminism, family, and the nation, issues of high symbolic value to social conservatives. They dedicate less space to pragmatic or utilitarian concerns that were mentioned in the PPW corpus. The interdiscursive features appear in most texts of the sub-corpus; some also borrow the authoritative usage of legal or political discourse. It can also be hypothesised that the emotionally heightened mode of address that prevails in the majority of the articles is indebted to the religious domain.

The dialogue with feminist discourse is made explicit in the sub-corpus by the insertion of extensive quotes and excerpts from feminist texts that the PSR enters into a debate with. However, a closer analysis, as demonstrated above, reveals a selective presentation of the feminist contributions so as to support a social conservative interpretation of feminism and downplay the feminist one. This is aided by positioned reading of feminist texts that places them in a discursive frame where the preferred reading position encourages their denouncement. The surface dialogicity masks the monologic nature of the corpus or, at best, makes it an example of intra-monologic dialogicity. The same type of a normative interpretive frame is offered through extensive use of presuppositions that contain the potential appeal of the feminist discourses to the present audience.

The texts are in an equally open dialogue with the discourse of American patriotism, here seen, above all, in the emphasis given to social conservative domestic agenda in questions of family and morality, on the one hand, and to

the assertive foreign policy stance on the other. The values find both explicit and implicit realisation at thematic and linguistic levels. In this discourse, American values and even the United States as a political entity are divorced from the federal government who is represented as being a (potential) threat to the integrity of the nation, especially in its stealth introduction of liberal social policies, even if they are not explicitly identified as such. Thus the corpus also enters into an implicit dialogue with social liberal discourse on family and morality, here presented through a social conservative lens that denies social liberalism access to self-presentation within the civil rights meta-frame, relegating it to the discourse of social unrest and radical change, a powerful strategy of “Othering” in the US of the 1980s. The language of rights and choice is singularly employed for the social conservative movement, with feminists and social liberals relegated to the discursive domain of coercion and imposition.

The articles are classifiable as analytical essays by their discourse type as they present a linear argumentation for one position, supported by argumentation and textual proof, formulated by an expert mediator. The articles follow a clear organisational pattern and strive to introduce different types of proof (quotations from the opponents, examples, personal experience), presenting the results in a language that aims at surface objectivity. However, as the discussion above showed, there are serious divergences from the format of analytical essay and especially in the nature of proof offered to support the claims.

One of the aspects where the corpus diverges from the tradition of classical analytical essays is in the use of authoritative voices summoned to back the case. Argumentation is dotted with references to influential supporters of the anti-ERA initiatives who are to lend credibility to the positions presented and to further mobilise the grassroots movement. Yet they are not introduced as representatives of a particular ideological perspective, suggesting their equation with the common sense. Conversely, the corpus also includes *ad hominem* attacks against prominent proponents of the ERA, especially President Carter:

To anyone who understood the ideology of women’s lib and the psychology of the Carters, there never was any doubt. President Carter did everything his wife told him to do, Roslynn had embraced the entire ideology of ERA, and the ERA-feminist-women’s lib strategy demanded the drafting of women. So Jimmy Carter was led down the primrose path and called for the draft registration of women and men. (PSR14)

This quote represents Carter not only as gullible politically but also as being under the influence of his wife, that is, not fitting the image of hegemonic masculinity expected of American presidents. Such attacks help to de-legitimise the political position offered without refuting any of the arguments presented. Such de-legitimising strategies are used, above all, to equate pro-ERA stances

with anti-patriotism, that is, excluding them from the American universe of political discourse.

All of the intertextual features are reinforced in the textual cues such as presuppositions that construct a common ground between the author(s) and the audience. As the description phase of analysis demonstrated, the common ground constructed here is anti-feminist not only reactively but also proactively. The readers are not only invited to reject feminist policies but also to join social movements to promote their own worldview. This can be seen in the reduction of stigmatising labels to designate feminist positions and the increase of explicit textual representation of social conservative women's movements. The presuppositions also create an apocalyptic view of the traditional family and morality, achieved through the deployment of military metaphor and emotional urgency, which intensifies the appeal to social conservative women to join political activism. It can be claimed that in the present corpus, the common ground is not only conservative but social conservative, reflected in the stigmatisation of (Republican) party elites and in the thematic preferences that emphasise family values and background economy and neoconservative concerns.

4.3.1.3. Mental models and frames

The PSR corpus is more diverse in terms of genre and authorship than the PPW. Since the discursive features employed, especially the frames conjured up in the PSR, are dispersed in different textual practices to a greater extent than in the PPW corpus, there are fewer explicitly worded examples of frames or mental models that could be taken out of the context to illustrate the functioning of the underlying ideologies. As a result, this sub-chapter will use but few explicit textual examples.

The frames in the present corpus are constructed on the notions of division and discord, centring on the need to defend American values and, especially American families as the guarantee of its moral fibre, from attacks by feminists and the federal government. The textual repertoires deployed place the social conservative frames, presented here as common sense, under the civil rights and individual freedom meta-frames that are largely blended in the present corpus, combining the legitimacy derived from individual freedom, a central tenet of the American value system, with the movement building potential of the civil rights frame. Thus social conservatives become defenders of the freedoms of choice and conscience but also the stability of the American social fabric.

The discord frame predominantly relies on the "Othering" of feminism, presented as extremist, especially with regard to domains of life of high symbolic value, but also as a clique interest of a limited but powerful set of elitist activists. For that reason, the corpus seeks to undermine the feminist position by selective interpretation of feminist-authored texts and associating them singularly with emotionally charged themes (abortion, gay rights) and

denying the relevance of feminist projects such as the ERA to majority concerns such as employment rights. This frame is implicitly built on a biological-determinist reading of dichotomous gender roles as the foundation of a functioning society and the exclusion of any alternative gender arrangements as undermining the social status quo. The presence of this meta-frame of determinist gender dichotomy explains the scarcity of references to legal or economic domains of meaning and the prevalence of seemingly trivial topics such as the wives taking their husband's name or the seemingly inexplicable protest against paternity leave (PSR15). It is these symbolic features that secure the status of the homemaker and give her a central role in the task of maintaining social stability, according to the worldview of the target audience.

In the present corpus the "Othering" of feminists is achieved by the employment of stigmatising associations in two frequently conflated sub-frames. On the one hand, feminists are persistently associated with homosexuality and abortion, both of which are classified as sinful in the eyes of social conservatives. What makes the use of the two associations frequent is their challenge to the traditional conception of family and motherhood, both of which define the mental universes of conservative women. Homosexuality and alternative patterns of cohabitation but also sexual permissiveness and extramarital sexuality all undermine the security of the traditional heterosexual marriage by showing it to be but one option among many others that are less binding. Abortion suggests that children are not a joyous gift but something similar to consumer choice, made at the convenience of the parents, and this rationalisation reduces the mystery of motherhood and its sacralised status (for an extended discussion of pro- and anti-abortion discourses see Luker 1984). It is for these reasons that abortion and lesbianism are central to the PSR's discussion of the ERA (PSR15, PSR16) and the NOW (PSR20). The concern about the definition of gender roles and the family also explains the sub-corpus' obsession (PSR9, PSR10, PSR14) with the draft, an example of an explicit and physical threat to the separation of male and female life worlds.

The frame of gender role transformation and re-configuration of social order is placed within a broader meta-frame of war, presented in almost Manichean tones that are likely to bear special significance among religious people who form a great proportion of social conservatives. In this corpus the threat of transformation is met by a capable social conservative movement that is constructed in an assertively agentive manner. The frame is made especially effective within a gender order that excludes women's participation in war – suggestion that even women are involved in the battle underscores the seriousness of the challenge and thus helps to maintain the motivation of the women who have joined the movement without them having to worry about their potential loss of traditionalist femininity. The anti-feminist movement itself is construed as defending the social conservative ethos but also the fundamental American value system and, even, its form of government from the

leaders who have been misguided by elitist liberal and/or feminist interest groups.

The frames suggested in the corpus have a strong focus on the critique of the federal government, especially before Reagan entered the White House. It is worth pointing out that although Reagan himself receives praise for his social conservative commitments, there is no sharp distinction in the linguistic and discursive resources used prior to and after the beginning of Reagan's term in office. The anti-government frame is based on American values discourse as well as economic arguments, frequently placed next to one another (e.g., "the 'solutions' will be very expensive in taxes, and even more disastrous in taking control away from parents and transferring it to the government" (PSR4)). The economic argument is revealed in the emphasis on the costs of the proposed social legislation regarding issues of gender and their link to higher taxes (e.g., "a multi-billion dollar agency to provide babysitting", "taxpayer-guaranteed annual income paid by higher taxes"). These economic arguments appear in different parts of the corpus and although they never achieve the prominence given to symbolic issues, they yoke the moral concerns that need not appeal to all conservatives with economic ones that enjoyed universal approval within the coalition.

The federal government is shown as being not only in conflict with the American public but also engaging in activities that seek to disintegrate families, for example by distancing children from their families or through legislation concerning education. Thus, for example, the federal government is implied to offer "how-to-do-it courses in normal and abnormal methods of engaging in sexual activities" but also "instruction to children in how to avoid and/or terminate pregnancies without letting their parents know", "redefining the 'family' in order to include immoral and/or illegal arrangements" (PSR4). The images of government control verge on a conspiracy theory, suggesting nefarious schemes and manipulation (e.g., "using the energy crunch to promote the four-day work week" (PSR4)). The conspiracy frame is extended to the media and the gay community as well. This is an important feature of the present corpus as it uses a rhetorical mode well established in American social conservative discourse. It is notable that although some arguments in the PPW verged on the conspiratorial, such frames were assiduously avoided in the majority of the text. In a publication targeted to a narrow and controlled audience, the habitual conservative discursive frame is reinstated as a badge of legitimacy within the particular universe of discourse.

The normative human being who emerges from the frames is an individual agent in control of her or his destiny, even if that control manifests itself in the recommended choice of a traditionalist family lifestyle. The centrality of individual choice and action can be seen in the disparaging attitude towards attempts to address domestic violence. Battered women, the only housewives who are characterised as "unhappy", are represented as "wives who insist on staying with husbands who beat them up", that is, as people who have made

their choice about being a victim of violence and should not receive any federal help as a result (PSR4). The normativity is veiled under the language of rights and choice, aligning social conservatives with the larger civil rights meta-frame that is especially powerful in the American context. The emphasis on choice overshadows the fact that the options available are to fit the social conservative common sense, one that explicitly excludes a number of choices as deviant or abnormal. That is, one is free to choose as long as one chooses social conservatism. This normative edge, especially in relation to moral and symbolic issues, is more strongly felt in this corpus than in the PPW.

4.3.2. Other verbal texts

4.3.2.1. Situational context

The situational context is more homogeneous in the case of this sub-corpus than in the articles, despite the generic variety and heteroglossic features of the textual material. All of the texts constitute testimonies, speeches and reports delivered in Congress against different gender equality provisions, especially the ERA. As the texts chosen for publication in the PSR have been selected to support the social conservative worldview, all of the texts warn the audience against different repercussions of gender equality measures and urge the acceptance of social conservative policies to guarantee future prosperity of the US. Thus both the activity type and the immediate context of use are homogeneous, as are the positions of the speakers. However, it is worth pointing out that as no testimonies in support of the ERA are reprinted in the PSR, although a great number was delivered in Congress over ten years, the reader is given a false impression of the unanimity of experts on the matters. The audience is encouraged to believe that objective and authoritative experts recommend the rejection of the amendment and attendant initiatives on a wide array of grounds, the diversity of topics masking the unanimity of opinion.

The self-positioning of the experts diverges more than the activity types. Although all of them speak or write from a position of authority, they ground in differently. The first type use overt self-positioning on the ideological field and thus act as advocates for their chosen worldview. The second type mask the self-positioning under the guise of objectivity of academic or legal discourse, with ideological preferences revealed in occasional linguistic slippages but, above all, in the choice of data and argumentation. The two strategies also define the relationship between the speaker and the audience differently: while the first type prefer a more personal appeal based on solidarity, the second, more impersonal discursive strategy, invokes a hierarchical relationship between the expert and the audience, as a means of legitimating the opinions offered.

As in the case of other corpora analysed here, the definitions of situational context are achieved through the deployment of linguistic strategies that seek to persuade the audience to select certain political positions and de-select others. In this sub-corpus, as mentioned above, the self-positioning of the speakers is more overt, with the possible exception of expert witnesses who seek to project objectivity. The texts offer alternative interpretive perspectives to the audience, with the original Congressional audience given more options and information for self-positioning than the readership of the PSR who faces a pre-selected range of opinions that present a more homogeneous worldview intended to fit theirs and support them in their life and political choices, discouraging them from seeking ideological alternatives.

4.3.2.2 Intertextual context

The testimonies and other genres that constitute this sub-corpus contain both internal and external dialogues. Because of the ideological homogeneity of the sub-corpus, it can be treated as a unitary whole at this level of analysis. Divergences within the corpus will be pointed out where relevant. Like the texts analysed above, the testimonies and speeches enter into an implicit dialogue with feminism, but a feminism constructed from a social conservative perspective, that is, arguing not with “real” feminists but “straw feminists”. This is especially noticeable in the discussions of the draft where the radicalism and “unnaturalness” of the exaggerated feminist position appears in an especially heightened form and helps to construct a common sense against other feminist proposals as well. Differently from the article corpus, actual feminist voices are not expressed in the texts, even in a selective mode, giving the readers no authentic material for forming their opinions.

The majority of texts in this corpus are classifiable as expert testimonies and, as was already mentioned above, the expert status is established through two contrasting methods, personalisation and depersonalisation. While the first type relies on the authority of the speaker’s personal experience to back its claims, the second musters the support of traditional legitimating sources (legal precedent, academic research), reflected also in the language use (Latinate vocabulary, nominalisation, passive constructions). In the corpus of testimonies printed in the PSR, it is the emotional ones that predominate (seven out of ten). This is not surprising, considering the movement mobilisation aims of the PSR.

The sub-corpus contains interesting heteroglossic elements, especially in the case of texts by Phyllis Schlafly. She positions herself in two contrasting ways in her testimonies to the U.S. House of Representatives. In the first case, from 1981 (PSR12), she introduces herself as “a wife and mother of six children and the volunteer national president of the Eagle Forum”, constructing the rest of the text in emotional tones and rhetoric of anxiety, fitting to an outsider activist. The text relies on the extensive use of the first person singular and personal narrative to legitimise the opinions offered (e.g., “by bearing and nurturing six

children, who have grown into educated and well-adjusted citizens who will pay decades upon decades of taxes into the Social Security system, I have done vastly more *financially* [emphasis in the original] for the Social Security system than any worker who pays taxes into the system all his or her life” (PSR12)).

In the second testimony in the corpus, from 1983 (PSR24), she represents herself as a Doctor of Law and a member of the Illinois Bar. Accordingly, the language and rhetoric are devoid of the emotionalism evident in the first case. This may be due to the expiry of the original ERA but also the chosen stance of self-presentation. This difference in presentation is also reflected in language use. For example, the opening paragraph of the printed version of the testimony reads as follows:

The most immediate and costly effect of ERA would probably be to mandate taxpayer-funding of abortion by making the Hyde Amendment unconstitutional. This would reverse the 5-to-4 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Newport News Shipbuilding & Dry Dock Co. v. Equal Opportunities Commission* (77 L. Ed. 2d 89, June 20, 1983), in which Justice Stevens, joined by six other Justices, wrote: “The Pregnancy Discrimination Act has now made clear that, for all Title VII purposes, discrimination based on a woman’s pregnancy is, on its face, discrimination because of her sex. (PSR24)

Not only does the text use references to legal precedents, as appropriate for a legal discussion, but it is also more cautious in the phrasing of claims (use of hedges, modality). In effect, the testimony sees Schlafly not condemning the ERA but suggesting a series of amendments to it.

The divergence of register and rhetoric is evident in other sections of the testimony sub-corpus as well. While the two Schlafly testimonies discussed above exploit different intertextual repertoires in two different texts, such a divergence can also be found inside one text. This is notable in the case of Judith Finn who frames herself as a “homemaker from Oak Ridge, Tennessee” to give emotional credence to her statements but maintains a steady argumentative tone all through the text, thus relying on her other role, as a public policy analyst, to legitimise her statements. The legitimisation is achieved discursively, by employing a formal style and intertextual features recurrent in academic discourse. For example:

The most important reason that the wives’ and widows’ benefits should be retained is that, totally apart from the income effects of cutting this benefit from traditional families where the wife has been primarily a homemaker, it would have severe adverse effects on the society as a whole. That is, the elimination of these benefits would induce many mothers who would otherwise choose to stay at home and take care of their own children to enter labor force (PSR13)

The quotation uses Latinate and complex vocabulary as well as complex sentence structure to produce a discourse that carries the authority of academic texts and thus lends credibility to the speaker. The testimonies of this type even

have disclaimers about the generalisability of the statements (e.g., “the research results I am referring to are based on averages” or “it would be dangerous to generalize on this subject from observation of the people around us” (PSR13)). Such qualifying statements are completely missing in the more emotional testimonies that rely on hasty generalisations in most of their arguments. Although there are lapses in the use of formal register (e.g., “my careful review of social science research that bears on this question indicates that it would *not* [emphasis in the original] be a good thing”), they do not entirely switch registers. The impersonal tone cited above stands in stark contrast to texts that seek legitimacy through emotional investment (e.g., “When a wife and mother spends her time in the home rearing children who are moral, law-abiding, industrious, educated, emotionally well-adjusted, and capable of forming strong families of their own, she makes the greatest of all contributions to a healthy society and to the future of our nation” (PSR12)).

