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A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE RHETORICAL STRATEGIES USED BY THE DETROIT NEWS AND THE DETROIT FREE PRESS IN THEIR COVERAGE OF THE 1993 DETROIT MAYORAL CAMPAIGN

by

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DISSERTATION

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DEDICATION

In memory of my father, the late Dr. Rufus Stokes,

who instilled in me an intense desire to pursue a dream,

and

To my mother, Bessie Stokes,

an extremely intelligent, hardworking, and caring person,

who has been a major force in my life.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This research project critically analyzes the *Detroit Free Press* and *The Detroit News* and the rhetorical strategies employed by their respective journalists and editorial writers in their coverage of the City of Detroit's mayoral campaign in 1993. This campaign is important as a research project because it involved many of the major issues inextricably linked with Americans today: gender, ideology, race, class, and partisan politics. Two of these issues—gender and race—were especially useful in my analysis of this campaign. For this research project, the terms "gender" and "race" are used in the way they have been socially constructed in American society. Specifically, women's and non-Whites' identities have been socially constructed, and this has caused these groups to be treated differently and unfairly (Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, & Thomas, 1995; Rakow, 1987). Additionally, Mark McPhail (1994) wrote specifically concerning race that "contemporary race relations theorists readily acknowledge that race is a product of social, instead of biological, definition" (p. 2).

The candidates for mayor, Sharon McPhail and Dennis Archer, were important and exciting players in this project. Both touted educations that included law degrees, were Democrats, and identified themselves as African Americans. There were, however, distinct differences between the candidates beginning with the obvious sex difference, a distinction that set the stage for gender to become an important campaign issue. Al-

though both candidates came from humble beginnings, their lives traversed different philosophical paths. Archer's judicial life culminated in an appointment as a Michigan Supreme Court Justice and later employment at one of Detroit's most prestigious law firms. He was married to a successful woman in her own right, and his two sons attended elite universities. McPhail, on the other hand, served the community as a high-profile prosecuting attorney for the Wayne County, Michigan's most populous county. She was twice divorced and at the time of the campaign was identified as a single mother of two. McPhail identified more with "grassroots" Detroiters (most of whom were Americans of African descent). Archer, on the other hand, appeared to be more concerned about and was supported by White business interests and labeled elitist by some Detroiters. This particular difference between the two candidates would set the stage for race to become a campaign issue.

Because of the differences between the two mayoral candidates, this study examines whether the *Detroit Free Press* (FP) and *The Detroit News* (DN) favored one candidate over the other and used certain rhetorical strategies in an effort to persuade readers to vote for a specific candidate. To accomplish this, news articles and editorials in the DN and FP focusing on the 1993 Detroit mayoral campaign were examined in an effort to identify these rhetorical strategies. This research provides insight into whether Detroit's daily newspapers were apolitical in their coverage of the campaign or whether they demonstrated a political agenda. I was interested in the issues of politics and ideology and whether there was a nexus between gender and race and the rhetorical strategies used by media during the campaign.

I have always been keenly interested in how print media can affect current events. Over several years, I have critiqued and on numerous occasions have been moved to re-

spond to the rhetoric contained in editorials and news stories in the FP and DN. This has been done in an effort to determine if they harbor a given political or ideological slant in their coverage of political campaigns. In my academic research, I hoped to critically analyze these papers to determine if there was support for my observations and to see if certain biases may have affected how media presented campaign issues. Investigating these issues is important because it may provide information that would allow the public to become aware of the power and influence of the press. My purpose, however, is not to search for evidence that the FP and DN *succeeded* in actually influencing voters or persuading voters to vote for a particular candidate, but rather to determine if they *attempted* to do so by using certain rhetorical strategies.

As a strong supporter of equal and civil rights for women and other marginalized groups—groups that figured prominently in the 1993 mayoral campaign—I believe the DN and the FP overall have been negligent in speaking up for the rights of these groups and have played a role in helping to sustain the racial polarization that continues to plague the Detroit Metropolitan Area. Race was also an integral component of the campaign. My experiences as a woman, my three decades as a resident of the Detroit Area, and my multicultural and interdisciplinary background have afforded me a unique perspective for analyzing Detroit news media and particularly the Detroit 1993 mayoral campaign. Moreover, I do not subscribe to a specific political ideology, thus helping prevent my falling through the usual liberal versus. conservative cracks. I admit, however, to a preconceived belief about the media' s reporting strategies but recognize the importance of letting the results of the research dictate the conclusion that, quite possibly, might go in an unanticipated direction.

I clearly recognize that women and persons of color have suffered discrimination

in this society at the hands of a White male power structure. Feminist rhetorical criticism not only helps identify those strategies that assist in reinforcing that structure, but attempts to challenge that structure. I seek to "raise issues and encourage public discussion" (Campbell, 1975, p. 9), of these issues. Further, as Campbell argues, "If criticism is to be justified, it must have intrinsic worth; it must perform a unique function for society" (p. 9).

