An updated version of a 1984 publication, this 49-item annotated bibliography focuses on rhetorical analysis of American feminist rhetoric published in communication journals. The selections date from 1962 to 1988. (NKA)
Because of the proliferation of discourse by and about the women's movement, I have included here only rhetorical analyses of American feminist rhetoric published in communication journals.

Categorizes and analyzes audience images of contemporary women politicians according to temperament (the psychological dimension), role (the sociological dimension), and status (the political dimension).

Analyzes Goldman's agitation as an illustration of the problems a female agitator encounters in a patriarchal society.

Describes how suffragists arrested for picketing and other protest strategies were denied their first amendment rights.

Campbell, Karlyn Kohrs. "Femininity and Feminism: To Be or Not to Be a Woman." Communication Quarterly, 31 (Spring 1983), 101-08.
Argues that the early and contemporary phases of feminism are one rhetorical movement, typified by an ideological conflict between "womanhood" and "personhood."

Describes women's liberation as an oxymoron because of substantive and stylistic features that distinguish it from other social movements.

The "Solitude of Self" should be understood as a philosophical statement of the ideology of nineteenth-century feminism, which accounts in part for its continuing power.


Foss, Karen A., and Foss, Sonja K. "The Status of Research on Women and Communication." Communication Quarterly, 31 (Summer 1983), 195-204. Surveys and summarizes the research on women, gender, and sex differences published in speech communication journals. Five categories of research are described: historical treatments of women, sex differences, images of women in the media, education and pedagogy, and surveys and integrative works.

Foss, Sonja K. "Feminism Confronts Catholicism: A Study of the Use of Perspective by Incongruity." Women's Studies in Communication, 3 (Summer 1979), 7-16.
Examines the use of perspective by incongruity in two feminist texts antagonistic to the Catholic church—a speech by Ti-Grace Atkinson and an essay by Mary Daly.

Describes the formation and characteristics of feminist theatre as a suitable response to the needs of the women's movement.

Argues that the Grimke's rhetoric served to develop and sustain their sense of selfhood in the face of strong social norms against women speaking in public.

The strategies of rejection and negation are shown to have a cathartic and affirming outcome for members of the women's movement.

Examines Wright's contribution to the egalitarian ideal through her lectures and speechmaking.

While both the black and women's liberation movements share the basic rhetorical task of redefinition of self, significant differences emerge in terms of the issue of sexism, the nature of the audience, and responses to each movement.

Huyink, Cynthia J. "A Dramatistic Analysis of Sexual Politics by Kate Millett." Women's Studies in Communication, 3 (Summer 1979), 1-6.
Examines Millett's motives for writing Sexual Politics and analyzes the rhetorical strategies she uses to accomplish her purposes.

Argues that women who are unhappy with the Roman Catholic Church's position on issues and who continue to identify as
Roman Catholics must embrace a paradoxical worldview.


Jensen, Richard J., and John C. Hammerback. "Feminists of Faith: Sonia Johnson and the Mormons for ERA." Central States Speech Journal, 36 (Fall 1985), 123-37. Suggests that Johnson's appeals to mainstream Mormons can be understood as reformist discourse that become radicalized only in a second stage.

Kendall, Kathleen Edgerton, and Jeanne Y. Fisher. "Frances Wright on Women's Rights: Eloquence Versus Ethos." Quarterly Journal of Speech, 40 (February 1974), 58-68. Wright's failure to adhere to societal norms for women may have lowered her ethos and decreased the effectiveness of her discourse.


Kruse, Noreen Wales. "The Myth of the Demonic in Anti-ERA Rhetoric." Women's Studies in Communication, 6 (Fall 1983), 85-95. Contends that the persuasive appeals of anti-ERA arguments were grounded in a mythic order that ERA supporters failed to counter. The 1980 referendum to add an ERA to Iowa's constitution is used as a case study.


Lake, Randall A. "Order and Disorder in Anti-Abortion Rhetoric: A Logological View." Quarterly Journal of Speech, 70 (November 1984), 425-43. Argues that anti-abortion rhetoric makes use of a descent-ascent metaphor grounded in Christian theology. Sexual activity is equated with a fall from grace, resulting in the pregnant woman as victim. Order and redemption can be restored by childbirth or working for a constitutional amendment prohibiting abortion.
Examines Shaw's speaking style, speeches, and rhetorical effectiveness.

Examines the grounds of Shaw's arguments for women's suffrage.

Shows how Duniway's suffrage arguments were based in practicality, freedom, and morality.

Demonstrates the importance of Brown as elocutionist, teacher, and political leader.

Explores internal (change attitudes) and external (change the societal framework) strategies of the women's movement; concludes that external ones are likely to be more effective than internal ones.

Uses the theory of the Coordinated Management of Meaning to describe four constructions of feminism and to show how these constructs lead to particular forms of interaction.

Traces seven stages in the controversy over abortion between 1960 and 1980: professional, narrative, auxiliary ideolographic, intrinsic ideolographic, normalization, stalemate, and fragmentation.

Analyzes the values on both sides of the abortion controversy as presented in popular magazines between 1973 and 1978.

Portion of a much longer interview with Atkinson (former president of the National Organization for Women and founder of The Feminists), dealing with her speaking style, speeches, and public communication in general.

Charts the progress of the women's liberation movement through the stages of "genesis and impetus," "action and reaction," and "conversion and change." Suggests what is necessary for the movement to move beyond the current stage to "revision and solidification" and "success and silence."

Suggests that feminists approach the issue of sexism in language with a strong Whorfian position (language determines thought) which, while beneficial to the movement in several ways, may cost them credibility.

Examines Sonia Johnson's conflict with the Mormon Church over the ERA as an example of a secular-sectarian dispute and suggests strategies for managing such conflicts.

Disputes Schneider and Foss' claim that the women's movement makes use of a strong Whorfian hypothesis in dealing with sexism in language [see WSIC, 1 (Spring 1977), 1-7], and argues instead that feminists employ the weaker, more acceptable form of the hypothesis.

Traces Goldman's use of argument by incongruity and embodiment and argues that, although these strategies are inherent in anarchist ideology, they were ineffective for an American audience.

The effectiveness of the rhetoric of STOP ERA is attributed in part to its strong mythic vision.

Examine the ideology and image of STOP ERA and its proponents, arguing that although its ideology is fatalistic and manipulative, its reaffirmation of traditional perspectives makes it rhetorically effective.


Solomon, Martha. "The Total Woman: The Rhetoric of Completion." Central States Speech Journal, 32 (Summer 1981), 74-84. Suggests that the success of Marabel Morgan's Total Woman stems from (1) its promise of fulfillment if women expiate the guilt they bear for marital discourse by self sacrifice; (2) its reinforcement of readers' perceptions of themselves and their husbands; and (3) its encouragement of sexual fantasy and play.