The common ground created in these texts relies on the construction of a potential threat to the “traditional” American way of life, constructed according to social conservative ideological preferences, although not identified as such. The attack against feminists is less central than the notion of the defence of both American values (freedom to choose, right to freedom) and American national security. Presented in Congress, testimonies lack the single-focus family appeal of the article sub-corpus although they employ the same notion of the American tradition.

4.3.2.3. Mental model and frames

The majority testimonies published in the PSR cover topics of extreme emotional appeal to the target audience. Hence the topics are overrepresented in the sub-corpus, despite their relative marginality in the whole ERA debate and this influences the mental frames employed. The frames suggested in the testimonies are largely based on the underlying meta-frame of a dichotomous gender order where socially constructed gender roles are mapped unto a biological binary. The primary frame is one of the essential difference of men and women, summoned to explain divergent propositions from the need to exclude women from combat roles in the military to the necessity of special protections for homemakers in Social Security payments. Women, in this normative frame, are represented as passive and vulnerable. The only exception is made for feminists who, in their assertiveness, appear as non-normative women. In this essentialist frame, equality is conflated with uniformity and, as a result, deemed impossible and unnatural. Because of the multiplicity of meanings given to the male-female difference, this frame contains contradictory sub-frames side by side. For example, PSR2 uses the chivalric notion of masculinity (“men instinctively became protective of the women”) but four paragraphs later resorts to a radically different notion of insatiable male sexual appetite (“large numbers of security personnel were needed to protect the

women I commanded, not from the enemy, but from *our own men* [italics in the original]”)

The framing of feminism in testimonies also relies on the frame of social discord and disruption in the American value system and moral standards. In the present case, the frame focuses on gender as a foundation of American social system rather than feminism per se. This explains why issues of gender and sexuality gain more prominence than feminism in this corpus. The discussion associates the ERA abortion, introduced in emotional tones (e.g., “the ERA, if it is proposed and ratified without an explicit provision against its use as a pro-abortion device, will in fact be used to sweep away the minimal protection of unborn children that the courts currently allow” (PSR22)). Feminism and the ERA are equally emphatically equated with homosexuality. This homophobic stance is expressed especially clearly in a series of insinuating rhetorical questions in PSR24:

Would ERA make all anti-sodomy laws unconstitutional? Would ERA prevent a private school or church from dismissing a homosexual or lesbian employee? Would ERA force the hiring of homosexual local policemen? Would ERA prohibit landlords from refusing to rent apartments or rooms to homosexuals? Would ERA prohibit the Scouts from refusing to have homosexuals or lesbians as group leaders? Would ERA force public school sex-education curricula to present homosexuality as an acceptable “alternate lifestyle”? /.../ Would ERA prohibit cities from closing down the homosexual bathhouses as public health nuisances? Would ERA prohibit police, paramedics, dentists, health personnel, and morticians from taking what they believe are adequate precautions to defend themselves against AIDS and other homosexual diseases?

This sequence of explicit and implicit stigmas conjures up multiple fears of parents as well as any citizens and associates them with the constitutional force of the ERA.

In the given context, the ERA is less of a problem as a feminist project but as one that exemplifies federal coercion and central planning. The moral stigmatisation of such social practices is yoked to the anti-statist frame as a guarantee of American stability, especially as the federal government is seen as manipulable by special interest groups. The malleability of federal government transcends party lines and is seen as stemming from the elitist stances of political establishment. The anti-statist frame that prioritises independence, value central in the American value system, over federal supervision is especially evident in the scepticism manifest in the representation of judicial oversight. The anti-statist stance is placed within a wider meta-frame of patriotism, although one that is articulated in a less emotional manner here, in a corpus of texts targeted to one of the three branches of federal government, than in the article sub-corpus. It is this underlying frame of American values and patriotism that are highlighted and the overt conspiracy discourses about the encroachment of federal power are subdued.

4.3.3. Multimodal texts

4.3.3.1. Situational context

Multimodal discourse is both more explicit and more ambivalent than verbal texts. On the one hand, their activity type and purpose are clearly defined (caricatures and photos, in this case) but, because of the ambiguities inherent in the rendition of images, the relationship between the text and the audience remains indeterminate (for a thorough discussion of the complexities of multimodal discourse see Kress and van Leeuwen 2001, 2006). This is especially pertinent in the case of caricatures. In the present corpus, they are overtly positioned as representations of social conservative worldview in their opposition to the intervention of federal government in the private affairs of individuals as well as to social change in the area of morals. This relationship is suggested in the personalisation of (threatened) private individuals, embodiments of the social conservative “little people” and the depersonalisation of the representations of government. This solidarity-based relationship encourages the readers to accept the positions offered, even if they do not disentangle all of the meanings encoded in the images.

The photo essay serves a similar purpose. Because of the documentary nature of the photographic medium, photos suggest a high level of reliability as evidence of the intentions of the people represented. This very tangibility of photography masks the multiple selections behind any photograph, in this case, the restricted criteria used for choosing the series of these particular images for publication. It is this invisible manipulative mechanism that makes images a powerful method for orchestrating common sense. In this case, the photos collect a series of incriminating evidence about the alien and disruptive nature of feminism that builds a relationship of trust and shared concern or even revulsion between the audience and the invisible editor.

4.3.3.2 Intertextual context

Both the caricatures and the photos rely on intertextual features. In the case of the caricatures, the intertextual cues are overtly expressed in the imagery and, because of the character of the medium, their interpretation is always inseparable from their cultural context and the texts circulating there. This is most explicit in the case of the caricature from PSR3 where the interpretation of the audience depends on their recognition of the Uncle Sam reference and its original source of occurrence. This intertextual parallel in the army recruitment poster conjures up patriotic associations and, subsequently, consternation at their mockery on the purported alternative poster referring to Aunt Samantha, breaking the convention of representing the US as a strong male and also placing the female representation of the state into a military context where it is bound to appear especially incongruous.

Intertextual cues can be found in other images as well, although in a less explicit manner (PSR16). Four of the caricatures will be chosen for special consideration. The image illustrating the case against federal child care depends on the readers' recognition of the underlying culture-specific image of domestic bliss that the caricature subverts. The caricature on the taxation of homemakers relies on similar cultural knowledge that allows the readers to identify the woman in the image as a homemaker and not as a child. The reading also depends on an underlying understanding of the notion of inviolability of the home and, by extension, private sphere, and the consequent suggestiveness of the open door of the home and its vulnerability in relation to the oversized hand of the government. Similarly, the critical stance of the caricature on same-sex marriage would be incomprehensible without the triggering of the mental model of a Western marriage (the symbolic significance of the white gown and veil of the bride and wedding bells) but also the general Western norm of today that excludes dresses from male wardrobe. Without these underlying cultural schemas, the critical intent of the caricature that seeks to alarm the audience with its reversal of gender roles would be lost. It can also be argued that the caricature on federal wage control is culture specific. The judge, a stern woman, is a marked choice as the representative of judicial oversight already because of the fact that only a minority of judges are female and this goes against the tradition in caricatures to opt for the most typical representatives of a group. The marked choice could suggest both a feminist influence and a hint to the nanny state, both of which are likely to be rejected as subversive by the target audience. Thus the very fact of a woman sitting on the elevated seat of traditional male authority serves as an example of the feared radical transformation of the gender order.

Intertextual cues also function in the photo essay, both in terms of what has been represented and what has been omitted from the photos. The intended negative reaction of the audience to the series of images of protest marches in support of the ERA depend on the readers' cultural knowledge about the social function of protest marches as a tool of political struggle and its alignment in the political landscape with left-wing and counterculture movements rather than more sedate practices of the political establishment or the networking strategies of the conservative grassroots movements. The outsider status of the protesters has been emphasised by the informal dress and careless grooming of the participants, their outward radicalism supporting the perceived radicalism of their agendas, as reflected in the selectively chosen slogans that focus solely on socialism, lesbianism and gay rights. This is especially important in the photos of women's groups defiling the floor of the state Senate or engaging in a sit-in protest, that is, in behaviours that would be considered unfeminine by the readers of the PSR. What is significant in its absence is the representatives of mainstream groups, from professional organisations to political lobby groups, that predominated in the pro-ERA campaign at the national level. This exclusion of the representatives of the pro-ERA movements whose demeanour

and tactics would have been comparable to those of the readership of the PSR creates a selective impression of the struggle and also increases alarm about social disruption the potential of which underlies all of the photo images. Significantly, the last page of the photo essay also offers the readers a constructive response to the alarm created in the list of resources they can buy to spread public awareness of the social conservative interpretation of the ERA.

Because of the ambivalence of pictorial media, the images could also be subjected to alternative readings but the intertextual interpretation offered here is in accordance with the verbal texts that surround the multimodal material. This combination of texts creates a common ground between the authors/editors and audience that celebrates social stability and status quo and rejects attempts at reform and potential social disruption.

4.3.3.3. Mental model and frames

The mental models conjured up by the multimodal texts are similar to the ones produced in verbal texts, although, because the limited scope of the multimodal corpus, the number of frames suggested remains smaller. The caricatures, because of the topic of the articles they accompany, are primarily derived from the anti-statist frame and the need to protect the inviolability of individual freedom, primarily in private affairs but also in people's relationships with the state. The latter is conjured up in the cartoon about federal wage control, triggering a meta-frame from American value system that valorises individual achievement and competition as bases of social progress and decries any outside intervention. The same meta-frame is present in caricature no. 1 and, especially, no. 3 with its suggestion of a forced entry into a home, protected only by a frail homemaker. The second underlying meta-frame is one of the normative binary division of gender roles that determines people's position in their private relationships (marriage) and social roles (child care). All of the images suggest (unnatural) outside intervention in structures and role divisions that are considered non-negotiable in the social conservative worldview. Although the intrusion is not overdramatised, it promotes existential anxiety in the target audience and calls them to action.

The mental models suggested by the photo images can, by and large, be united under the frame of social discord and division. This is, above all, suggested by the selection of groups to represent the pro-ERA coalition: while socialist workers' groups threaten to overturn the capitalist economic system that has become inseparable from the image of the US, the gay and lesbian community presage a radical transformation of gender roles. The latter, especially in the suggested context of public protest and the attendant attempt to extend the powerful civil rights frame to gay rights, is bound to be especially alarming in the social conservative context. The photo images of women's groups protesting feed the same frame of public discord and radical role reversal, symbolically coded in all the women wearing trousers and in engaging

in public unrest to the extent that it requires the physical removal of the women by the police. In these images, women who have surrendered traditionalist femininity are not only out of the home but also out of the civilised public sphere ruled by stability and order. The frames merge to support the claim that the ERA is not an amendment to extend civil rights but one to effect radical reversal of roles in the family and in society at large.

4.4. Explanation of the ERA-related texts in the PSR as social practice

The textual corpus derived from the PSR not only represents the concerns of social conservative and anti-feminist women, but also acts as a social practice or, even, a set of social practices derived from the surrounding social structures and instrumental in moulding them in accordance with the preferred ideologies of social conservatism. The influence of the PSR is, on the one hand, discursive and, on the other hand, political: it creates a language that speaks the concerns of social conservative women and, by constructing this language, enables the social conservative women's voice to enter political debate and realign alliances there, especially with regard to concerns related to the family and the private sphere. The thesis does not argue that the PSR alone created the social conservative women as a political action group but it claims that the discursive repertoire offered in the PSR was instrumental in sustaining and reinforcing the nascent group identity and, through that, in translating individual women into a political force. Thus, the PSR is representative as it describes the central concerns of social conservative women but also constitutive as it forges a coherent movement out of autonomous individuals and stakes out a claim to a segment of the American political landscape. Slippages and discursive discontinuities in texts presented to different audiences allow us to argue that this constitutive angle is consciously manufactured and strategically employed to achieve desired framings of events, participants and social processes.

Unlike the PPW corpus, the positions espoused in the PSR are primarily inspired by the need to create and maintain group identity among social conservative women. For this reason, the textual material focuses less on the demonisation of the feminist movement, a given among the readers of the PSR, and is more concerned with creating and maintaining the cohesion of social conservative women's movement. This is achieved largely by emphasising the breadth and strength of the movement and the effectiveness of its actions. The corpus makes fewer references to concerns that stay outside the immediate sphere of interests of social conservative women (economy, Cold War) and, instead, dedicates a considerable share of textual material to the discussion of matters that are of great symbolic importance to the target audience (abortion, draft, attempts to broaden the definition of marriage). The main focus, in terms

of thematic distribution and lexical choices, is the family that the target audience is equated with, in the self-designation “pro-family movement”. This, implicitly, defines the opponents as being anti-family and thus excludes them as legitimate partners in the discussion about the future of families and, by extension, the organisation of the private sphere in general. Thus, the PSR accepts the feminist slogan that personal is political, while claiming the politicised site of the family as its own.

The corpus is overlexicalised with regard to attempts to resituate the dividing line between the public and the private or, in other words, what have traditionally been considered the male and female spheres of influence. The texts express discomfort about women’s increased entry into the “male” sphere of public life (labour force, the military) but also about men’s potential encroachment upon the female sphere of the home. This concern over the re-situation of gender roles helps to explain the PSR’s opposition to paternity leave. If dichotomous gender roles are seen as sacred and immutable, then any attempt to alter them is bound to be perceived as not merely radical but also destabilising to the larger social order built on the gender binary. Such a shift would disrupt the social conservative women’s life world, which to them is endowed with the mission to guarantee the moral regeneration of the family and, through that, the United States as a whole. The loss of the traditionalist conception of the family, therefore, would weaken, if not break, the moral backbone of the nation. The latter threat is likely to be especially alarming to social conservatives in the aftermath of the shifts in the social mores as well as the international standing of the US after the 1960s–1970s.

The ERA becomes a symbol of all attempts to transform the gender order, “Othered” within the social conservative discursive universe as morally and politically unacceptable. Although the core of the PSR argument rests with symbolic claims, it also situates government intervention in the private lives of individuals outside the acceptable practice of the American polity. This plays an important role in the de-legitimisation of the ERA but also other similar legislation, potentially all social liberal legislation. As such, this theme feeds into the anti-statist stand of the American value system, reinforced with the suggestion that government intervention would deprive Americans of their individual rights and freedoms. The radicalism of feminism and the federal government form an unholy alliance in this discursive universe. This purported attack on the core American values feeds the existential anxieties of many Americans of the time that saw the US humbled internationally and domestically and encourages the readership to take action to restore the greatness of America by bringing back its traditionalist self-image.

Thus the social conservative women are invited to not only defend their own way of life but also America and its values. This wider mission also helps to explain the proportion of attention dedicated to the federal government, the courts and the media, that is, the formal and informal opinion leaders who, in the social conservative eyes, are failing in their task of supporting the moral

regeneration of the USA. This might also explain some of the vitriol targeted personally at President Carter who, as a born-again Christian and relative political outsider from the South, had promised to bring change to Washington but had failed, at least with regard to the religiously informed agenda that would have satisfied the social conservative electorate. There is new hope in the election of Ronald Reagan, but as the corpus shows, this does not reduce the movement's suspicions of the potential corruption or corruptibility of political agents. Thus, the PSR corpus as well as the PPW, creates a sharp distinction between the federal government and the USA, inviting the readers to take action to defend the latter from the interventions of the elites who represent the former. The idealised America conjured up, indirectly, in the corpus, is one of localised communities and families, rather than a centrally controlled federal state. This representation, to an extent, conflicts with the testimonial voices that speak about foreign wars when describing the challenges involved in potential drafting of women. The responsibilities that result from the superpower role of the US inevitably conflict with the social conservative ideal of decentralised small-town America but this tension remains unacknowledged in the PSR, crowded out by appeals to patriotism.

The anti-statist and patriotic themes extend the discursive repertoire of the PSR corpus beyond concerns about the family, gender and sexuality. In a way, gender issues become symbolic of the encroachments of the federal government: if federal bureaucrats do not shirk from attempts to engineer gender, they are out of control and need to be reigned in. As such, gender issues become a bridge between different strands of conservatism, although appeals outside immediate readership are more limited in the PSR than in the PPW corpus. Rather than selling the anti-feminist stance to other conservatives, the PSR sells elements of other conservative strands to social conservative women, suggesting that their needs are best met by a fluid coalition that is not fully dedicated to a gender and family agenda but furthers it the best it can. The possibility of social liberal support to the family has already been discursively excluded as ideologically alien. This choice has important consequences to American families that lack most of the social protections offered in most European countries. By de-legitimising social liberalism, through associations with radicalism and attempts to re-configure the traditionalist gender order, conservative ideology frees itself from the need to offer any support to families who are granted full freedom to fight for their survival in a domain where they are severely disadvantaged (e.g., in comparison to employers).