Although the rhetoric contained in editorials and news articles is very important, the rhetoric of the candidates themselves and how their rhetoric was reported and summarized in the press is also significant. In the early months of the campaign, McPhail appeared to receive neutral reporting, with neutral reporting being described as reporting that would not negatively or positively affect McPail's campaign ("McPhail Faces Huge Challenge," 1993; "McPhail Jumps In," 1993; "McPhail Backs Cops Moonlighting," 1993); as the campaign wore on, however, she seemed to lose the support of both the DN and the FP. Archer appeared to be the "golden child" of the media, although salient questions must be asked concerning the reasons for this perceived preference for Archer and why the press seemingly compromised journalistic integrity in favor of what some might perceive as biased reporting. This research project addresses these concerns.

Significance of Study

This study attempts to discover if writers in print media tried to influence elections by using certain types of rhetoric in their news stories and editorials. That predominantly male and White editorial boards might wield their influence over a majority African American population in Detroit and the minority White and Hispanic populations is something of which all voters should be cognizant. Did media attempt to educate voters

about the qualifications and accomplishments of one mayoral candidate while ignoring or trivializing the positive aspects of the other candidate? If an attempt was made at local levels to influence political campaigns, it may be interesting to examine if it has also been attempted on a national level. Also, if it can be suggested that the DN and FP attempted to persuade voters in the Detroit mayoral election through use of specific rhetorical strategies in news stories and editorials, then it is important that Detroit voters and, by extension, all voters, know that this possibility exists. They must, for the future, recognize the possibility of bias in news reporting so that they do not blindly and unquestionably accept everything presented them by media about a specific candidate for political office.

In arguing further for the significance of this research, a brief history of politics in the City of Detroit before the Archer/McPhail mayoral campaign is useful for showing the relationship between one of Detroit's previous mayors and the DN and FP—a relationship that arguably encouraged the newspapers to have more than a news-reporting interest in the 1993 mayoral campaign. The importance of historical information in research was acknowledged by Berkowitz (1993), who wrote that we should "find a usable past" and "identify and reclaim rhetoric that has been lost" (p. 192). In this regard, a more detailed historiography appears in Chapter III.

Most observers will quickly acknowledge the adversarial relationship between the late Coleman Alexander Young and Detroit's daily newspapers, especially the DN. Young was loved by some and hated by others, but regardless of this love/hate relationship, he was re-elected mayor five times (Rich, 1989). Support for Young was often divided along racial lines, i.e., many Whites demonstrated an intense dislike for Coleman Young, and this information was routinely passed on to the community by the DN and

FP. Everything wrong about Detroit was attributed to Mayor Young. From his first term in office, when he cavalierly suggested that all criminals "hit Eight Mile Road," he became the media's favorite target (*Detroit Free Press*, 1974). Most persons who heard the speech realized "hit Eight Mile Road" was a metaphor; Young was not literally telling criminals to leave Detroit and move to the suburbs. The newspapers, however, used this statement to support their ongoing argument that Young was divisive, that he wanted to create a chasm between Black and White, between city and suburb. Throughout Young's twenty-year stay in office, his "hit Eight Mile Road" comment was reported over and over again by media as an example of his "race baiting" (Young & Wheeler, 1993). Only after his death did one of Detroit's weekly newspapers print the complete text of his speech revealing that his famous comment had been taking out of context, but it was too late; the damage had been done and many felt it was irreparable ("Young the Racist?" 1997).

In 1970, three years before Young was elected mayor, the Black population in Detroit numbered 672,605, and they were 44% of the total population of 1,514,063. By 1980, the population had declined to 1,203,339, and the percentage of Blacks had increased to 63% (Rich, 1989; Swaine, 1993). The decline occurred as Whites and Blacks left the city for the suburbs. Whites were now the numerical minority in Detroit. The DN and FP, not surprisingly, remained the bastion of opinion-shaping information and power. By the time the 1993 mayoral campaign officially began, the word "Detroit" was firmly established by Detroit newspapers as a code word for "Black." The term "suburbs" was acknowledged by many as a code word for "White." Both suburban and city residents were extremely interested in the outcome of the mayoral race. Thus, numerous news stories in both papers stressed the importance of a mayor who would improve relations with the surrounding municipalities. Neither suburbanites nor the daily newspapers, it ap-

peared, wanted another Coleman Young-type mayor, a mayor who challenged the media's reporting tactics, who loudly condemned racism, and who exhibited no trepidation when speaking out on issues affecting the City of Detroit and its residents.