The universe of discourse as represented in the PSR accepts conservatism as the only common-sense ideology, with no viable alternative. The stigmatisation of social and cultural liberalism, an important goal in the PPW, is a *fait accompli* in the PSR. Significantly, though, existential anxieties about gender roles and American values are more pronounced in the PSR than in the PPW, now embedded within a discursive frame that borders on paranoia. What is more, the sense of threat is not reduced significantly in the PSR after the

election of Ronald Reagan. This suggests that anxiety and suspicion of out-groups, however sympathetic to the social conservative cause, play a central role in maintaining the group identity of social conservatives as self-designated outsiders from the political mainstream. The potential victim status and a permanent sense of threat from outside makes the movement insular but also helps to maintain its unity and the commitment of its members to the cause. In this, the PSR corpus reveals a feature that is central to social conservative group identity and the resultant discursive practice, even now when the White House is more congenial with social conservative needs and wants than any previous administration. Thus, the PSR does not so much show a shift in social conservative discourse towards greater convergence with the mainstream after the victory of conservatism in American society but a strategic maintenance of a marginalised stance, characterised by a persistent fear and anxiety. This pervasively alert stance of permanent suspicion of the political establishment has been maintained by the PSR to this date, as evidenced in the issues of the PSR published after 1983 but not directly analysed here.

The PSR corpus, as a social movement building tool, thus, provides naturalised ideological positions, all integrally linked to the American value system, that members can identify themselves with in order to belong to the close-knit community of “normal” Americans who are being constantly threatened by outside forces in the shape of potentially coercive federal government and various hostile ideologies such as feminism. This survivalist rhetoric makes the social conservatives targeted with the texts define themselves as the protectors of “traditional” America and as defenders of order against change. The sense of threat, as was suggested above, was especially great in the 1970s, after the defeat in Vietnam but, for social conservatives, especially after the major social transformations of the 1960s, above all, the re-defining of sexual mores and gender roles. Gender order is thus but one – although central – order to be protected from an enemy that is increasingly American, not a distant foreign “Other” of the Cold War. The internal enemy calls for constant vigilance in the mission to maintain the sanctity of family and the greatness of America, goals that are not entirely separable in the corpus.

While the PPW represents discourses that are largely inclusive, the PSR constitutes a discursive practice based on exclusion. Yet the two act in unison as a social practice, consolidating the social conservative movement with the exclusionary discourse of the PSR but also offering it as a viable ideological tool for broader audiences sympathetic to conservatism and/or disenchanted with the putative failures of liberalism. However, the two corpora have a distinct interpellative appeal. In the PSR the normative individual embraces the American values of individualism and choice, although they are mitigated with language of tradition and order: the idealised vision of society is not based on the rhetoric of the survival of the fittest but the vision of closely-knit communities. Individualism here is not atomised at an individual level but extended to communities. What is permanent in the representation of

individualism is the suspicion of outside control, here coupled with a more broad suspicion of difference. Thus, the interpellations of the PSR are much more sharply targeted in terms of ideology, if not necessarily in terms of gender, than those in the PPW and have limited use outside the immediate circle of social conservative grassroots movement. If the PPW corpus could also be interpreted as interpellating women with “non-traditional” family and career choices, in the PSR there are no explicit alternatives to the traditionalist family. Other heterosexual life choices (career-orientation, childlessness) are not stigmatised but they simply do not appear in the corpus where family is seen as a central element of life and a guarantee of American stability. The urgency of the appeal and the careful targeting increase the expressive force and effectiveness of the acts of hailing. The proof of their effectiveness can be seen in the emotional investment of anti-feminist activists to the cause and their loyalty to the STOP-ERA campaign. This effectiveness and group cohesion made the social conservative women an influential presence in the American political landscape.

Thus, despite or, possibly because of, the limited interpellative appeal of the PSR corpus, the discursive practices it employed re-constituted the social, even if not necessarily in the ways supportive of the needs of social conservative women. Social conservative women came to self-identify with a very limited range of discourses on family, gender and American values, dismissing alternatives that could have empowered them as women, for example, through a partnership with difference feminism with which, as suggested in Chapter 1, they shared important ideological similarities. This division of differently situated women into two incompatible ideological camps is possibly one of the most significant effects of the type of social conservative discourse espoused by the PSR. As a result, conservative women and their needs have been dispersed within a broader conservative agenda that has been eager to exploit family values as a rhetorical resource, without committing itself to policies designed to support and benefit families, especially families of lower socio-economic strata.

The PSR corpus enters into a complex web of relations of power. On the one hand, as has been suggested above, the discursive cohesion produced by texts such as the PSR helped forge the cohesion of groups such as the Eagle Forum or the STOP-ERA movement. The texts themselves are not immediate carriers of power, but power is created with the distribution of the newsletter among the network of women activists and the resultant emergence of a group identity that, by engaging in political activism, helped to bring about a conservative revolution in the American political discourse. Therefore, it can be argued, along Foucauldian lines, that the PSR is an instance of the net-like operation of the structures of power/knowledge that translate into political action by the groups interpellated, resulting in their acquiring “real” political power. On the other hand, the same seemingly empowering acts can also be seen as disempowering as they subdue the subversive potential of homemakers and other social conservative women by yoking them to a narrow ideology, albeit one with a

strong hegemonic appeal, that is ultimately antagonistic to their economic needs. It is this second layer of power, seen from a traditional materialist perspective, that should not be forgotten in the euphoria of celebrating the decentralised nature of power. This broader power, primarily realised in neoliberalist economic imperatives, has had far-reaching effects on the incomes and wellbeing of families, by virtue of having been naturalised as the common sense social organisation, depriving them of a language of legitimate protest.

It is not argued here that the PSR sought to make its readership oblivious to the larger social forces that operate in society, but, possibly inadvertently, it has helped to close the American family discourse into a vicious circle by excluding the possibility of cross-pollination from ideologies informed by some form of social liberalism. It is at this level that the present thesis, once again, wants to voice its pessimism about the possibility of resistance that is optimistically suggested by Foucault. When the power of discourse is coupled with economic and political influence, the achieved hegemony, if it permeates all spheres of life, is hard to counteract in the world of political discourse which has delegitimised or co-opted ideologies with a potential to undermine the system. Thus here, too, the surface signifiers of freedom and choice continue to mask the underlying inequalities that go beyond gender. The thesis does not suggest that people are completely deprived of agency by repressive ideological apparatuses. Rather, the analyses presented above suggest that while people are agentive in their political choices, this agentivity can be channelled in desired directions by manipulating common-sense notions. People barraged by innumerable commercial messages have become immune to blatant sales strategies in politics as well, but they are less well equipped to deal with more subtle discursive activation of their underlying value systems. These processes are especially potent if people's primary conduit of information lacks ideological variety and presents information from a selective angle. Media products targeted to a narrow audience such as the PSR are prime examples of texts that both inform their audiences and shape them ideologically. As a result, people indeed use their political agency in the political process but on the basis of limited information and, as a result, the acts of political empowerment may result in the socio-economic disempowerment of the same groups.

CONCLUSION

Gender equality enjoys an ambivalent position in contemporary American political discourse. On the one hand, it has come to be seen as politically passé, associated with the optimistic naiveté of the 1960s–1970s, and proved unviable in the harsh realities of the increasingly conservative decades since the 1980s. The political neglect has been compounded by the disenchantment with the concept of equality in feminist circles, where many leading figures have increasingly delved into the theorisation of the politics of difference. On the other hand, formal gender equality is seen as largely achieved and, as a result, it has been exiled from the domestic policy debates by exporting it to a post-colonial context. However, the complacency with the achievements of second-wave feminism may have serious consequences in the pervasively conservative environment of today's American public discourse, which is witnessing a stealthy erosion of many gender-related rights and freedoms.

The conservative encroachment necessitates a fresh analysis of the anti-feminist discourse of the 1970s–1980s as it was that decade that saw the emergence of discursive strategies which streamline the social conservative stance on gender and sexuality with the American value system, challenging, if not outright discrediting, the feminist and social liberal alternatives. Ideological contestations between competing conservatism led to the foregrounding of gender issues to unify the conservative agenda, thereby rendering gender into a strategic device as well as an embodiment of the emerging conservative creed. For this very reason, untangling the ideological complexities of the rhetoric used in that period, especially in the social conservative anti-feminist campaign against the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), enables us to gain a better understanding of not only the general conservative universe of discourse but also its strategic deployment.

While the socio-political aspects of the conservative mobilisation in general and around the ERA in particular have found insightful discussion in the past decades, the linguistic-discursive angles have received less attention. This is why they have been chosen for analysis in the present thesis. It is the discursive aspect of the anti-ERA campaign that has had a lasting effect on American political discourse and, through that, social reality, by influencing the accepted ways of conceptualising and articulating notions associated with central tenets of liberalism and conservatism. A close discourse analysis of anti-feminist rhetoric, like the one presented in this thesis, demonstrates the exploitation of discursive mechanisms to ensure the success of certain ideologies and to delegitimise others in the American universe of political discourse. The period when the shift from a social liberal consensus to a social conservative one took place is a pertinent juncture to study, for it is in moments of transition that fissures in the otherwise naturalised ideological frameworks are most likely to be revealed.

Conservatism has had a complex history in the USA, a country created on classical liberal foundation that has become equated with the “American way”, embraced by most political parties in the US. As a result, American liberalism and conservatism accept the basic tenets of classical liberalism and ideological contestation appears primarily in relation to social and cultural affairs, for example issues of gender and sexuality. Conservatism, especially social conservatism, was marginalised in American politics of the 20th century up to the 1960s when a series of domestic and foreign political cataclysms led to a reversal of attitudes in the American polity. It was then that a volatile but effective coalition of disparate conservative forces, consisting of economic neoliberals, anti-communists and social conservatives, was forged.

This uneasy conservative alliance was united by a common enemy, social and cultural liberalism, conservatism’s lack of a coherent ideology veiled by the vehemence of its actions on topical issues of a high symbolic value, for example those related to gender. The ERA serves as a good example of the perceived threat to American conservatism as it encapsulates two elements central to the conservative agenda: sacredness of the private sphere and the limited role of the state. On the one hand, the amendment seemed to reconfigure the existing gender order and, on the other hand, increase the intervention of the federal government in the affairs of states and private individuals. This double threat made the ERA an attractive target for conservative organisations of diverse ideological preferences, uniting them behind a common cause. The discursive strategies deployed by conservative forces in the anti-ERA campaign successfully de-legitimised social and cultural liberal definitions of American values by tapping into the ever-present American anti-statism but also the American fear of radical change, especially in matters as fundamental as the existing gender order.

The concept of equality is central to classical liberalism, the founding philosophy of the US and the source of its conceptualisation of individual rights and freedoms. The positionality of the liberal subject who was guaranteed equality was revealed only with the emergence of critiques based on race, class and gender. The first feminist campaigns sought to extend the definition of human being and the attendant equality rights to women. The debates of the past century, however, have revealed the problematic nature of the concept of equality, especially its tensions with the need to accommodate differences between men and women.

Questions of equality and difference have remained divisive within the feminist field of thought, with especially clear differences of opinion between liberal/equality feminism and radical/difference feminism. Equality feminism believes that differences between men and women are socially constructed and should be minimised as they help to maintain a social status quo that erodes the rights of women. Difference feminism, on the contrary, considers male-female differences essential and sees the major problem in the suppression of true female difference in a male-centred world. In a hostile cultural environment

both equality and difference feminist positions can translate into public perceptions detrimental to women's rights: emphasising gender differences helps to perpetuate them but so does ignoring gender differences and treating women similarly to men. This dilemma has also undermined legislation designed to promote women's rights. The equality-difference debate has also been central in the debates over legislation concerning gender equality in the US starting from the 1920s.

The version of the ERA that was debated in the 1970s, in consonance with the classical liberal ethos of the US, was defined as a civil rights issue the aim of which was the cementing of negative freedoms of individual women. Diverse feminist groups united behind the effort to enter the ERA into the Constitution, a symbolic recognition of gender equality as a necessary feature of a democracy. The ERA emerged from Congressional debates as a document of great symbolic and little substantial value. The ERA was passed with overwhelming majorities in the Senate and the House of Representatives in 1972 and was sent to the states for ratification. Concerted opposition to the ERA was raised only in the ratification phase, that is, when federal power was extended to the level of states. If the supporters of the ERA worked the political elites in Washington, the opponents mobilised the grassroots, using populist rhetoric to build on their suspicion of the elites and federal government but, above all, exploiting their fear of change.

The most prominent group opposing the ERA was the STOP-ERA movement organised by Phyllis Schlafly by mobilising social conservative women. As the ERA had been adopted as an embodiment of traditional American values, above all the equality of all citizens before the law and their right to free self-realisation, the primary strategy employed by Schlafly was a redefinition of the ERA within the same framework of American values. The resultant discursive strategy of the STOP-ERA sought to re-frame the central argument of the proponents of the ERA, the idea that the ERA protected the equality of the roles of men and women, into the claim that the ERA was a vehicle of radical role change. This discursive shift was achieved by defining the feminist movement as radical and, ultimately, un-American in its purported attack against the traditionalist nuclear family as well as the rights of the states and individuals. The ERA debate was intensified by the awareness that it was part of a symbolic struggle for the future of the US and its values. The atmosphere of insecurity prevalent in the 1970s provided a welcoming ground for social conservative rhetoric that appealed to permanence and tradition. The discursive shift initiated by the STOP-ERA altered the initially enthusiastic attitude towards the ERA enough to slow its ratification. The ERA expired in 1982, with only three states short of the required quota for ratification.

The STOP-ERA movement successfully changed public perceptions of the ERA but also of gender equality and social liberalism in general. The anti-ERA campaign thus demonstrates the strategic use of discursive means to delegitimise gender equality within an achievement-oriented individualist cultural

context and the role of such discursive mechanisms in forming a political consensus. The campaign vividly illustrates the centrality of linguistic-discursive means of persuasion, rather than overt coercion, in today's society where language is the primary means through which ideologies operate. Such operation of ideologies is best observed in the study of discourse. Discourse, as defined by Michel Foucault and Norman Fairclough, is a social practice, language use that does not merely describe the social but constitutes it. This productive capacity of the notion of discourse is especially relevant to the project at hand as anti-feminist discourse importantly contributes to the formation of the anti-feminist movement that did not exist prior to the emergence of the anti-ERA discourse.

The thesis is couched within a Foucauldian conception of power, with focus on the particular and the contingent. By transforming the "truth" about gender equality within a clearly demarcated space of one political debate, anti-ERA discourse also helped to constitute the conservative economy of power at a national level. The localised Foucauldian analytic of power is especially germane in the present context where the lasting conservative shift was achieved at the grassroots level. The whole anti-ERA campaign eloquently demonstrates that power is not a possession but a productive potential which generates human action. However, in the light of contemporary developments, the present thesis has considerable reservations about Foucault's claim that power is totally dispersed and reminds the readers of the extent to which discourse is manipulable to serve narrowly defined ideological aims.

In the present thesis ideology is defined as the array of sense-making practices of a particular community, its "common sense", naturalised as the "normal" state of affairs. Such ideologies operate at an individual as well as social level. In the latter case, they can be identified as the hegemony, the common sense that serves the interests of the dominant groups in society, yet made volatile by the permanent need to re-win the consent of the governed. The latter is achieved by discursive manipulation. The ERA campaign is an excellent example of hegemonic struggle where the cultural liberal and social conservative actors seek to create their preferred common-sense notions of gender and equality within the American universe of political discourse in order to win the approval of the electorate. The competing ideologies were realised in a series of interpellative acts, to use the term coined by Louis Althusser, that invited the American public to recognise themselves as particular kinds of political subjects and, as a result, to align themselves with either the liberal or the conservative ideology. Interpellative processes of subjectivation are central to the discursive strategies developed by Schlafly.

Ideology, treated in this thesis as a cognitive group schema that is politically situated and materially realised in political praxis, is above all launched through the use of discursive resources. It is by studying discourse that we can gain access to the processes of forming preferred definitions of reality. The present thesis avoids the elusiveness of the Foucauldian analytic by studying particular

discursive instances in the anti-ERA campaign where language is used to gain and maintain power and shape people's ideological preferences. The methodology used in the thesis follows the models of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in combining rigorous linguistic analysis with political explanation. The analysis employs the three-tier version of CDA proposed by Norman Fairclough, consisting of the description of the textual practice, the interpretation of the discursive practice and the explanation of the social practice realised in particular texts. However, Fairclough's method, with its primary focus on materialist aspects of discourse, does not entirely meet the needs of the present thesis. The methodology has, therefore, been modified with insights from cognitive discourse analysis developed by Teun van Dijk who dedicates greater attention to the socio-cognitive structures and mental models that act as interfaces between the individual and the social, a necessary aspect for understanding movement mobilisation in the present thesis. Following Robert Entman and George Lakoff the thesis suggests that the socio-cognitive frames of individuals can also be influenced to meet ideological ends.

The empirical part of the thesis is devoted to a close linguistic analysis of two text corpora to detect the methods used to create what later became a lasting shift in the American public discourse, characterised by the legitimisation of social conservative discourses and the de-legitimisation of social and cultural liberal ones. The first corpus, Phyllis Schlafly's book *The Power of the Positive Woman* (1977) (PPW), serves as an illustration of the social conservative attempt to expand its audience outside the immediate activist circle in the final phases of the ERA ratification struggle. The second corpus, ERA-related texts from the *Phyllis Schlafly Report* (PSR), the social conservative newsletter edited by Schlafly, from the years 1980–1983, represents an example of movement building inside the social conservative women's movement in the final stages of the ERA ratification struggle and the beginning of conservative dominance in American political discourse. The close analysis of the corpora revealed extensive similarities in the discourses employed, suggesting the existence of a shared social conservative discourse, one that can be modified to fit the requirements of a specific function and to manipulate different target audiences.

Both corpora were subjected to an identical three-tier CDA analysis. The description phase identified the lexico-grammatical strategies used in the texts. The primary features in the area of vocabulary are the use of ideologically contested and emotionally charged lexis (nouns, adjectives, verbs and their collocation patterns) and metaphors, especially in contexts that result in the creation of sharp distinctions between in- and out-groups. Sites of ideological contestation are characterised by overlexicalisation. The emphasis on the naturalness and rationality of the in-group implicitly labels the out-group as unnatural and irrational. Both corpora extensively rely on presuppositions that covertly present the readers with ready-made conclusions. The texts resort to unqualified absolute claims. On the grammatical plane, the corpora exploit

personal pronouns to forge in- and out-group identifications. Instances of transitivity grant or decline agency; the passive voice and nominalisation are used to conceal agency behind specific actions. The choice of verb tenses and modality stress the inevitability of imminent ERA-related changes. The corpora include various sentence types that reinforce the “common sense” (voice, modality) and summon readers to action (imperatives, interrogatives).

The interpretation phase of analysis was dedicated to the study of discursive strategies. In both corpora, the interpretation of the situational context distinguished two different but intertwined reading potentials, one preferred by the author; the other embedded under the first reading, signalling manipulation with the audiences. The analysis of the linguistic resources suggests that this polyfocality is to remain hidden from the implied reader whose trust in the truth value of the text is based on its claim to the unequivocal common sense. The interpretation phase also revealed numerous instances of explicit and implicit dialogicity as well as the presence of diverse mental models and frames united by their reliance on a narrowly defined (social) conservative worldview. The information gained from the description and interpretation phases of analysis was placed within the social context in the explanation phase of analysis to elucidate how the corpora act as social practices.

The description and interpretation of the corpora reveal the overlexicalisation of feminist-identified women in collocations associated with violence, militancy and extremism, excluding them from the traditionalist model of femininity as well as civilised political dialogue. This tendency was more pronounced in the PPW, suggesting the need to disenchant non-activist readers from their potential sympathy for feminism, a goal already accomplished within the social conservative movement. According to necessity, the corpora stress both the marginality of feminism in the American society and its far-reaching influence. Feminism is labelled as a totalitarian dogma alien to the American way of life. The ideological positioning of social conservatism is not acknowledged in the PPW where it is treated as naturalised common sense. In the PSR the feminist movement is contrasted to an equally effective social conservative movement, which makes ideological contestation the centre of the corpus and uses it for movement mobilisation. As a result, the PSR corpus is characterised by an explicit and implicit use of the war metaphor, investing the social conservative struggle with apocalyptic overtones.

The corpora represent men and women based on a dichotomous view of gender constructed on essential difference. The male-female difference is a central concern of the PSR. The representation of social conservative women and men derives from hegemonic gender roles; feminism is marked as gender deviance. Gender difference is associated with diversity, a central American value, and contrasted to uniformity, a totalitarian feature the ERA and feminists are purported to promote. In consonance with the American value system, the corpora emphasise the centrality of choice.

Individualised traditionalist men and women are opposed to the de-individualised feminists or the federal government, two forces that are suggested to be acting in unison. In the PSR the targets also include the Supreme Court, the political establishment and the media, represented in a populist mode, suggesting a conspiracy by an elitist cabal. In both corpora the ERA appears as threatening several central tenets of the American value system, above all, individual freedom and choice. This is emphasised by recurrent use of tropes associated with totalitarianism. The corpora evoke deep-seated anti-statist sentiments held by many Americans, especially social conservatives. Feminist initiatives are represented as being antagonistic to the needs of even those conservatives who do not share the social conservative fervour about traditionalist gender roles. The PSR is more suspicious of the federal government and the political elites, maintaining its scepticism even in the period of conservative ascendancy.

The corpora consistently identify themselves as the voice of the majority of Americans and oppose themselves to feminism and, more broadly, social and cultural liberalism, identified as elite projects. The corpora lack direct references to political parties, suggesting an attempt to address a bi-partisan audience of conservatives. The corpora create sharply distinguished in- and out-groups. Characteristically to texts that seek to unite the uneasy conservative alliance, the PPW relies not so much on a unifying agenda as much as on the demonisation of a shared enemy, here identified as feminism and the federal government. The loosely bound in-group is tacitly equated with the American value system and common sense, not a clearly enunciated ideology. The PSR corpus is more explicit in defining its in-group as specifically social conservative and, in conveying a sense of existential threat, suggesting an almost apocalyptic struggle between social conservatives and the “Othered” social and cultural liberal coalition, as a means of inciting its target audience to political action.

The hidden ideological positioning of both corpora is revealed in the use of discursive strategies that can be subjected to differential modes of interpretations, two of which were studied in the present thesis. In the first interpretation of the situational context, the PPW and PSR are defined as texts that seek to inform their audience. The texts set up a non-hierarchical relationship of trust between the author and the readers, based on a shared concern about the American value system. The readers who accept this preferred interpretation of situational context will not perceive the inherent positionality of the texts and the selectivity with which views are presented, a feature revealed only in the second interpretation of situational context. In the latter case the PPW and the PSR stand as examples of political persuasion or, especially in the case of the PSR, of movement mobilisation, which hide their manipulative intent and inherently hierarchical nature. The validity of this interpretation is proved by the numerous linguistic and discursive slippages appearing in the texts. The PSR, because of its more narrowly defined audience,

is bolder in using linguistic resources to foreground the first reading, without having to resort to the masking strategies employed in the PPW.

The interpretation of the corpora revealed significant occurrences of intertextuality, especially an implicit dialogue with feminism as well as the social liberal discourse on the role of the state in the definition of the private sphere. A dialogue is also set up with civil rights discourses that are summoned to de-legitimise gender equality as a civil rights issue. There is a pervasive implicit dialogue with social liberal discourse on family and morality, although the opponent is denied the right to speak on the issues. The language of rights and choice is reserved for the social conservative movement, with feminists and social liberals relegated to the discursive domain of coercion. However, in the PSR, especially, surface dialogicity masks the ideological monolocality of the corpus. Intertextual features construct an anti-feminist common ground between the author(s) and the audience but, differently from the largely reactive anti-feminism of the PPW, the PSR stance is proactive in character: the readers are not only invited to reject feminist policies but also to join social movements to promote their own worldview.

The main frames and mental models used in the corpora are constructed around division and discord. The primary one defines feminism as an extremist minority interest dangerous to the American way of life, because of its aim of de- and re-constructing the gender order, a step towards the reconfiguration of all other social relations. The frame is based on an underlying meta-frame of a hierarchically organised dichotomous gender order. In this frame equality is conflated with uniformity and deemed unnatural. The underlying meta-frame also explains the persistent concern, especially eloquently expressed in the PSR, about permissive sexual mores, abortion and homosexuality. The discussion of gender is couched in the language of American values, especially individualism and choice. The ERA and similar initiatives are presented as restrictions on freedom and a threat to the meritocratic basis of the American society, especially in the PPW, which extends the readership beyond social conservatives.

The employed frames, with their focus on the destabilisation of the gender order and the American value system, evoke insecurity, thus creating a larger mental model of existential threat at an individual as well as societal level. The anxiety is especially pronounced in the case of the PSR. The contextually reinforced existential threat is the ultimate point of the texts, stored in the memories of the participants and demanding immediate action. This suggests that both corpora have not only representational but also constitutive value, though one that differs somewhat between the two corpora.

The PPW was important in disseminating social conservative ideas outside the immediate activist circle, the non-partisan discursive repertoire employed suggesting its ambition to forge a broad-based conservative consensus. The PPW achieves the aim through re-framing both conservatism and feminism, liberating the former from the taint of extremism by transferring that label to the latter and, by extension, to other cultural and social liberal causes. This

cognitive frame shift is supported by the social circumstances of the 1970s that alienated the American electorate from social and cultural liberal policies but also from the expansion of the power of the federal government. By relying on the American anti-statist tradition and by defining social liberalism as a radical creed the PPW leaves (social) conservatism as the only rational option for the responsible citizen. In this, the book is not only constitutive of a certain image of the American values but also of a normative subject position of an American who, in order to maintain the greatness of the nation, is invited to reject liberal social policies (of which gender equality is but one) and embrace a clearly defined set of norms that span from ideas about family to national security.

The analysis proves the validity of the Foucauldian reading of power in the case of the PPW, one of the nodes in the dispersed American social conservatism that had the potential to interpellate different audiences. However, the present analysis questions the possibility of Foucauldian resistance in this wider social process, specifically, the possibility of a feminist refusal of the ideological interpellations offered by social conservative texts. Inserting themselves into the anti-feminist universe of discourse during the ERA debate, feminists inevitably had to accept their interpellation in a conservative frame. Attempts to contest these definitions only led to their increased currency, translating into further stigmatisation of feminism. While many social conservative concerns articulated in the PPW have largely been ousted from mainstream American public discourse, the discursive universe persists in demonising feminist and other social liberal equality projects, suggesting that localised feminist resistances have not affected the hegemonic emphases of the society.

The PSR is both representational and constitutive of the political agenda of social conservative women. The thesis does not argue that the PSR created the social conservative women as a political group but the analysis proves that the discursive repertoire offered in the PSR was instrumental in sustaining and reinforcing the group identity. Discursive discontinuities in the texts suggest that the constitutive angle is consciously manufactured. The corpus dedicates considerable space to the discussion of symbolic matters, especially those linked to the re-situation of the dividing line between the public and the private. The mission of social conservative women, as suggested in the PSR, combines concern for the moral regeneration of the family with that of the US. The idealised America conjured up, indirectly, in the corpus, is one of localised communities and families, rather than a centrally controlled federal state. The audience of the PSR is invited to take action to restore the greatness of America by bringing back its traditionalist self-image, a potent appeal in the insecure 1970s.

Gender issues form a bridge between different conservatisms. Instead of introducing the anti-feminist stance to other conservatives, the PSR “sells” elements of other conservative ideologies to social conservative women, suggesting that their needs are best met by a fluid conservative coalition. The possibility of social liberal support to the family is discursively excluded as

ideologically alien. By de-legitimizing social liberalism, conservative ideology encapsulated in the PSR frees itself from the need to offer any support to families who are granted full freedom to fight for their survival in a domain where they are severely disadvantaged.

The universe of discourse of the PSR accepts conservatism as the only common-sense worldview. Despite the presence of an active social conservative movement in the PSR corpus, it exhibits greater existential anxieties about gender roles and American values than the PPW. What is more, this sense of threat is not reduced significantly in the corpus after the conservative Reagan revolution. One of the reasons for this paranoid passion could be the irreversibility of change in gender roles in American society: instead of speaking for the majority of American women, the social conservatives increasingly represent a shrinking minority. Thus the vehement emphasis on tradition and normalcy seeks to allay the doubts of the target audience about their way of life and its sustainability and, in a sense, this is the ultimate constitutive intent of the corpus.

The self-marginalisation of the social conservative discourse revealed in the analysis of the PSR also suggests that anxiety and suspicion of out-groups play a central role in maintaining the group identity of social conservatives. This potential victim status and a permanent sense of threat from outside make the movement insular but also help to maintain the commitment of its members to the cause. Thus, the PSR does not so much show a shift in social conservative discourse towards greater convergence with the mainstream after the victory of conservatism in American society but a strategic maintenance of a marginalised stance, characterised by a persistent anxiety and fear of difference. This survivalist rhetoric makes the social conservatives targeted with the texts define themselves as the protectors of “traditional” America and as defenders of order against change. Gender order is but one – although central – order to be protected from (liberal) enemies within the American polity.

While the PPW represents discourses that are largely inclusive, the PSR constitutes a discursive practice based on exclusion. Yet the two corpora act in unison as a social practice that seeks to consolidate the (social) conservative movement both inside the activist circle and among broader audiences sympathetic to conservatism and/or disenchanted with the putative failures of liberalism. This determines the scope of interpellative appeal of the two corpora. The interpellations of the PSR are much more sharply targeted in terms of ideology than those in the PPW. In the PSR the normative individual embraces the American values of individualism and choice, although they are mitigated with language of tradition and order. The PSR re-constitutes the social by limiting women’s range of concerns to the family and gender, defined from a social conservative perspective. As a result, social conservative women and their needs are dispersed within a broader conservative agenda that is eager to exploit family values as a rhetorical resource without advocating policies to support families, especially families of lower socio-economic strata.

The analysis of the PSR corpus also demonstrates the validity of the Foucauldian approach to power. The discursive cohesion produced by the PSR helps to increase the cohesion of social conservative groups and, as the localised structures of power/knowledge in the PSR translate into direct political action by the groups interpellated, result in their acquiring “real” political power. However, the same seemingly empowering acts can also be seen as disempowering since they subdue the subversive potential of social conservatives by yoking them to a narrow ideology that is ultimately antagonistic to their economic needs. This broader power, primarily realised in neoliberal economic imperatives, has had far-reaching effects on the wellbeing of families, especially since it, by virtue of having been naturalised as the common sense, deprives people of a language of legitimate protest.

The thesis does not argue that the corpora studied consciously seek to make their readership oblivious to these larger social processes, but the analysis presented in the thesis shows that, possibly inadvertently, the texts have helped to close American family discourse into a vicious circle by excluding the possibility of cross-pollination from ideologies informed by some form of social liberalism. It is at this level that the present thesis voices its pessimism about the possibility of resistance optimistically suggested by Foucault. If the power of discourse is coupled with economic and political influence, the achieved hegemony, which permeates all spheres of life, is hard to counteract, especially when the world of political discourse has de-legitimised or co-opted ideologies with a potential to undermine the system. Thus, surface signifiers of freedom and choice can mask the underlying inequalities that go beyond gender inequality. The analyses of the thesis suggest that while people are agentive in their political choices, this agentivity can be channelled in desired directions by the manipulation of common-sense notions and underlying value systems. As a result, people indeed use their political agency in the democratic political process but on the basis of pre-selected information and, as a result, acts of political empowerment of social groups may simultaneously result in their socio-economic disempowerment.

The analysis of the present thesis reveals several aspects of social conservative discourse of the 1970s–1980s that continue to have validity in the American universe of political discourse. The conflicting interests of the uneasy conservative alliance are still linked by a consensus on gender issues, although today gender equality has been replaced by an even more divisive question of same-sex marriage. Social conservative activist groups help to cement conservative power, in their patriotic support of the present government’s conservative foreign and social policies, disregarding the same government’s partisan actions in matters of taxation and social security that ultimately harm most social conservatives who fall into lower socio-economic strata. This suggests that the potent mixture of American patriotism and symbolic gender-related issues that emerged in the anti-feminist campaigns of the 1970s–1980s continues to consolidate and fuel interest groups in the American political

landscape, inviting them to support political forces that act against their economic interests. It is impossible to tell on the basis of texts whether corporate interest groups use social conservative rhetoric strategically to achieve their desired goals but there is ample evidence to suggest that the conservative consensus created with the help of the emotional urgency of social conservatism has benefited business interests. Skilful application of discursive strategies on the one hand empowered social groups hitherto excluded from the political discourse but, paradoxically, disempowered them by severing their potential alliances with other social groups and curbing their actions to a limited sphere that does not ultimately challenge the existing socio-economic status quo.

The developments in the USA, because of the political and cultural prominence of the nation, influence the public discourses of other countries as well. This has been especially pronounced in the spread of neoliberalist economic policies starting from the 1980s, with far-reaching effects all over world on a societal as well as discursive level. This effect is especially pronounced in post-Socialist “New Europe” that has taken the ideological tenets borrowed from the US as its ticket to the club of developed nations. As a result, many Eastern European countries, such as Estonia, have been characterised by the dominance of conservatism. However, because of the complexity of historical development of the country, the conservative discourses have had different ideological emphases in Estonia than in the US. This is revealed even in debates on similar policies, for example gender equality provisions that the author of the present thesis has studied in her research (Põldsaar 2006, 2007a, 2007b). While in the US, as the above analysis demonstrated, social conservative agenda was used to covertly introduce neoliberal economic policies, then in Estonia the process has been the opposite: neoliberal economic policies that have reached hegemonic status in public discourse have shielded a stealthy incursion of social conservatism into Estonian public discourse. This suggests that the operation of discourses in the service of power always has to be contextualised in a thorough analysis of the historical and ideological realities of particular societies, as demonstrated in the present thesis. The validity of this methodological apparatus in the case of Estonian conservative discourse is to be tested in a future research project.