Dennis Archer announced his candidacy more than a year prior to Sharon McPhail's announcement and resigned from a prestigious, lucrative law practice with the partners' blessings. As revealed in numerous newspaper articles, Archer was the "darling" of the media, and a cursory view of news stories seems to suggest most of his press coverage was more positive than negative. As discussed previously, the initial rhetoric concerning Sharon McPhail was somewhat neutral, but as the campaign wore on, specifically when polling numbers suggested the race was getting tighter, media support was totally absent and negative reporting against her appeared to increase.

Twenty-three days before the election, the polls indicated the race was too close to call—42% versus 45%, with 13% of Detroit's voters undecided. This prompted the DN and FP to develop polling questions that asked, "How important is it that the next mayor work to improve relations with the city's suburban neighbors?" "Do you feel that Sharon McPhail or Dennis Archer is better able to improve relations with the suburbs?" ("Mayor's Race Tightens," 1993). They also identified polling results from a racial standpoint, usually Black versus White voters, and in the final days of the race subtly alluded to the fact that the White vote in Detroit might be the swing vote. Increasingly, it became apparent that neither the DN nor the FP wanted Sharon McPhail elected mayor of the City of Detroit. The favored candidate was Archer. Interestingly, most of the journalists who wrote about the campaign did not live in the city of Detroit, but they showed a keen interest in the outcome of the race. To discern whether their interests were economical, political, ideological, or a combination of all three are explored further in this

research project.

Research Questions

The following questions are the primary focus of my project: (1) In what ways do the rhetorical strategies used by *The Detroit News* and the *Detroit Free Press* in their news stories and editorials focus on gender and race issues in their coverage of the Detroit mayoral campaign? (2) In what ways did agenda-setting operate to influence journalists and editorial writers in determining which issues in the Detroit mayoral campaign were deemed important to voters? A critical analysis of the rhetoric contained in the news stories and the editorials of both Detroit dailies during the campaign addresses these questions. This research project sought to determine what, if anything, media hoped to accomplish by using certain rhetorical strategies and if their choice for mayor was based on a candidate for mayor of the City of Detroit who would support the White male power structure. It appeared their preferred candidate, based on a cursory review of the information, was Dennis Archer. Thus, I will argue that the media manipulated the campaign to favor their candidate of choice by first creating the issues and then dictating that these media-created issues were important to voters.

This research questioned whether Dennis Archer, as the preferred candidate, was presented by media as the person more capable of speaking to the important issues, more capable of extending the olive branch to the suburbs, and better able to communicate with White business owners anxiously waiting to do business in Detroit. In other words, did media believe that Archer was not only the right "man" for the job but the right "Black" for the job? On the other hand, this research will seek to determine if the media believed and argued in news stories that the election of Sharon McPhail would mean continuation

of the rift supposedly created by Coleman Young between Blacks and Whites and between city and suburbs. Did McPhail have no mind of her own, a Barbie Doll if you will, and was she a willing dupe of Young who would guarantee the Young dynasty would continue? This analysis addresses these issues.

Methodology

This study used feminist rhetorical criticism as a methodology along with theoretical support from critical race theory. Such a perspective offers a position from which to understand the close relationship between gender and race in our society. Traditional research methods examining print media usually involve content analysis, experiments, or surveys. These methodologies are particularly useful to newspapers that are interested in learning ways to increase circulation and in determining what the public wants to read about. This is important, of course, because newspapers are largely dependent on advertisers (Wimmer & Dominick, 1987). There is considerable evidence, however, that newspapers today go far beyond merely discovering what readers want to read about. Because many of today's newspapers are part of conglomerates, including the DN and the FP, they also play an important role in pursuing social, economic, and political endeavors. Newspapers are increasingly concerned about who gets elected to political office, and, as a result, some will use their pages to show support for candidates they believe will best serve their interests. This very human effort to write articles and editorials that support a particular political candidate or ideology and seek to persuade demands a humanistic methodology to analyze their rhetorical strategies. Thus, feminist criticism, with support from critical race theory, is an excellent tool in this regard.

In order to understand the appropriateness of feminist criticism in this study, it is

important to recognize what it means to be a critic. Brock et al. (1990) wrote that to be a successful critic, it is imperative to select consciously and purposefully the perspective or approach one uses. The selection of an approach should be based on the material being researched and should allow for the best analysis of the information. Thus, a critical approach in analyzing rhetorical strategies used by the DN and FP that focuses on gender and race issues was useful in this research. Hart (1990) wrote that good criticism identifies what is significant or important, and what is most important for this paper is that criticism can identify an agenda. He wrote that "good criticism is the art of developing and then using critical probes, i.e., asking intelligent and specific questions of a given text" (p. 54). Criticism not only takes a position or makes a judgment but gives reasons for supporting a position.

Campbell (1974) posits that the purpose of criticism is to "describe, analyze, interpret, and evaluate." She states that criticism "must have intrinsic worth" and "perform a unique function for society," and that "the social function of criticism is to raise issues and encourage public discussion" (pp. 9, 10). She argues that criticism has a social function and that function is to not only raise issues but also to encourage public discussion. Additionally, communication scholars should encourage trained critics to critique "contemporary persuasive acts" (p. 11). My purpose for criticizing contemporary acts found in newspapers in Detroit was to determine whether media have overstepped their bounds by not just reporting news events but attempting to influence the outcome of political campaigns. Since politics plays a significant role in our society, this criticism of media is justified. The results of the research can perform a social function by making readers of newspapers aware that journalists and editorial writers are not without political aims and designs.

Rhetorical criticism is part of a sociological perspective that Brock et al. (1990) argue that "views human communication as a generating force and one reflective of society and accordingly assesses human communication in terms of society structures, traditions, norms, and conventions" (p. 21). My research will looked at some of the major issues confronting our society today, i.e., gender and race, and how powerful communicators like newspaper journalists and editorial writers can affect how certain members of society can be influenced by communication strategies directed toward them. In this regard, many rhetorical critics have reasoned that "the structure, institution, and processes of society itself are central to who communicates, what communicators say, and when, how, and why people communicate as they do" (p. 274).

The word "rhetoric" has many definitions. Aristotle defines it as all of the available means of persuasion. Foss, Foss, and Trapp (1991) define rhetoric as "an action human beings perform" and also "a perspective humans take" (p. 14). Brock et al. (1990) describe rhetoric "as the human effort to induce cooperation through the use of symbols" (p. 14). Newspaper stories and editorials are a form of rhetorical activity. For example, the FP and the DN made a decision concerning their choice of candidates and then set out to "induce" readers to believe the newspapers' choice for mayor was also the best choice for the voters in Detroit. My goal as a rhetorical critic was to make readers and voters aware of the efforts by media to persuade using rhetorical strategies. Most journalists today claim they are objective, especially with regard to political campaigns, but they are often influenced by their own ideology or the ideology or political slant of the newspaper for which they write. This slant, where it exists, should be exposed.

Nothstine, Blair, and Copeland (1994) wrote about the importance of studying rhetoric in all its forms and the effect it can have on the world. They argue that rhetorical

criticism that "promotes its audience to think or act differently and in socially responsible ways" is extremely valuable (p. 4). In this research, I argue that readers of newspapers need to be conscious of hidden bias in media because the outcome of a political race just may be important enough to a newspaper that it will use whatever rhetorical strategies are necessary to get its candidate elected.

In the "Report of the Committee on the Advancement and Refinement of Rhetorical Criticism" (1971), the committee argued that rhetorical criticism should be used to "analyze a human act, process, product, or artifact," and that it is up to the critic what he or she chooses to criticize, from rock music to newspapers (Bitzer & Black, 1971, p. 221). One of their most important arguments was that "any critic, regardless of the subject of his inquiry, becomes a rhetorical critic when his work centers on suasive potential or persuasive effects, their source, nature, operation and consequences" (p. 221). The committee also reported that although it is aware of the scholarly justification for all criticism, one of the top priorities is "the illumination of contemporary rhetorical transactions." It emphasized contemporary criticism and also historical studies that can shed light on the contemporary (p. 225). Because I view news stories and editorials as contemporary rhetorical transactions, rhetorical criticism of today's print media is not only appropriate, but the use of historical documentation to "illuminate" is also appropriate. Thus, my criticism of the media includes contextualizing how the past influenced the contemporary actions of the media.

In order to engage in effective criticism of rhetorical strategies used by media, it is important to have a focus, an approach. This is especially true for an analysis of newspapers where the critic is looking at numerous articles and editorials written by different journalists. Depending on the approach used, different conclusions can be reached. As

discussed previously, for this research project my goal was to determine if newspaper writers used gender and race issues to develop a particular agenda, and feminist rhetorical criticism is an exceptional tool to adequately address these issues. A feminist approach is demanded primarily because one of the candidates in the campaign was a woman. Even though Sharon McPhail was Dennis Archer's intellectual equal, had a similar educational background and similar work experience, McPhail started to slip in the polls soon after the campaign began. Few voters knew either candidate personally, so their knowledge of these candidates came primarily from media reports. Because Sharon McPhail lost an election that it appears she could have won, feminist rhetorical criticism can look at those gender issues that might have been presented by media in such a way as to adversely affect McPhail.

Feminist critics have also been at the forefront in examining the connection between gender and race. Even though both candidates identified themselves as African American, certain race issues appeared to permeate the campaign. During the campaign, it was the female candidate who was accused by media of race-baiting and "playing the race card." Perhaps few journalists really cared whether a man or a woman was elected mayor, but they effectively used rhetorical strategies that heightened the awareness of gender and race issues. The media did not appear to be overtly sexist or racist in their reporting, but it is suggested here that the media did use gender and race rhetoric as tools to create an image in the public's minds of the better candidate.