REFERENCES

Primary sources:

The Phyllis Schlafly Report (1980–1983).

Schlafly, Phyllis. 1977. *The Power of the Positive Woman*. New York: Jove/HBJ.

Secondary sources:

Abray, Jane. 1975. Feminism in the French Revolution. *American Historical Review* 80: 1, 43–62.

Alcoff, Linda. 1990. Feminist Politics and Foucault: The Limits to a Collaboration. In Alene B. Dallery and Charles Scott (eds). *Crises in Continental Philosophy*. Albany: SUNY Press.

Althusser, Louis. 1971. *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. New York: Monthly Review.

Banks, Olive. 1981. *Faces of Feminism. A Study of Feminism as a Social Movement*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Baron-Cohen, Simon. 2004. *The Essential Differences: The Truth About Male and Female Brain*. New York: Basic Books.

Becker, Mary E. 1993. Prince Charming: Abstract Equality. In D. Kelly Weisberg (ed). *Feminist Legal Theory: Foundations*, 221–236. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Becker, Susan E. 1981. *The Origins of the Equal Rights Amendment: American Feminism Between the Wars*. Westport: Greenwood Press.

Belsey, Catherine. 1980. *Critical Practice*. London: Methuen.

Bendroth, Margaret Lamberts. 1999. Fundamentalism and the Family. Gender, Culture, and the American Pro-Family Movement. *Journal of Women's History* 10: 4, 35–54.

Berlin, Isaiah. 1969. *Four Essays on Liberty*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Berry, Mary Frances. 1986. *Why ERA Failed. Politics, Women's Rights, and the Amending Process of the Constitution*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Bjerre-Poulsen, Niels. 2002. *Right Face. Organizing the American Conservative Movement 1945–65*. Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press.

Blommaert, Jan. 2005. *Discourse*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Boles, Janet K. 1979. *The Politics of the Equal Rights Amendment. Conflict and the Decision Process*. New York and London: Longman.

Bradley, Patricia. 2003. *Mass Media and the Shaping of American Feminism, 1963–1975*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.

Brinkley, Alan. 1994. The Problem of American Conservatism. *American Historical Review* 99: 2, 409–429.

Brock, David. 2002. *Blinded by the Right. The Conscience of an Ex-Conservative*. New York: Three Rivers Press.

Brown, Barbara et al. 1971. The Equal Rights Amendment: A Constitutional Basis for Equal Rights for Women. *Yale Law Journal* 80, 871–985.

- Brown, Gillian and George Yule. 1983. *Discourse Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brownmiller, Susan. 1975. *Against Our Will. Men, Women and Rape*. New York: Ballantine Books.
- Buechler, Steven M. 1990. *Women's Movements in the United States*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Burke, Edmund. 1955. *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. Indianapolis and New York: Bobbs-Merrill.
- Butler, Judith. 1990. *Gender Trouble*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Butler, Judith. 1997. *Excitable Speech. A Politics of the Performative*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Cameron, Deborah. 1995. *Verbal Hygiene*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Cameron, Deborah. 2006. *On Language and Sexual Politics*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Cassell, Joan. 1977. *A Group Called Women: Sisterhood and Symbolism in the Feminist Movement*. New York: David McKay.
- Chafe, William H. 1977. *Women and Equality. Changing Patterns in American Culture*. Oxford and London: Oxford University Press.
- Chafetz, Janet Saltzman and Anthony Gary Dworkin. 1986. *Female Revolt. Women's Movements in World and Historical Perspective*. Totowa: Rowman & Allanheld.
- Chafetz, Janet Saltzman and Anthony Gary Dworkin. 1987. In the Face of Threat: Organized Antifeminism in Comparative Perspective. *Gender and Society* 1: 1: 33–60.
- Chichowski, Rachel A. 2002. “No Discrimination Whatsoever”. Women’s Transnational Activism and the Evolution of EU Sex Equality Policy. In Nancy A. Naples and Manisha Desai (eds). *Women's Activism and Globalization: Linking Local Struggles and Transnational Politics*, 220–238. New York: Routledge.
- Chouliaraki, Lilie and Norman Fairclough. 1999. *Discourse in Late Modernity. Rethinking Critical Discourse Analysis*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Cixous, Hélène. 1976. The Laugh of the Medusa. *Signs* 1: 4, 875–893.
- Cixous, Hélène. 1987. Sorties. In Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clément. *The Newly Born Woman*, 63–130. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- CNN. 2001. Falwell Apologizes to Gays, Feminists, Lesbians. September 14. Available at <http://archives.cnn.com/2001/US/09/14/Falwell.apology/>, accessed September 17, 2006.
- Connell, R. W. 2002. *Gender*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Connell, R. W. 2005. *Masculinities*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Cornell, Drucilla L. 1992. Gender, Sex, and Equivalent Rights. In Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (eds). *Feminists Theorize the Political*, 280–296. New York and London: Routledge.
- Costain, Anne. 1991. After Reagan: New Party Attitudes Toward Gender. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 515 (May): 114–125.
- Costain, Anne N., Richard Braunstein and Heidi Berggren. 1997. Framing the Women’s Movement. In Pippa Norris (ed). *Women, Media and Politics*, 205–220. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cott, Nancy F. 1987. *The Grounding of Modern Feminism*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- Coulter, Ann. 2004. *How to Talk to a Liberal (If You Must)*. New York: Crown Forum.

- Cranny-Francis, Anne et al. 2003. *Gender Studies. Terms and Debates*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Critchlow, Donald T. 2005. *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism: A Woman's Crusade*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Crystal, David. 1987. *The Cambridge Encyclopaedia of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Danner, Lauren and Susan Walsh. 1999. "Radical" Feminists and "Bickering" Women: Backlash in U.S. Media Coverage of the United Nations Forth World Conference on Women. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 16, 63–84.
- David, Miriam and Ruth Levitas. 1988. Antifeminism and the British and American New Rights. In Gill Seidel (ed). *The Nature of the Right. A Feminist Analysis of Order Patterns*, 141–151. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: Johns Benjamins Publishing Company.
- De Hart, Jane Sherron. 1991. Gender on the Right: Meanings Behind the Existential Scream. *Gender & History* 3: 3, 246–267.
- De Hart, Jane Sherron. 2001. Welfare as Identity Politics. Rediscovering Nationalism, Re-viewing the American National Experience, and Recasting the "Other" in the Post-Cold War United States. In Mark Shackleton and Maarika Toivokainen (eds). *Roots and Renewal. Writings of Bicentennial Fulbright Professors*, 30–44. Helsinki: Renvall Institute.
- De Hart, Jane Sherron. 2004. Second-Wave Feminists and the Dynamics of Social Change. In Linda K. Kerber and Jane Sherron De Hart (eds). *Women's America. Refocusing the Past*, 598–623. 6th ed. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Diamond, Irene and Lee Quinby (eds). 1988. *Feminism and Foucault: Reflections on Resistance*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.
- Di Stefano, Christine. 1990. Dilemmas of Difference: Feminism, Modernity and Postmodernism. In Linda Nicholson (ed). *Feminism/Postmodernism*, 63–82. New York and London: Routledge.
- Douglas, Susan J. 1994. *Where the Girls Are. Growing Up With the Mass Media*. New York: Times Books.
- Ducat, Stephen J. 2004. *The Wimp Factor: Gender Gaps, Holy Wars, and the Politics of Anxious Masculinity*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Dworkin, Andrea. 1981. *Pornography – Men Possessing Women*. New York: E. P. Dutton.
- Dworkin, Andrea. 1983. *Right-Wing Women. The Politics of Domesticated Females*. London: The Women's Press.
- Eagle Forum. n.d. Phyllis Schlafly. Available at <http://www.eagleforum.org/misc/bio.html>, accessed August 1, 2006.
- Eagleton, Terry. 1983. *Literary Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Eagleton, Terry. 1991. *Ideology: An Introduction*. London: Verso.
- Edsall, Thomas B. 2006. *Building Red America: The New Conservative Coalition and the Drive for Permanent Power*. New York: Basic Books.
- Ehrenreich, Barbara. 1983. *The Hearts of Men. American Dreams and the Flight from Commitment*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Ehrlich, Susan and Ruth King. 1998. Gender-Based Language Reform and the Social Construction of Meaning. In Deborah Cameron (ed). *The Feminist Critique of Language*, 164–182. 2nd ed. London and New York: Routledge.

- Eisenstein, Zillah R. 1993. *The Radical Future of Liberal Feminism*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.
- Entman, Robert M. 1993. Framing: Toward Clarification of Fractured Paradigm. *Journal of Communication* 43: 4, 51–58.
- Erickson, Nancy S. 1974. Women and the Supreme Court: Anatomy Is Destiny. *Brooklyn Law Review* 41:2, 209–282.
- Evans, Sara M. 1989. *Born for Liberty. A History of Women in America*. New York: The Free Press.
- Fairclough, Norman. 1989. *Language and Power*. London and New York: Longman.
- Fairclough, Norman. 1992. *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Fairclough, Norman. 1995. *Critical Discourse Analysis. The Critical Study of Language*. Harlow: Longman.
- Fairclough, Norman. 2003. *Analysing Discourse. Textual Analysis for Social Research*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Fairclough, Norman. 2004. Critical Discourse Analysis in Researching Language in the New Capitalism: Overdetermination, Transdisciplinarity and Textual Analysis. In Lynne Young and Claire Harrison (eds). *Systemic Functional Linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis: Studies in Social Change*, 103–122. London and New York: Continuum.
- Fairclough, Norman and Ruth Wodak. 1997. Critical Discourse Analysis. In Teun A. van Dijk (ed). *Discourse as Social Interaction*, 258–284. London and Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Fausto-Sterling, Anne. 2000. *Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality*. New York: Basic Books.
- Felsenthal, Carol. 1981. *The Sweetheart of the Silent Majority. The Biography of Phyllis Schlafly*. Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc.
- Finlay, Barbara. 2006. *George W. Bush and the War on Women. Turning Back the Clock on Progress*. London: Zed Books.
- Fiske, John. 1990. *Introduction to Communication Studies*. 2nd ed. London and New York: Routledge.
- Foucault, Michel. 1972 [1969]. *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Foucault, Michel. 1980. Two Lectures. In Colin Gordon (ed). *Power/Knowledge*, 80–105. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Foucault, Michel. 1981. The Order of Discourse. In Robert Young (ed). *Untying the Text. A Poststructuralist Reader*, 48–79. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Foucault, Michel. 1998 [1976]. *The History of Sexuality*. Vol. I: *The Will to Knowledge*. London and New York: Penguin Books.
- Fowler, Roger. 1991. *Language in the News. Discourse and Ideology in the Press*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Fowler, Roger. 1996. On Critical Linguistics. In Carmen Rosa Caldas-Coulthard and Malcolm Coulthard (eds). *Texts and Practices. Readings in Critical Discourse Analysis*, 3–14. London and New York: Routledge.
- Fowler, Roger, Bob Hodge, Gunther Kress and Tony Trew. 1979. *Language and Control*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. 1996. *Feminism Is Not the Story of My Life. How Today's Feminist Elite Has Lost Touch with the Real Concerns of Women*. New York: Anchor Books.

- Francis, Samuel. 1993. *Beautiful Losers. Essays on the Failure of American Conservatism*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press.
- Frank, Thomas. 2000. *One Market Under God. Extreme Capitalism, Market Populism, and the End of Economic Democracy*. New York: Doubleday.
- Frank, Thomas. 2006. *What's the Matter with America? The Resistible Rise of the American Right*. London: Vintage.
- Fraser, Nancy. 1989. *Unruly Practices. Power, Discourse and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Freeman, Jo. 1975. *The Politics of Women's Liberation. A Case Study of an Emerging Social Movement and Its Relation to the Policy Process*. New York: David McKay Company, Inc.
- Fuss, Diana. 1989. *Essentially Speaking. Feminism, Nature and Difference*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Garton Ash, Timothy. 2004. *Free World*. London: Allen Lane.
- Gee, James Paul. 2004. *Situated Learning: A Critique of Traditional Schooling*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Gelb, Joyce and Marian Lief Palley (eds). 1987. *Women and Public Policies*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Georgapoulou, Alexandra and Dionysis Goutsos. 1997. *Discourse Analysis. An Introduction*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Gerteis, Joseph and Alyssa Goolsby. 2005. Nationalism in America: The Case of the Populist Movement. *Theory and Society* 34, 197–225.
- Giddens, Anothony. 1991. *Modernity and Self-Identity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Gilligan, Carol. 1982. *In a Different Voice. Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Ginsburg, Ruth Bader. 1978. Sex Equality and the Constitution: The State of the Art. *Women's Rights Law Reporter* 4: 3, 143–147.
- Gitlin, Todd. 1987. *The Sixties. Years of Hope, Days of Rage*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Goffman, Erving. 1974. *Frame Analysis. An Essay on the Organisation of Experience*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Goldstein, Richard. 2003. Stealth Misogyny. *The Village Voice*, March 5–11. Available at <http://www.villagevoice.com/issues/0310/goldstein.php>, accessed April 19, 2003.
- Gramsci, Antonio. 1988. *An Antonio Gramsci Reader. Selected Writings, 1916–1935*. Ed. by David Forgacs. New York: Schocken Books.
- Greenberg, Cheryl. 2001. Twentieth-Century Liberalisms. Transformations of an Ideology. In Harvard Sitkoff (ed). *Perspectives on Modern America. Making Sense of the Twentieth Century*, 55–79. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Greenberg, Hazel. 1977. *Women's Rights and the Law. The Impact of the ERA on State Laws*. New York and London: Praeger Publishers.
- Habermas, Jürgen. 1988. *On the Logic of the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Halliday, M. A. K. 1978. *Language as Social Semiotic*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Hamburger, Tom and Peter Wallsten. 2006. *One Party Country. The Republican Plan for Dominance in the 21st Century*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Hardt, Hanno. 1992. *Critical Communication Studies. Communication, History and Theory in America*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Harrison, Cynthia. 2003. "Heightened Scrutiny": A Judicial Route to Constitutional Equality for US Women. In Alexandra Dobrowolsky and Vivien Hart (eds). *Women*

- Making Constitutions. New Politics and Comparative Perspectives*, 155–172. Houndmills and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hartz, Louis. 1955. *The Liberal Tradition in America: An Interpretation of American Political Thought Since the Revolution*. New York: Harcourt Brace.
- Hausman, Melissa H. 1992. The Personal Is Constitutional. Feminist Struggles for Equality Rights in the United States and Canada. In Jill M. Bystydziński (ed). *Women Transforming Politics: Worldwide Strategies for Empowerment*, 108–123. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Hawkes, David. 1996. *Ideology*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Heer, Jeet. 2005. The Anti-Populist. *The Boston Globe*. March 6. Available at http://www.boston.com/news/globe/ideas/articles/2005/03/06/the_anti_populist?mode, accessed September 18, 2006.
- Hekman, Susan. 1996. *Feminist Interpretations of Michel Foucault*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Hennessy, Rosemary. 1993. *Materialist Feminism and the Politics of Discourse*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Hodgson, Godfrey. 1976. *America in Our Time*. New York: Doubleday.
- Hoff, Joan. 1991. *Law, Gender, and Injustice. A Legal History of U. S. Women*. New York and London: New York University Press.
- Hofstadter, Richard. 1967. *The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Hofstadter, Richard. 1989 [1948]. *The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made It*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Holland, Catherine A. 2001. *The Body Politic. Foundings, Citizenship and Difference in the American Political Imagination*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Huddy, Leonie. 1997. Feminists and Feminism in the News. In Pippa Norris (ed). *Women, Media and Politics*, 183–204. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hughes, Christina. 2002. *Key Concepts in Feminist Theory and Research*. London: Sage.
- Irigaray, Luce. 2001. *Democracy Begins Between Two*. New York: Routledge.
- Jaggar, Alison M. 1990. Sexual Difference and Sexual Equality. In Deborah L. Rhode (ed). *Theoretical Perspectives on Sexual Difference*, 239–256. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- Jameson, Frederic. 1991. *Postmodernism, Or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Jaworski, Adam and Nikolas Coupland. 1999. Perspectives on Discourse Analysis. In Adam Jaworski and Nikolas Coupland (eds). *The Discourse Reader*, 1–44. London and New York: Routledge.
- Jeffreys, Sheila. 1996. Return to Gender: Post-modernism and Lesbian and Gay Theory. In Diane Bell and Renate Klein (eds). *Radically Speaking: Feminism Reclaimed*, 359–374. London: Zed Books.
- Jenson, Jane. 1987. Changing Discourse, Changing Agendas: Political Rights and Reproductive Policies in France. In Mary Fainsod Katzenstein and Carol McClurg Mueller (eds). *The Women's Movement of the United States and Western Europe: Consciousness, Political Opportunity, and Public Policy*, 64–88. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Kellner, Douglas. 2003. *Media Spectacle*. London and New York: Routledge.