Archer was presented as the best candidate who possessed the important qualities of competence, honesty, and cooperation. Sharon McPhail was presented as the continuation of the past mayor, who was often accused by media of race-baiting. The aforementioned Barbie Doll image, whether created by accident or purposefully, focused on

McPhail's gender and made gender an issue. Second, it focused on her physical appearance. Historically, there has been and continues to be a certain rift between Blacks of darker and lighter skins. To a certain extent, McPhail was molded into a Black "dumb blonde" whose election would guarantee that the Coleman Young crowd was still pulling the strings at city hall.

Although I argue later in this analysis how race has been socially constructed, the issue of race concerns all groups in our society. Some scholars might suggest using an Afrocentric perspective for this research because many of the participants are Americans of African descent. The City of Detroit has a majority Black population and both candidates for mayor identified themselves as African American. I believe, however, that a methodology that focuses on placing Africa at the center is inappropriate here and would also be constraining in an analysis of the DN and FP. Race is not an *African* American phenomenon but an *American* one (if not an international one) that concerns all Americans. This analysis should not be constrained by a limiting African-centered analysis any more than it should be constrained by a Euro-centered one. Mark McPhail (1994) argued that although Asanti claims to articulate an Afrocentric rhetoric that, unlike Eurocentric rhetoric, is not "imperialistic or oppressive," Asanti runs the risk of "simply replacing one ontologically oppressive discourse—no matter how well intended—with another" (p. 33). McPhail also revealed that alternative analyses offered by scholars such as Asante that tend to question traditional approaches have not "offered significantly different conceptualizations of race in terms of their epistemological assumptions" (p. 92). Feminist rhetorical critics, on the other hand, have made significant contributions to the study of race because of its similarity and intersection with gender. In fact, the women's movement of the 1960s saw the creation of a relationship between feminism and criticism. Black

feminist scholars initially argued that, for Black women, race, gender, and class were clearly and closely intertwined, and eventually feminist scholars of other race and ethnic backgrounds began to understand and write about this connection (Swigonski, 1994).

I agree with those rhetorical critics who argue that "societal forces are so significant that they deserve to be treated as the focal point of any analyses of human activity" (Brock, Scott, & Chesebro, 1990, p. 274). Gender *and* race are societal forces that cannot be ignored in a critical analysis that many believed was the most important political campaign in Detroit in over two decades. Although Brock et al. for the most part ignored race as an approach, race demands the same visibility and analysis as gender, especially in a society where media are obsessed by so-called racial differences. Books are constantly being published that address race and so-called race differences (Anderson, 1994; Crenshaw et al. 1995; Herrnstein & Murray, 1994; Reed, 1997; Takakki, 1994; Wicker, 1996). Detroit daily newspapers, in particular, discuss most issues from a racial standpoint, from test scores to illegitimacy to reasons for poverty. The more traditional demographic variables are those that look at the relationship between gender and persuasion, but I argue that in our race-conscious society, the relationship between race and persuasion should also be listed as an important variable. In this regard, Brock et al. argued that "society might be described demographically to allow...a statistical analysis in which each member of a society could be compared, grouped and contrasted" (pp. 278, 279). Interestingly, they mentioned race along with gender as examples in this instance but argued that *gender* differences are the ***most*** meaningful and stable demographic variables for explaining society structures and processes. Ignoring race shows their unwillingness or lack of understanding of the ongoing role of race in our society.

Although gender and race were my primary concern in this study, I accept the

concept of race only as it has been socially constructed. Many scientists believe race has biological and cultural baggage and question the validity of the word. Some scientists have suggested the word "race" be abandoned altogether because it does not assist lay persons in understanding the true nature of human diversity. One scientist argued that there are *no* human traits inherently and inevitably associated with one another (*Discover Magazine*, 1994). Morphological features do vary from region to region but they do so independently. The word "race," however, is politically loaded and causes much confusion even among specialists in the field, as made evident by the fact that almost half of all anthropologists no longer acknowledge the existence of race (*Discover Magazine*, 1994).

Critical race theorists believe that race is not a fixed term and define race as a "fluctuating, decentered complex of social meanings that are formed and transformed under the constant pressures of political struggle" (Delgado & Stefancic, 1997, p. 318). Guinier (1995) argue that race in this country has defined all sorts of issues, from individual identities, to opportunities, to frames of reference, and even relationships. She also argues that because race has been of historical importance and continues to play a significant role, "membership in a so-called racial group often serves as a political proxy for shared experience and common interest" (p. 215). Lawrence (1995) argues that most of us do not recognize how our cultural experience not only influences our beliefs about race but how those beliefs affect our actions. Lee (1995) argues that Whites have historically used the concept of race to subordinate people of color. Some groups have redeployed race as an affirmative category around which people have organized to assert group power (p. 443).

Lee (1995) wrote that, in any discussion on race or when race is used as a variable in research, both the essential and historical notions of race must be acknowledged and

that we consider both race-neutral and race-conscious remedies. She argues that if one set of definitions is abandoned, we might also abandon other useful tools (p. 447). Grillo and Ansley (1997) argues for the importance of holding up the lens of gender and the lens of race because they might provide new patterns that need to be studied (p. 648). I strongly believe it is important to hold up both race and gender as prisms through which the rhetorical strategies of the DN and the DF can be observed in their coverage of the Detroit mayoral race.

Regardless of whether one accepts or rejects the concept of distinct and separate races, Detroit's newspapers regularly focus on race. As far as the Archer/McPhail mayoral campaign was concerned, the issue of race was an ongoing part of the entire campaign, whether it was articulated in Black versus White terms or suburbs versus city. Thus, race definitely should be addressed and should be a part of my criticism of the FP and DN. The intersection of race and gender in my research is paramount in attempting to understand the role of media in the Archer/McPhail mayoral political campaign. The purpose of my research, however, is not to charge sexism or racism but to determine how race and gender have been used in the media's rhetorical strategies. I am painfully aware that charges of sexism and racism too often fall on deaf ears. Thus, even though Andolsen (1986) argued that racism and sexism are historically related and have helped sustain White male privilege, I seek instead to contribute a less confrontational discussion of race and gender issues.

For this research project, it is also important to understand the dualism of race and gender. For example, print media have played a pivotal role in promoting, if not creating, negative images of Black women in this country. Jewell (1993) argues that where stereotypes of women are constantly being perpetuated by media, society begins to be-

lieve that all Black women fit a certain stereotype (pp. 16-18). Rhodes (1993) wrote that "black women often were characterized as the complacent servant mammy" or the "scheming and wicked Jezebel casting her spell over vulnerable men" (p. 187). Although my research focuses on the use of race as opposed to racism and gender as opposed to sexism, some may argue that for media to purposely defame Black women on an ongoing basis would require a racist (and sexist) media. Because both racism and sexism are deeply embedded in our society, I cannot ignore racism or sexism in those instances when they "rear their ugly heads." For example, Aptheker (1971) argues that "a racist society breeds and needs a racist historiography" (p. 9). Rhodes (1993) suggests that "a racist society also requires a racist media to disseminate these values and beliefs to a mass audience" (p. 185). Van Dijk (1991) argues that "the Western press, and especially the right-wing press, (re)produce and further emphasize a negative image of minorities, immigrants, and refugees, and thereby contribute to increasing forms of intolerance, prejudice and discrimination" (p. 111). Lule (1995) also emphasizes the importance of looking at these issues. He wrote, "The interrogation of racist stereotypes is an essential starting point for press criticism of race" (p. 180)

Review of Literature

The literature focuses on my research methodology and feminist criticism, and also provides additional information on some of the tools I used to support this research project. For example, gender research has made significant advancements in the last three decades; critical race theory continues to demand a voice, as respected scholars of various ethnic backgrounds challenge past scholarship; agenda-setting has a rich history of research by many prominent scholars who argued for and against the theory that media

try to set agendas. Also, some political communication literature will be useful because this study focuses on a political campaign and the rhetoric of politicians as well as literature that discusses power and the media.

Gender Research

There is a wealth of literature on gender research that discusses feminist rhetorical criticism as an approach or methodological tool. Chapter III of this dissertation goes into considerably more detail concerning feminist rhetorical criticism and its usefulness in this specific analysis. An analysis of media rhetoric and media coverage of McPhail is important in ascertaining whether there was biased reporting because she was female. Sapiro (1983) discusseo the difficulty for women (especially in a male-dominated political system and in a male-dominated news media) to transcend the female stereotype that persists even today. On the whole, women are not valued in politics (p. 3). Trent and Friedenberg (1983) posit that gender is a significant variable that can influence how campaigns are carried out, and that female candidates often have a much more difficult task than male candidates simply because gender can create unique problems in campaign style. Sapiro holds that research on women's communication has suggested that female candidates' ability to participate in politics may be restricted by their being less influential than male candidates. Research into gender differences in political communication was important for this project.

Lee and Solomon (1990) wrote that Black women in particular are invisible in the news media, and that when they are present, they are usually at the bottom except for the few highly visible Black women on television. If news media have been unable to treat women equally in the media's own work environment, one can surmise that this attitude

would also permeate their rhetorical strategies involving Black female political candidates. As reported earlier in this study, the historical record clearly shows that print media have not been kind to Black women. Black women have been portrayed as baby-making welfare queens, drug addicts, and prostitutes.