- Kerber, Linda K. 1998. *No Constitutional Right to Be Ladies: Women and the Obligations of Citizenship*. New York: Hill and Wang.
- Klatsch, Rebecca E. 1987. *Women of the New Right*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Klatsch, Rebecca E. 2001. The Formation of Feminist Consciousness Among Left- and Right-Wing Activists of the 1960s. *Gender & Society* 15: 6, 791–815.
- Klatsch, Rebecca E. 2002. The Development of Individual Identity and Consciousness Among Movements of the Left and Rights. In David S. Meyer, Nancy Whittier and Belinda Robnett (eds). *Social Movements. Identity, Culture, and the State*, 185–204. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Kress, Gunther. 1985. *Linguistic Processes in Sociocultural Practice*. Victoria: Deakin University Press.
- Kress, Gunther and Bob Hodge. 1979. *Language as Ideology*. London: Routledge.
- Kress, Gunther and Theo van Leeuwen. 2001. *Multimodal Discourse. The Modes and Media of Contemporary Communication*. London: Arnold.
- Kress, Gunther and Theo van Leeuwen. 2006. *Reading Images. The Grammar of Visual Design*. 2nd ed. London and New York: Routledge.
- Kristeva, Julia. 1986. Women's Time. In Toril Moi (ed). *The Kristeva Reader*, 187–213. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Kristeva, Julia. 2004. The Meaning of Equality. In Kelly Oliver and Lisa Walsh (eds). *Contemporary French Feminism*, 90–108. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Laclau, Ernesto and Chantal Mouffe. 1984. *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*. London: Verso.
- Lakoff, George. 2002. *Moral Politics. How Liberals and Conservatives Think*. 2nd ed. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Lakoff, George. 2004. *Don't Think of an Elephant. Know Your Values and Frame the Debate*. White River Junction: Chelsea Green Publishing.
- Lakoff, Robin Tolmach. 1990. *Talking Power. The Politics of Language*. New York: Basic Books.
- Lâm, Maivan Clech. 1994. Feeling Foreign in Feminism. *Signs* 19: 4, 865–893.
- Langley, Winston E. and Vivian C. Fox (eds). 1994. *Women's Rights in the United States. A Documentary History*. Westport: Greenwood Press.
- Law, Sylvia A. 1984. Rethinking Sex and the Constitution. *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 132. 955–1040.
- Lazar, Michelle M. 2005. Politicizing Gender in Discourse: Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis as Political Perspective and Praxis. In Michelle M. Lazar (ed). *Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis. Gender, Power and Ideology in Discourse*, 1–28. Houndmills and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Lebsock, Suzanne. 1993. Woman Suffrage and White Supremacy: A Virginia Case Study. In Nancy Hewitt and Suzanne Lebsock (eds). *Visible Women: New Essays in American Activism*, 62–100. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Lemke, Jay 2005. Place, Pace, and Meaning: Multimedia Chronotopes. In Sigrid Norris and Rodney Jones (eds). *Discourse in Action. Introducing Mediated Discourse Analysis*, 110–122. London and New York: Routledge.
- Levinson, Sanford. 1979. "The Constitution" in American Civil Religion. *Supreme Court Review* 1979: 123–151.

- Lewis, Justin. 1999. Reproducing Political Hegemony in the United States. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 16: 3, 251–267.
- Lind, Rebecca Ann and Colleen Salo. 2002. The Framing of Feminists and Feminism in News and Public Affairs Programs in US Electronic Media. *Journal of Communication* (March), 211–228.
- Lipset, Seymour Martin. 2000. Still the Exceptional Nation? *The Wilson Quarterly* XXIV: 1, 31–45.
- Locke, John. 1967. *Two Treatises of Government*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lopez-Claros, Augusto and Saadia Zahidi. 2005. *Women's Empowerment: Measuring the Global Gender Gap*. Geneva: World Economic Forum.
- Lowi, Theodore J. 1979. *The End of Liberalism. The Second Republic of the United States*. 2nd ed. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Lowi, Theodore J. 1995. *The End of the Republican Era*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Lowi, Theodore J. 1998. Think Globally, Lose Locally. *Boston Review*, April/May. Available at <http://bostonreview.net/BR23.2/lowi.html>, accessed September 15, 2006.
- Lukacs, John. 2005. *Democracy and Populism. Fear and Hatred*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- Luker, Kristin. 1984. *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- MacKinnon, Catharine. 1989. *Towards a Feminist Theory of the State*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Mäelo, Helmi. 1999. *Eesti naine läbi aegade*. Tallinn: Varrak.
- Mansbridge, Jane J. 1986. *Why We Lost the ERA*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Marsden, George M. 1990. *Religion and American Culture*. Fort Worth and Philadelphia: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Marshall, Susan E. 1985. Ladies Against Women: Mobilization Dilemmas of Anti-feminist Movements. *Social Problems* 32: 4, 348–362.
- Mathews, Donald G. 1993. “Spiritual Warfare”: Cultural Fundamentalism and the Equal Rights Amendment. *Religion and American Culture* 3: 2, 129–154.
- Mathews, Donald G. and Jane Sherron De Hart. 1990. *Sex, Gender, and the Politics of ERA. A State and the Nation*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McBride-Stetson, Dorothy. 2004. *Women's Rights in the USA. Policy Debates and Gender Roles*. 3rd ed. New York and London: Routledge.
- McChesney, Robert. 1996. Is There Any Hope for Cultural Studies? *Monthly Review* 46: 10, 1–18.
- McCracken, Ellen. 1993. *Decoding Women's Magazines*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- McGirr, Lisa. 2001. Piety and Property. Conservatism and Right-Wing Movements in the Twentieth Century. In Harvard Sitkoff (ed). *Perspectives on Modern America. Making Sense of the Twentieth Century*, 33–54. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Micklethwait, John and Adrian Wooldridge. 2004. *The Right Nation. Conservative Power in America*. New York: Penguin.
- Mill, John Stuart. 1988 [1869]. *The Subjection of Women*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co.
- Mills, Sara. 2004. *Discourse*. 2nd ed. London and New York: Routledge.

- Minow, Martha. 1990. *All the Difference. Inclusion, Exclusion and the American Law*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Mitchell, Juliet. 1987. Women and equality. In Anne Phillips (ed). *Feminism and Equality*, 24–43. New York: New York University Press.
- Moi, Toril. 1985. *Sexual/Textual Politics. Feminist Literary Theory*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Morgan, Robin (ed). 1970. *Sisterhood Is Powerful. An Anthology of Writings from the Women's Liberation Movement*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Moses, Claire Goldberg. 1998. Made in America: “French Feminism” in Academia. *Feminist Studies* 24: 2, 241–274.
- Mueller, Carol and Thomas Dimieri. 1982. The Structure of Belief Systems Among Contending ERA Activists. *Social Forces* 60: 3, 657–675.
- Nickerson, Michelle. 2003. Women, Domesticity, and Postwar Conservatism. *Organization of American Historians Magazine of History* 17. Available at <http://www.oah.org/pubs/magazine/conservatism/nickerson.html>, accessed March 1, 2003.
- Nock, Albert Jay. 1943. *Memoirs of a Superfluous Man*. Chicago: Regnery.
- Novikova, Irina. 2003. К вопросу о женских движениях и феминизме в обществах Балтии. *Гендер, культура, общество*, 24–57.
- Nussbaum, Martha. 1999. The Professor of Parody. *The New Republic*, February 22, 37–45.
- Oliver, Pamela E. and Hank Johnston. 2000. What a Good Idea! Frames and Ideologies in Social Movement Research. *Mobilization* 5: 1, 37–54.
- Paglia, Camille. 1994. *Vamps and Tramps*. New York: Vintage.
- Pateman, Carole. 1989. *The Disorder of Women. Democracy, Feminism and Political Theory*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Patton, Paul. 1979. Of Power and Prisons. In Meaghan Morris and Paul Patton (eds). *Michel Foucault: Power/Truth/Strategy*, 109–146. Sydney: Feral Publications.
- Pêcheux, Michel. 1982. *Language, Semantics, Ideology*. London: Macmillan.
- Perry, Ruth. 1986. *The Celebrated Mary Astell: An Early English Feminist*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Phillips, Anne. 1992. Universal Pretensions in Political Thought. In Michèle Barrett and Anne Phillips (eds). *Destabilizing Theory. Contemporary Feminist Debates*, 10–30. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Plumwood, Val. 1993. *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature*. London: Routledge.
- Põldsaar, Raili. 2000. *American Cultural Influence and the Reconstruction of Gender in Recent Estonian Public Discourse*. Unpublished MA thesis. Department of Germanic and Romance Languages and Literatures, University of Tartu.
- Põldsaar, Raili. 2003. Uneasy Step-Sisters: The Contradictions of Feminism in the Globalising World. In Krista Vogelberg and Ene-Reet Soovik (eds). *Encounters. Linguistic and Cultural-Psychological Aspects of Communicative Processes*, 123–135. Tartu: Tartu University Press.
- Põldsaar, Raili. 2004. Framing Hillary Rodham Clinton. In Russell Duncan and Clara Juncker (eds). *Transnational America. Contours of Modern US Culture*, 157–171. Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press.
- Põldsaar, Raili. 2005. Taming Women Warriors: Gender Order and the Discursive Positioning of American Women in War. In Raili Põldsaar and Krista Vogelberg (eds). *North America: A Transcultural View*, 134–146. Tartu: Tartu University Press.

- Põldsaar, Raili. 2006. Parallel Monologues: Comparative Critical Analysis of Gender Equality Debate in Estonia. Paper delivered at the 1st International Conference *Critical Approaches to Discourse Across Disciplines*, University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK, 29–30 June.
- Põldsaar, Raili. 2007a (forthcoming). “Othering” Gender Equality in the Struggle for a New National Identity: A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Media Representation of Gender Equality Legislation Debate in Estonia.
- Põldsaar, Raili. 2007b (forthcoming). Gender Equality Reframed: Estonian Experience and Global Context.
- Popper, Karl. 1966. *The Open Society and Its Enemies*. Vol. II: *The High Tide of Prophecy: Hegel, Marx, and the Aftermath*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Remnick, David. 2006. Nattering Nabobs. *The New Yorker*, 10 July. Available at http://www.newyorker.com/printables/talk/060710ta_talk_remnick, accessed 10 July 2006.
- Rhode, Deborah L. 1989. *Justice and Gender. Sex Discrimination and the Law*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press.
- Rhode, Deborah L. 1990. Definitions of Difference. In Deborah L. Rhode (ed). *Theoretical Perspectives on Sexual Difference*, 197–212. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- Rhode, Deborah L. 1997. *Speaking of Sex. The Denial of Gender Inequality*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press.
- Riesman, David. 1961. *The Lonely Crowd. A Study of the Changing American Character*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- Rojola, Lea. 2003. Erinevus. In Anu Koivunen and Marianne Liljeström (eds). *Võtmesõnad. 10 sammu feministliku uurimiseni*, 159–178. Tallinn: Eesti Keele Sihtasutus.
- Rossiter, Clinton. 1955. *Conservatism in America*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Roszak, Theodore. 1995. *The Making of a Counterculture*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Rowbotham, Sheila. 1997. *A Century of Women. The History of Women in Britain and the United States in the Twentieth Century*. New York and London: Penguin Books.
- Rubin, Gayle. 1996. The Traffic in Women. Notes on the “Political Economy” of Sex. In Linda Nicholson (ed). *The Second Wave. A Reader in Feminist Theory*, 27–62. New York and London: Routledge.
- Sargent, Lyman Tower (ed). 1995. *Extremism in America*. New York: New York University Press.
- Schegloff, Emmanuel. 1998. Text and Context Paper. *Discourse and Society* 3, 4–37.
- Schlafly, Phyllis. 1964. *A Choice Not an Echo*. Alton: Pere Marquette Press.
- Schlafly, Phyllis. 2003. *Feminist Fantasies*. Dallas: Spence Publishing Company.
- Schlafly, Phyllis. 2004. *The Supremacists: The Tyranny of Judges and How to Stop It*. Dallas: Spence Publishing Co.
- Schlesinger, Arthur M, Jr. 1992. *The Disuniting of America. Reflections on a Multicultural Society*. New York and London: W. W. Norton.
- Schoenwald, Jonathan M. 2001. *A Time for Choosing. The Rise of Modern American Conservatism*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Scott, Joan W. 1990. Deconstructing Equality-Versus-Difference: Or, the Uses of Post-structuralist Theory for Feminism. In Marianne Hirsch and Evelyn Fox-Keller (eds). *Conflicts in Feminism*, 134–148. New York and London: Routledge.

- Scott, Anne Firor. 1991. *Natural Allies: Women's Associations in American History*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Settle, Mary Lee. 1972. *The Scopes Trial. The State of Tennessee v. John Thomas Scopes*. New York: Franklin Watts, Inc.
- Shapiro, Edward S. 2004. Conservatism. In Stephen J. Whitfield (ed). *A Companion to 20th-Century America*, 462–477. Malden and Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Sheehan, Paul. 2004. Postmodernism and Philosophy. In Steven Connor (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to Postmodernism*, 20–42. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Smart, Carol. 1989. *Feminism and the Power of Law*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Sommers, Christina Hoff. 1994. *Who Stole Feminism? How Women Have Betrayed Women*. New York and London: Simon & Schuster.
- Springborg, Patricia. 1995. Mary Astell (1666–1731), Critic of Locke. *The American Political Science Review* 89: 3, 621–633.
- Springborg, Patricia. 1998. Mary Astell and John Locke. In Steven N. Zwicker (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to English Literature, 1650–1740*, 276–306. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Squires, Judith. 2003. Reviewing the UK Equality Agenda in the Context of Constitutional Change. In Alexandra Dobrowolsky and Vivien Hart (eds). *Women Making Constitutions. New Politics and Comparative Perspectives*, 200–215. Houndmills and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Steiner, Gilbert Y. 1985. *Constitutional Inequality. The Political Fortunes of the Equal Rights Amendment*. Washington, D. C.: The Brookings Institution.
- Stewart, Edward C. and Milton J. Bennett. 1991. *American Cultural Patterns. A Cross-Cultural Perspective*. Yarmouth: Intercultural Press.
- Sunderland, Jane. 2004. *Gendered Discourses*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Sunderland, Jane and Lia Litosseliti. 2002. Gender Identity and Discourse Analysis. Theoretical and Empirical Considerations. In Lia Litosseliti and Jane Sunderland (eds). *Gender Identity and Discourse Analysis*, 1–39. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Talbot, Mary. 1995. A Synthetic Sisterhood: False Friends in a Teenage Magazine. In Kira Hall and Mary Bucholtz (eds). *Gender Articulated. Language and the Socially Constructed Self*, 143–168. New York and London: Routledge.
- Terborg-Penn, Rosalyn. 1983. Discontented Black Feminists: Prelude and Postscript to the Passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. In Lois Scharf and Joan M. Jensen (eds). *Decades of Discontent: The Women's Movement, 1920–1940*, 261–278. Westport: Greenwood Press.
- Titscher, Stefan, Michael Meyer, Ruth Wodak and Eva Vetter. 2000. *Methods of Text and Discourse Analysis*. London and Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Tobias, Sheila. 1997. *Faces of Feminism. An Activist's Reflections on the Women's Movement*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Trilling, Lionel. 1950. *The Liberal Imagination*. New York: Doubleday.
- Van Dijk, Teun A. 1998. *Ideology. A Multidisciplinary Introduction*. London and Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Van Dijk, Teun A. 2001. Multidisciplinary CDA: A Plea for Diversity. In Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (eds). *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, 95–120. London and Thousand Oaks: Sage.

- Van Dijk, Teun A. 2003. War Rhetoric of a Little Ally. Political Implicatures of Aznar's Legitimization of the War in Iraq. *Journal of Language and Politics* 4: 1, 65–92.
- Van Leeuwen, Theo. 1993. Genre and Field in Critical Discourse Analysis. *Discourse and Society* 4: 2, 193–223.
- Van Zoonen, Liesbet. 2005. *Entertaining the Citizen. When Politics and Popular Culture Converge*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Volosinov, V. N. 1973. *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*. New York: Academic Press.
- Walby, Sylvia. 1992. Post-Post-Modernism? Theorizing Social Complexity. In Michèle Barrett and Anne Phillips (eds). *Destabilizing Theory. Contemporary Feminist Debates*, 31–52. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Watts, Sarah. 2003. *Rough Rider in the White House. Theodore Roosevelt and the Politics of Desire*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Weedon, Chris. 1999. *Feminism, Theory and the Politics of Difference*. Oxford and Malden: Blackwell Publishers.
- Weintraub, Jeff. 1997. The Theory and Politics of the Public/Private Distinctions. In Jeff Weintraub and Krishan Kumar (eds). *Public and Private in Thought and Practice. Perspectives on a Grand Dichotomy*, 1–42. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Wharton, Linda J. 2006. State Equal Rights Amendments Revisited: Evaluating Their Effectiveness in Advancing Protection Against Sex Discrimination. *Rutgers Law Journal* 36: 4, 1201–1293.
- Whelahan, Imelda. 1995. *Modern Feminist Thought. From the Second Wave to "Post-Feminism"*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Wicke, Jennifer. 1998. Celebrity Material: Materialist Feminism and the Culture of Celebrity. In Joan B. Landes (ed). *Feminism, the Public and the Private*, 385–408. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Widdowson, Henry. 1995. Discourse Analysis: A Critical View. *Language and Literature* 4: 3, 157–172.
- Wilkinson, Rupert. 1992. On American Character. In Rupert Wilkinson (ed). *American Social Character. Modern Interpretations from the '40s to the Present*, 1–14. New York: HarperCollins.
- Will, George F. 1997. *The Woven Figure. Conservatism and America's Fabric*. New York: Touchstone.
- Williams, Wendy. 1992. The Equality Crisis: Some Reflections on Culture, Courts and Feminism. *Women's Rights Law Reporter* 14: 2/3, 151–174.
- Wodak, Ruth. 1996. *Disorders of Discourse*. London and New York: Longman.
- Wodak, Ruth. 2001. What CDA Is About – A Summary of Its History, Important Concepts and Its Developments. In Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (eds). *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, 1–13. London and Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Wodak, Ruth. 2005. Gender Mainstreaming and the European Union: Interdisciplinarity, Gender Studies and CDA. In Michelle M. Lazar (ed). *Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis. Gender, Power and Ideology in Discourse*, 90–113. Houndmills and New York: Palgrave Macmillan
- Wollstonecraft, Mary. 1992 [1792]. *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. London: David Campbell Publishers.

APPENDIX 1

CORPUS 2: ERA-RELATED ARTICLES FROM THE *PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY REPORT (1980–1983)*

Don't Put Women in Military Combat. Testimony by Brigadier General Andrew J. Gatsis, U.S. Army (Ret.). (PSR1)

Testimony by Mary Lawlor, Representing WAC Veterans for Freedom. (PSR2)

Testimony by Colonel Phelps Jones, U.S.A. (Ret.), Representing the Veterans of Foreign Wars. (PSR3) PSR 13:7 (February 1980), II.

The White House Conference on Families. A Front for More Federal Taxes, Spending, and Controls Plus Social Dignity for "Alternate Lifestyles". (PSR4) PSR 13:10 (May 1980), II.

Why Congress Defeated Draft Registration of Women. Report of the Subcommittee on Manpower and Personnel on the Rejection of Legislation Requiring the Registration of Young women Under the Military Selective Service Act. (PSR5)

Speech by Senator Jake Garn. (PSR6)

Speech by Senator Roger Jepsen. (PSR7) PSR 13: 12 (July 1980), I.

Does Reagan Know Who Elected Him? (PSR8) PSR 14: 5 (December 1980), I.

Don't Let the Courts Draft Women. (PSR9)

The Army wants Women in Combat. (PSR10) PSR 14: 6 (January 1981), I.

Eagle Forum Defends Wives and Mothers. (PSR11)

Testimony by Phyllis Schlafly to the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee Subcommittee on Social Security, March 6, 1981. (PSR12)

Testimony by Judith Finn to the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee Subcommittee on Social Security, March 6, 1981. (PSR13) PSR 14:9 (April 1981), I.

Eagle Forum Defends Women from Draft. (PSR14) PSR 15:1 (August 1981), I.

How ERA Would Change Federal Laws. (PSR15) PSR 15:4 (November 1981), I.

The Tremendous Powers of ERA's Section 2. (PSR16) (December 1981), I.

Federal Court Voids ERA Extension, Upholds Recission. (PSR 17) PSR 15:6 (January 1982), II.

ERA Would Mean Women in Combat by Brig. Gen. Andrew J. Gatsis, U.S. Army, Ret. (PSR18) PSR 15:7 (February 1982), II.

Community Property Laws – Justice for Wives. (PSR19) PSR 16:4 (November 1982), I.

What Are NOW's Policies and Goals? (PSR20) PSR 16: 4 (November 1982), II.

Ten Years of ERA Is Enough! (PSR21) PSR 16:9 (April 1983), II.

The ERA-Abortion Connection. Testimony of Congressman Henry J. Hyde to the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, Constitution Subcommittee, May 26, 1983. (PSR22) PSR 16:11 (June 1983), II.

The ERA-Private Schools Connection. Testimony by Professor Jeremy A. Rabkin, Cornell University, to the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, Constitution Subcommittee, September 13, 1983. (PSR23) PSR 17: 3 (October 1983), II.

Why Congress Must Amend the ERA. Excerpts from Testimony by Phyllis Schlafly to the Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights of the U.S. House Committee on the Judiciary, October 20, 1983. (PSR24) PSR 17:4 (November 1983), I.

New Testimony on the Old ERA. Excerpts from October 20, 1983 Testimonies to the Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights of the U.S. House Committee on the Judiciary. (PSR25) PSR 17: 4 (November 1983), II.

APPENDIX 2

THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

Section 1. Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.

Section 2. The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

Section 3. This amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification.

SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

Ameerika Ühendriikide sotsiaalkonservatiivse diskursuse kujunemine 1970.–1980. aastate anti-feministliku retoorika kriitilise diskursusanalüüsi näitel

KOKKUVÕTE

Soolist võrdõiguslikkust käsitletakse tänapäeva Ameerika Ühendriikide poliitilises diskursuses kui aegunud teemat, mis ei kuulu pärast 1980. aastaid üha konservatiivsemaks muutunud riigi prioriteetide hulka. Sellel huvipuudusel võivad olla ohtlikud tagajärjed, seda enam, et tänane konservatiivne poliitiline keskkond on viinud paljude sooküsimustega haakuvate õiguste ja vabaduste varjatud kadumiseni. Just see konservatiivne poliitiline aktiivsus tekitab vajaduse teadustöö järele, mis uuriks 1970.–1980. aastate anti-feministlikku diskursust, sest just sellel kümnendil tekkisid diskursiivsed strateegiad, mis harmoniseerisid konservatismi ameerikaliku väärtussüsteemiga, diskrediteerides feministlikud ja liberalistlikud alternatiivid. Sel perioodil loodud retoorika, eriti soolist võrdõiguslikkust tagava põhiseadusmuutuse (Equal Rights Amendment/ERA) ümber käinud debati, analüüs aitab paremini mõista nii konservatiivset diskursust kui ka selle kasutamise võimalusi.

Konservatiivse liikumise tekkimist ja ERA debatti puudutavad uurimused on siiani vähe tähelepanu pööranud neis protsessides olulist rolli mänginud lingvistilis-diskursiivsetele mõjuritele. Need on valitud käesoleva doktoritöö teemaks, kuna just sotsiaalkonservatiivsed diskursused on jätnud jääva jälje USA avalikule diskursusele ning seal valitsevale suhtumisele konservatismi ja liberalismi. Käesolevas töös esitatud anti-feministliku retoorika analüüs on üheks näiteks sellest, kuidas diskursiivseid mehhanisme saab rakendada, et kindlustada teatavate ideoloogiate edu ja välistada teised. Uurimiseks valitud perioodil toimus USAs üleminek liberaalselt konsensuselt konservatiivsele ning selle ülemineku käigus tulid ilmseks lõhed ideoloogilistes raamistiketes, mis stabiilsematel perioodidel jäänuks varjatuks.

Nii ameerika konservatism kui ka liberalism toetavad klassikalise liberalismi printsiipe ning nendevahelised erinevused ilmnevad eelkõige suhtumises sotsio-kultuurilistesse teemadesse, näiteks soo ja seksuaalsusega seonduvasse. Need teemad said eriti oluliseks ühendavad lüliks 20. sajandi teisel poolel tekkinud “uusparempoolse” (New Right) konservatiivse koalitsiooni eripalgeliste osade vahel. ERA kampaania on üheks näiteks, mis toob esile ameerika konservatismi kesksed ühisteemad: erasfääri puutumatus ja föderaalvõimu piiramise. ERA võinuks viia eksisteerivate soosuhete muutmiseni ning ühtlasi suurendada föderaalvalitsuse sekkumist osariikide ja üksikisikute ellu. See topeltoht tegi ERA sobivaks märklauaks erinevatele konservatiivsetele organisatsioonidele, keda liitis ühine vaenlane. Kampaania käigus rakendatud diskursiivsed

strateegiad delegitimiseerisid liberaalsed väärtused, kasutades ära ameeriklastele omast skeptilisust föderaalvõimu vastu ja need kartust radikaalsete muutuste suhtes, eriti kui need muutused puudutavad nii tundlikku teemat kui soosuhteid.

See ERA versioon, mida arutati 1970. aastatel, oli defineeritud kui kodanikuõigusi tagav dokument, mille eesmärgiks oli individuaalsete naiste õiguste kaitse diskrimineerimise eest avalikus sfääris. Kongressi mõlemad koad toetasid ERA-d kui dokumenti, millel oli suur sümbolne ja väike sisuline kaal ning põhiseadusmuudatus võeti 1972. aastal suure häälteenamusega vastu. Vastuseis tekkis alles siis, kui ERA saadeti ratifitseerimiseks osariikidesse. Kõige olulisem ERA vastane grupp oli Phyllis Schlafly poolt organiseeritud sotsiaalkonservatiivsetest naistest koosnev STOP-ERA liikumine. ERA oli föderaaltasandil vastu võetud kui ameerikalike põhiväärtuste, eelkõige vaba enesemääramisõiguse ja võrdsete võimaluste, kandja. Schlafly poolt välja pakutud strateegia oli oma olemuselt diskursiivne, keskendudes põhiseadusmuudatuse ümberdefineerimisele sellesama väärtussüsteemi sees: seadus, mille eesmärgiks oli tagada meeste ja naise rollide võrdsuse kaitse muudeti seaduseks, mis püüdis radikaalse soorollide muutmise poole föderaalvalitsuse võimu laiendamise läbi. Schlafly diskursiivne strateegia keskendus feministliku liikumise kui ERA põhitoetaja seostamisele radikaalsuse ja mitte-ameerikalikkusega, kuna seda nähti tegutemas nii traditsionalistliku tuumik perekonna kui ka osariikide õiguste kärpimise nimel. ERA debatti kannustas mõlemalt poolt teadmine, et see moodustas osakese sümbolsest võitlusest ameerikaliku ühiskonna tuleviku üle. 1970. aastate Ameerika Ühendriikidele omases ebakindluse õhkkonnas oli Schlafly strateegia piisavalt efektiivne, et jahutada esialgselt entusiastlikku toetust ERA-le ning see aeg 1982. aastal.

STOP-ERA liikumine muutis avalikku suhtumist nii soolisse võrdõiglikkusesse kui ka sotsiaalliberaalsesse poliitikasse tervikuna. Kampaania on heaks illustratsiooniks lingvistilis-diskursiivsete vahendite kasutamisest ideoloogiliste eelistuste levitamiseks. Sellised protsessid näitlikustavad, et diskursused on oma olemuselt sotsiaalsed praktikad, teisisõnu, et nad, nagu seda on väitnud Michel Foucault ja Norman Fairclough, mitte ainult ei kirjelda sotsiaalset reaalsust, vaid ka vormivad seda. Diskursus on seega lahutamatu seotud võimu ja ideoloogia mõistetega, mida käesolevas väitekirjas defineeritakse läbi Michel Foucault', Antonio Gramsci ja Louis Althusseri tööde. Ühelt poolt käsitletakse selles uurimuses võimu kui loovat potentsiaali, mis on oma olemuselt hajus ja partikulaarne. Teisalt rõhutatakse, et sellised hajusad võimu manifestatsioonid on seotud laiemate ideoloogiliste protsesside ja hegemooniliste võimuhetega, mis privilegieerivad teatud ühiskondlikke grupe teiste arvelt. Seda saavutatakse eelkõige mõjutades inimeste „tervemõistuslikke“ ja loomulikustatud arusaamu ühiskondlikest protsessidest, mida tänapäeval saavutatakse eelkõige diskursiivsete vahenditega. ERA kampaania paigutub keskele kohale ideoloogilises vastasseisus, kus konservatiivid ja liberaalid võitlesid

õiguse eest otsustada, mis on Ameerika Ühendriikide avalikus debatis „tervemõistuslik“.

Kuna ideoloogiate vormimine toimub diskursiivsel tasandil, siis on nende analüüsimiseks kõige sobivam vahend diskursusanalüüs. Käesolev doktoritöö uurib ideoloogiliste eelistuste väljendumist konkreetsetes lingvistilistes väljendusvahendites, kasutades selleks kriitilise diskursusanalüüsi meetodeid. Töö lähtub konkreetsemalt Norman Fairclough poolt välja arendatud kolmetasandilise kriitilise diskursuseanalüüsi mudelist, milles esmalt kirjeldatakse konkreetsetes tekstides kasutatud tekstilisi praktikaid ning interpreteeritakse tekstide loomisesse ja lahtimõtestamisse kaasatud diskursiivseid praktikaid. Kahe esimese tasandi analüüs asetatakse laiemasse ühiskondlikku konteksti, seletamaks kuidas antud tekstid toimivad kui sotsiaalne praktika. Kolmanda tasandi analüüsi on kaasatud ka Teun van Dijki arusaamad inimeste ideoloogiliste eelistuste sotsio-kognitiivsest olemusest ning George Lakoffi ja Robert Entmani väited inimeste mõtteraamistike manipuleeritavuse kohta teatud poliitiliste eesmärkide saavutamiseks.

Töö empiiriline osa analüüsib kahte tekstikorpust, tuvastamaks meetodeid, mida kasutati konservatiivse konsensuse loomiseks rohujuuretasandi sotsiaalkonservatiivide ja laiema avalikkuse seas. Esimeseks korpuseks, mille analüüs on antud 3. peatükis, on Phyllis Schlafly 1977. aastal ilmunud raamat *The Power of the Positive Woman* (1977) (Positiivse naise jõud), tekst, mis viis ERA debati toimumise ajal sotsiaalkonservatiivsete naiste vaated laiema lugejaskonnani. Teise korpuse moodustavad ERAGA seotud tekstid, mis aastatel 1980–1983 ilmusid Schlafly poolt toimetatud väljaandes *The Phyllis Schlafly Report* (Phyllis Schlafly Raport), mis levis eelkõige sotsiaalkonservatiivsete naiste seas. Teine korpus hõlmab perioodi, mil ERA aegus ning algas laiem konservatiivne revolutsioon Ameerika Ühendriikide poliitilisel maastikul. Kahe korpuse kõrvutatav süvaanalüüs näitas, et eksisteerib väljakujunenud sotsiaalkonservatiivse diskursus, mis rakendab sooküsimusi laiemate poliitiliste eelistuste vormimiseks ning et seda diskursust on võimalik strateegiliselt modifitseerida, tagamaks selle atraktiivust erinevatele publikutele.

Analüüsi esimene faas, tekstilise praktika kirjeldus, tuvastas, et mõlemas tekstis kasutati sarnaseid strateegiad, kuid erinevate eesmärkide saavutamiseks. Kasutatud strateegiate hulka kuuluvad emotsionaalse ja ideoloogiliselt laetud sõnavara, metafooride ja kollokatsioonide kasutamine, eelkõige selgete piiride loomiseks Oma ja Võõra, normaalseks ja ebanormaalseks peetava vahel, seda nii eksplitsiidselt kui ka varjatult, näiteks presupositsioonide kasutamise läbi. Ideoloogiliselt problemaatiliste teemade puhul esineb ülesõnastamist ja sagedast modifitseerimata väidete kasutamist, seda eriti seoses moraalsete absoluutidega. Grupikuuluvust aitavad kinnistada ka asesõnad, mis kutsuvad lugejat võtma soovitud seisukohti. Grammatilisel tasandil rakendatakse agentsuse varjamiseks transitiivsust ja nominaliseerimist; aktiivi ja passiivi kasutamine aitab luua muljet gruppide aktiivsusest või passiivsusest. Modaalsus mõjutab lugejate arusaamu potentsiaalsete muudatuste vältimatusest. Diskursiivsete praktikate

interpretatsioon näitas, et neid lingvistilisi vahendeid kasutati soovitud meenatsete mudelite loomiseks feministidest, soolisest võrdõiguslikkusest, aga ka konservatiividest, liberaalidest ja USA valitsusest. Tekstides paljastusid erinevad interpreteerimisvõimalused, mis näitavad kahe korpuse manipulaatiivseid eesmärke.