Because of disparate treatment of women of color in media, I believe that, in addition to literature addressing feminist rhetorical criticism, it is important to look at literature that addresses race. As discussed earlier, use of this type of methodology is sparse in communication literature except for the "nods" made to Afrocentrism. Mark McPhail (1994), however, in his book, *The Rhetoric of Racism*, makes significant strides into the relationship between rhetoric and racism. Although he focuses primarily on racism, there are certain epistemological foundations and conceptualizations he espouses on racism that can be entertained as we look at the issues of race and gender. For example, he acknowledges there has been a discussion of race and rhetoric in some communications, but concludes that "there exists few systematic and sustained discussions of the rhetoric of racism" (p. 4). In order to have a sustained discussion on racism, we must first have a sustained discussion on race. Correctly, Mark McPhail argues there is a danger in isolating racism as an object of critical analysis when the foundation the analysis is based on is often rooted in the same philosophy that created racism in the first place (p. 23). His failing is that he uses race, race relations, and racism interchangeably. Without socially constructed race, there is no racism. We must first deal with the sociological and philosophical underpinnings of the root word before we can attack the evil that it has produced. I am also encouraged and delighted that ontological assumptions about race are now being expanded by scholars to include "whiteness" as research into critical white studies advances (Delgado & Steffancic, 1997).

Critical Race Theory

In analyzing a political campaign that involves the coverage of persons of color by writers and editors who are predominantly White and male, it is imperative that race be taken into account in this treatise, but we must go beyond those analyses that see race as a "Black" issue only. Race is not about the study of African Americans; race is about the study of all Americans because race and racism have affected all of us. Mark McPhail wrote that although scholars address race, "they do not offer in-depth explorations of the epistemological foundations of race, nor do they address how racism influences communication between blacks and whites" (p. 5). Feminist rhetorical criticism, for example, is helpful in the interrogation of gender and race and their intersection because feminist scholars have identified this connection. The complexities of race, though, require more theoretical foundation. Thus, I find it necessary to also look at critical race theory for additional information in this area.

Critical race theory (CRT) has been developed in recent years by legal scholars. Many persons today, of course, believe that we should be moving toward a color-blind society, but those of us who are persons of color and women believe we are no closer to a color-blind society than we are to a gender-neutral society. Hence, the concept of color-blind research or gender-neutral research is a fallacy. I do not expect to see the eradication of socially-constructed race or gender in my lifetime. CRT, which takes race into account in an analysis, can assist in understanding the many racial issues we face today in communication efforts and may add insight into gender issues. Therefore, both feminist rhetorical criticism and critical race theory can be useful in developing the tenets for a rhetorical criticism that addresses gender and race and helps to advance the argument that both gender and race issues are significant in looking at the rhetorical strategies used by

media in the Detroit mayoral campaign.

Critical race theory (CRT) challenges the ways in which race and racial power are constructed and represented in American legal culture and in American society. This theory was developed because of dissatisfaction with the discourse about traditional civil rights by both the conventional liberal and conservative legal scholars. Critical race theory "thus represents an attempt to inhabit and expand the space between two very different intellectual and ideological formations" (Crenshaw et al., 1995, p. xiii). Critical race theorists do not subscribe to a "canonical set of doctrines or methodologies," but there are two things that unify the scholarship: a need to understand how "a regime of white supremacy and its subordination of people of color have been created and maintained in America," and once understood, the knowledge to change it (Crenshaw et al., 1995, p. xiii). CRT also shows how the problems of race have many similarities to those of gender.

Another reason CRT was developed was because of a failure of Critical Legal Studies to address the constraining role of racial ideology in the composition and culture of American institutions. I argue that media are a powerful American institution. If members of the legal profession see the need for a theory that uses race as a variable in an analysis, or sometimes place race at the center of the analysis, the importance of both a race theory and race-oriented methodology cannot be trivialized or overlooked in the communication discipline. Although CRT seeks to examine the law's role in the construction and maintenance of social domination and subordination, the tenets of CRT (like feminist rhetorical theory/criticism) can also assist in providing support for a race-oriented criticism. CRT attempts to address social issues from a legal standpoint and seeks to compel scholars to confront the "historical centrality and complicity of the law in

upholding White supremacy (and concomitant hierarchies of gender, class and sexual orientation)" (Crenshaw et al., p. xi). The centrality and complicity of powerful media in upholding White supremacy should also be addressed.