Tekstiliste praktikate kirjeldus ja interpretatsioon näitas, et mõlemad korpused ülesõnastavad feministe, seondades neid vägivald ja äärmuslikkusega. See tendents oli eriti selge esimeses korpuses, mille eesmärgiks oli laiem avalikkuse võõrandamine feminismisõbralikest vaadetest; teise korpuse lugejaskond on selle seisukoha juba varem omaks võtnud. Vastavalt vajadusele ilmub feminism mõlemas korpuses nii marginaalse kui ka mõjukana. Kui feminismi kujutatakse kui totalitaarset dogmat, siis konservatismi ideoloogiline asetatus ei leia märgistamist, tõestades, et seda käsitletakse „tervemõistusliku“ lähene misena ühiskonnale. Teises korpuses, mille kaudsem eesmärk on sotsiaalkonservatiivse liikumise mobiliseerimine, ilmub aga feministliku liikumise kõrvale tugev antifeministlik liikumine. Kuna selle korpuse keskmeks on võitlus kahe vastaspoole vahel, siis esineb seal palju sõjametafoore ja apokalüptilisi alatoonide. Mõlema korpuse puhul on läbiv konflikt ja sotsiaalse ebakõla raamistiku rõhutamine, mille kohaselt feminism on ohuks ameerikalikule elulaadile.

Korpustes kujutatakse soosuhteid lähtudes hierarhilisest dihhotoomsest soomudelist, mille keskmeks on soorollide selge lahtatus. Sotsiaalkonservatiivseid mehi ja naisi seondatakse normaalsuse, feminismi soolise hälbimusega. Soorinevusi seondataks mitmekesisuse ja valikuvõimalustega, ehk siis kesksete ameerikalike väärtustega, millele vastandatakse feminismi väidetava totalitaarse ühetaolisuse taotlusega. Individualiseeritud konservatiivseid mehi ja naisi vastandatakse de-individualiseeritud feministide ja föderaalvõimuga. Teises korpuses lisanduvad konservatismi vastaste hulka ka Ülemkohus, poliitiline eliit ja meedia, keda populistlikult kujutatakse elitaarsetena ja tavainimesest võõrandunuina. Mõlemad korpused rõhutavad, et ERA ohustab indiviidide ja osariikide õigusi ja vabadusi. Laialt leiab kasutamist ameerikalik skepsis föderaalvalitsuse suhtes, seda ka teises korpuses, mis pärineb ajajärgust, mil ka keskvalitsus oli konservatiivne.

Mõlemad korpused rõhutavad seda, et nad esindavad ameeriklaste enamuse häält, kutsudes lugejaid samastuma oma loomulikustatud vaadetega, mis demoniseerivad mitte ainult feminismi, vaid ka sotsiaalliberalistlike poliitikaid laiemalt. Esimene korpus üritab luua laia konservatiivset koalitsiooni eelkõige oma vastase stigmatiseerimise läbi, identifitseerimata täpset konservatiivset ideoloogiat, luues mulje sellest kui „tervemõistuslikust“ ellusuhtumisest. Teine korpus loob selgema pereväärtustele keskenduva sotsiaalkonservatiivse mudeli, kuid samas rõhutab ka eksistentsiaalset ohtu sellele mudelile nii individuaalsel kui ühiskondlikul tasandil, ärgitades seega oma lugejaskonda poliitilisele tegevusele oma elulaadi kaitseks. Seda eksistentsiaalset ohtu võib pidada mõlema korpuse, eriti aga teise korpuse, põhieesmärgiks, sest just see kutsub neid poliitilises protsessis aktiivselt osalema. Seega võib järeldada, et

mõlemad korpused mitte ainult ei kujuta teatud ideoloogilisi eelistusi, vaid loovad ka konkreetset poliitilist reaalsust ehk siis, et tegu on mitte ainult diskursiivsete vaid ka sotsiaalsete praktikatega. Konkreetsed ühiskondlikud eesmärgid on kahe korpuse puhul mõnevõrra erinevad.

Esimene korpus levitab sotsiaalkonservatiivseid ideid laiema avalikkuse seas, osaledes üldise konservatiivse konsensuse loomises. See eesmärk saavutatakse konservatismi ja feminismi ümbermõtestamise abil: esimene lakkas olemast äärmuslik, sest korpus omistas äärmuslikkuse sildi feminismile ja, laiemale, (sotsiaal)liberalismile. Sellele kognitiivsele nihkele aitas kaasa konkreetne ühiskondlik kontekst. Kasutades ära ajajärgu pessimismi (sotsiaal)liberaalsete poliitikate ja püsivat ameerikalikku skepsist föderaalvalitsuse suhtes kujundab esimene korpus arusaama, et (sotsiaal)konservatism on vastutustundlikule kodanikule ainuke tervemõistlik poliitiline valik. Ei looda mitte ainult teatud soovitud pilti ameerikalikest väärtustest, vaid ka patriootliku ameeriklase normatiivne subjektipositsioon, mis välistab igasugused sotsiaal-liberaalsed poliitikad, millest sooline võrdõiguslikkus on vaid üks. Seega sobitub esimene korpus oma lokaliseeritud moel laiemasse konservatiivse revolutsiooni raamistikku, mis on viinud selleni, et liberalismist on USA avalikus diskursuses saanud söimusõna.

Teine korpus nii kujutab sotsiaalkonservatiivseid naisi kui ühiskondlikku jõudu ja ühtlasi loob nende grupiidentiteeti. Käeolev analüüs ei väida, et analüüsitud korpus tekitas sotsiaalkonservatiivsete naiste liikumise, kuid analüüsi tulemused kinnitavad, et siin väljapakutud diskursiivsed repertuaarid, rõhuasetusega sümbolsetel teemadel, aitasid nende grupiidentiteeti tugevdada. Korpus näitab, et sotsiaalkonservatiivsed naised näevad oma missiooni perekonna ja selle kaudu ka USA moraalses tugevdamises. Ka teine korpus näitas, et sootemaatika toimis sillana erinevate konservatismide vahel. Erinevalt esimesest korpusest ei tutvusta teine korpus sotsiaalkonservatiivseid anti-feministlikke vaateid laiemale (konservatiivsele) avalikkusele, vaid „müüb“ muid konservatisme sotsiaalkonservatiivsetele naistele. Kõik sotsiaalliberaalseid poliitikad, kaasa arvatud poliitikad, mis toetavad perekondi, stigmatiseeritakse kui ideoloogiliselt võõrad, defineerides konservatismi ainuvõimaliku „tervemõistliku“ maailmavaatena.

Kuigi teises korpuses kujutatakse mõjukat sotsiaalkonservatiivset liikumist, kajab sellest vastu ka tugev eksistentsiaalne hirm nii sooküsimustes kui seoses ameerikalike väärtustega laiemale. See hirm ei vähene ka pärast konservatiivide võimuletulekut. Üks võimalik seletus on, et kirglik traditsionalistliku pereinimuse normaalsete rõhutamine ja selle seondamine ameerika enamuse arvamusel aitab vaigistada teadmist vääramatutest muutustest ameerika pereinimuses ja ühiskonnakorralduses ning kinnitada sotsiaalkonservatiivsete naiste eluvalikute valiidsust. Teine korpus ei näita sotsiaalkonservatiivide suuremat sulandumist ameerika avalikku diskursusesse pärast konservatiivsete võitu riiklikul tasandil. Ilmnud enesemarginaliseerimist, eksistentsiaalset hirmu ja „Teise“ kartust võib pidada sotsiaalkonservatiivide grupiidentiteedi keskseks

osaks, mille kohaselt on tegu anti-elitaarse liikumisega, kes kaitseb habrast ameerika traditsiooni, kaasa arvatud traditsioonilisi soorolle, pidevalt ähvardava sisevaenlase ehk siis liberalismi eest.

Seega on mõlema korpuse eesmärgiks konsolideerida konservatiive liberalismi vastu. Mõlemad korpused tõestavad Foucault' poolt kirjeldatud detsentraliseeritud võimu toimimist, kuna need tekstid aitavad suurendada konservatiivsete gruppide ideoloogilist sidusust ja anda neile seega suuremat mõjuvõimu poliitilistes protsessides osalemises. Samas tuleb rõhutada, et näiliselt rohujuuretasandi aktivistide mõju suurendavad aktid võivad omada ka vastupidiseid tulemusi. Käesolevas töös analüüsitud diskursused seovad sotsiaalkonservatiivid kitsastesse ideoloogilistesse piiridesse, mida iseloomustavad individualism ja neoliberalistlik majanduspoliitika, „tervemõistusliku“ ameerikaliku elukorralduse alustalad. Siinne uurimus ei ürita väita, et analüüsitud tekstide autorid soovivad teadlikult oma lugejaid petta, kuid ometi koorub analüüsist välja tõdemus, et pakutav konservatiivne diskursus välistab igasugused sotsiaalliberalistlikud initsiatiivid, mis mõjutab oluliselt näiteks pere toimetulekut, seda eriti elanikkonna madalamates kihtides. Teisisõnu siis sotsiaalkonservatiivne diskursus, olles seotud ameerika ühiskonna laiemate hegemooniliste struktuuridega, kutsus inimesi, väärtuste diskursust ära kasutades, tegutsema oma majanduslike huvide vastu. Selle vastuolu tõttu on käesolev uurimustöö skeptiline Foucault' optimistliku arvamuse suhtes, et igasugusele võimule on võimalik vastu astuda.

Käesolev doktoritöö tuvastas mitmeid ameerika sotsiaalkonservatiivse diskursuse jooni, mis käibivad ka tänases poliitikas. Laia konservatiivset koalitsiooni seob siiani vastuseis katsetele ümber defineerida soorolle, kuigi sooline võrdõiguslikkus on asendunud samasooliste abielu küsimusega. Sotsiaalkonservatiivsed aktivistid aitavad endiselt konservatiivide võimu kindlustada, jättes arvesse võtmata, et praeguse valitsuse majanduspoliitika kahjustab sotsiaalkonservatiivide huve, kellest paljud kuuluvad madalamatesse ühiskonna-kihtidesse. Seega võib kinnitada, et 1970. aastatel anti-feministlikes kampaniates ilmnunud diskursused ühendavad siiani konservatiivseid huvigruppe ja marginaliseerivad liberaalseid poliitikaid: sotsiaalkonservatiivid on ühelt poolt tugevamad kui kunagi varem, kuid samas on nende mõju piiratud vaid väärtusediskursusega ning nad ei ole ohtlikud võimusuhetele majanduslikus plaanis.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Raili Põldsaar

Department of Germanic and Romance Languages and Literatures
University of Tartu
Ülikooli 18, 50090 Tartu
Raili.Poldsaar@ut.ee

Education:

B. A. cum laude, English Language and Literature, University of Tartu, 1995
M. A. cum laude, English Language and Literature, University of Tartu, 2000

Work experience:

1995–1996 Senior Secretary, Department of Germanic and Romance Languages and Literature, University of Tartu
1996–2001 Assistant Lecturer in English, Department of Germanic and Romance Languages and Literature, University of Tartu
2001– Lecturer in English, Department of Germanic and Romance Languages and Literature, University of Tartu

Research activities:

Estonian Science Foundation targeted research project “Contrastive-Functional Study of Estonian-Russian, Estonian-English, Estonian-German and Estonian-Romance Languages” (2003–2007) (member of research team)
Estonian Science Foundation Grant “Speech of Estonians in English-Language Communication: Questions of Pragmatics and Conversational Structure”, 2002–2003 (member of research team)
Estonian Science Foundation targeted research project “Linguistic and Cultural-Psychological Aspects of Communication Processes in the Changing World”, 2001–2003 (member of research team)

Scholarships and grants:

Open Estonia Foundation travel grant to the University of East Anglia, 2006
Open Estonia Foundation travel grant to Cornell University, 2004
Summer School “Gender and Language and Society”, Central European University, 2001
Fulbright Scholarship, University of Notre Dame, USA, 1996–1997

Administrative positions:

Executive Director, Baltic Center for North American Studies, University of Tartu
Member of the Council, Department of Germanic and Romance Languages and Literatures, University of Tartu
Board Member, Estonian Women’s Studies and Resource Center

CURRICULUM VITAE

Raili Põldsaar

Germaani-romaani filoloogia osakond
Tartu Ülikool
Ülikooli 18, 50090 Tartu
Raili.Poldsaar@ut.ee

Haridus:

B. A. cum laude, inglise keel ja kirjandus, Tartu Ülikool, 1995
M. A. cum laude, inglise keel ja kirjandus, Tartu Ülikool, 2000

Teenistuskäik:

1995–1996 vanemlaborant, germaani-romaani filoloogia osakond, Tartu Ülikool
1996–2001 inglise filoloogia assistent, germaani-romaani filoloogia osakond, Tartu Ülikool
2001– inglise filoloogia lektor, germaani-romaani filoloogia osakond, Tartu Ülikool

Teaduslik tegevus:

Eesti Teadusfondi sihtfinantseeritav teema “Eesti-vene, eesti-inglise, eesti-saksa, eesti ja romaani keelte kontrastiivne uurimine funktsionaalsetel alustel” (2003–2007) (täitja)
Eesti Teadusfondi grant “Eestlaste kõne ingliskeelses suhtlemises: pragmaatilised ja vestlusstruktuurilised aspektid”, 2002–2003 (täitja)
Eesti Teadusfondi sihtfinantseeritav teema “Kommunikatsiooniprotsesside lingvistilised ja kultuurilis-psühholoogilised aspektid muutuvmas maailmas”, 2001–2003 (täitja)

Saadud stipendiumid:

Avatud Eesti Fondi reisistipendium, East Anglia Ülikool, 2006
Avatud Eesti Fondi reisistipendium, Cornelli Ülikool, 2004
Suvekool “Gender and Language and Society”, Kesk-Euroopa Ülikool, 2001
Fulbrighti stipendium, Notre Dame'i Ülikool, USA, 1996–1997

Administratiivne tegevus:

Tegevjuht, Põhja-Ameerika Uuringute Keskus, Tartu Ülikool
Nõukogu liige, germaani-romaani filoloogia osakond, Tartu Ülikool
Juhatause liige, Eesti Naisuurimus- ja Teabekeskus

PUBLICATIONS (selection)

- Põldsaar, Raili. 2007a (forthcoming). "Othering" Gender Equality in the Struggle for a New National Identity: A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Media Representation of Gender Equality Legislation Debate in Estonia.
- Põldsaar, Raili. 2007b (forthcoming). Gender Equality Reframed: Estonian Experience and Global Context.
- Põldsaar, Raili. 2007. In Search of Estonian Women's History. *Aspasia International Yearbook for Women's and Gender History of Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe* 1, 482–496.
- Põldsaar, Raili. 2006. Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered: The Reception of Virginia Woolf's Feminist Writing in Estonia. *Interlitteraria* 11, vol. II. Tartu: Tartu University Press, 458–470.
- Põldsaar, Raili. 2005. Who Framed Gender Equality?: A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Media Representation of Gender Equality Legislation Debate in Estonia. In María Labarta Postigo (ed). *Approaches to Critical Discourse Analysis* (CD). Valencia: Universitat de València Servei de Publicacions.
- Põldsaar, Raili. 2005. Taming Women Warriors: Gender Order and the Discursive Positioning of American Women in War. In Raili Põldsaar and Krista Vogelberg (eds). *North America: A Transcultural View*. Tartu: Tartu University Press, 134–146.
- Põldsaar, Raili. 2004. A Case of Mixed Identity: Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* in Estonian Translation. *Literature, Folklore, Arts*. Acta Universitatis Latviensis No. 666. Riga: University of Latvia, 36–42.
- Põldsaar, Raili. 2004. Framing Hillary Rodham Clinton. In Russell Duncan and Clara Juncker (eds). *Transnational America. Contours of Modern US Culture*. Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 157–171.
- Põldsaar, Raili. 2003. Media Representations of Women in Politics: A Comparison of Canada and the United States. *Literatura. (Research Papers: Canadian Studies)* 45: 5. Vilnius University Publishing House, 13–25.
- Põldsaar, Raili. 2003. Uneasy Step-Sisters: The Contradictions of Feminism in the Globalising World. In Krista Vogelberg and Ene-Reet Soovik (eds). *Encounters. Linguistic and Cultural-Psychological Aspects of Communicative Processes*. Tartu: Tartu University Press, 123–135.
- Põldsaar, Raili. 2003. Men on the Verge of Nervous Breakdown: Masculinity in Contemporary Culture and Literature. *Interlitteraria* 8. Tartu: Tartu University Press, 308–321.
- Põldsaar, Raili. 2002. With Barbie in Wonderland: American Consumer Culture and the Commodification of Estonian Motherhood. *Angles on the English-Speaking World 2: 2002*, 51–61.
- Põldsaar, Raili. 2001. Kriitiline diskursusenalüüs ja naisekäsitlus eesti meedias. *Ariadne Lõng*, 1–2, 99–106.

**DISSERTATIONES PHILOGIAE ANGLICAE
UNIVERSITATIS TARTUENSIS**

1. **Kristina Mullamaa.** Towards a dynamic role conception of liaison interpreters: an ethnographic study of self-descriptions of practising liaison interpreters in Estonia. Tartu, 2006.