The usefulness of some of the tenets of CRT in an analysis of a political campaign involving candidates of color and a predominantly White editorial board cannot be ignored. Critical race theorists have challenged the lack of critical thinking about race by scholars. They agree that race has been socially constructed; however, "there is a material dimension and weight to the experience of being 'raced' in American society" (p. xxvi). Because American society is and has been built on the concept of race, a race-conscious theory that details how the law participates in "race-ing" American society was deemed important and thus developed. Critical race theorists suggested that some of the implications of their work as legal scholars could lead to a broader national conversation about racial politics. They believe CRT can provide new ways to think about the contemporary politics of the social construction of race and how it continues to dominate our society. They argue that even a cursory look at today's national discourse on such issues as public education, unemployment, immigration, and welfare reform clearly demonstrate the role of race and racial ideology (pp. xxix, xxx). Media are among the central forces controlling the discussion of these issues, and the DN and DF in particular can be analyzed by using certain aspects of CRT to show if they attempted to shape the campaign debate around race or race issues. Thus, this theory can be useful in analyzing the Archer/McPhail mayoral campaign because it had significant racial overtones in the numerous articles and editorials in the DN and FP.

CRT's chief goal is to remind us that racial ideology continues to matter in American life, and it seeks to provide tools that will help us think about race. CRT ac-

knowledges oppressions that include gender, economic class, and sexual orientation. and many of its adherents see the "interlocking set of oppressions that extend beyond the singular base of race" to includes these additional issues (Crenshaw et al., p. 320). This is helpful since my research project looks at gender in addition to race. This theory also looks beyond "narrow boundaries of racialism" (p. xxxi). For example, critical race theorists were critical of those Blacks who rallied around Clarence Thomas' appointment to the Supreme Court of the United States just because he was a Black man. Dennis Archer even admitted he was an early supporter of Clarence Thomas for this reason. These theorists argued that "racialist politics helped secure the radical right's crucial fifth vote to the Supreme Court" (p. xxxi). Additionally, CRT promotes the idea that "racial identities are lived within and through gender identities" and severely condemns Black racialist politics that deny the struggle against "racialized gender oppression" and "gender exclusivity" (p. xxxi). CRT certainly allows for the intersection of race and gender.

The importance of race in this campaign cannot be denied or ignored. Critical race theory clearly argues for a race analysis in scholarship when appropriate. At the same time, it clearly accepts the intersection of gender and race.

Agenda-Setting Research

Agenda-setting was a useful tool for this project because of prior research concerned with whether or not media attempt to influence their readers or viewers. Since McCombs and Shaw (1972) first studied the 1968 presidential election, there has been a steady flow of scholarly research on agenda-setting. Fifty years before McCombs and Shaw's seminal article, Lippman (1922) wrote that the voice of the public is heard through political parties that link policy makers with their constituents. Lippman's article

suggested that mass media is the mechanism that links the public with these policy makers, a form of agenda-setting. Lazarsfeld and Merton (1948) wrote about who sets the media agenda and the resultant implication for society, and believed that big business financed the production and distribution of mass media. Cohen (1963) initiated further interest by writing that media do not tell us what to think but tell us what to think about.

McCombs and Shaw (1972) take the position that news media play an important roll in shaping political reality. For example, in political campaigns, media may determine the direction of the campaign by deciding what or who is important to voters. McCombs and Shaw also showed that media set the agenda for each political campaign and can influence attitudes about political issues. Detroit's newspapers determined very early that the most important aspect of the campaign would be whether a candidate could communicate with and be acceptable to suburbanites. Overall, the McCombs and Shaw study supported the hypothesis of the agenda-setting function of the media, arguing that voters accept what media define as important, but they also recognize that more research is needed. They made a strong case for agenda-setting over 25 years ago, stating that agenda-setting can be useful in making the determination of whether media attempted to influence voters to vote for a particular candidate by determining which issues were deemed important.

Graber (1976) questioned the influence of agenda-setting on women. This has relevance because, as stated earlier, one of the candidates in the campaign was a woman. Graber argued that women might be different from men as far as their political interests and knowledge are concerned. She concluded in a research study that it was important for women to become more interested in politics, or at least change the perception that they are not interested. This would encourage media to show a greater respect for

women's political interests. Graber's study will be significant in my research because it argues that there are gender differences in the political arena, and this is important in ascertaining if the female candidate was treated differently as far as reporting tactics were concerned.

Weaver, McCombs, and Spellman (1975) found that media can do more than reinforce preexisting beliefs, and that they can actually "teach those beliefs." Media have gone far beyond telling us what to think about—their telling us *how* to think. Kosicki (1993) argued that there is a growing ability of special interest groups to influence the media and their reporting on campaign issues. Thus, the issue of agenda-setting by media and its impact on readers has important implications in today's society. Family-owned or small-town newspapers are becoming a thing of the past, and the fact that both the DN and FP are now owned by profit-seeking national organizations suggests a possible reason for their efforts to influence local politics.

Disagreements remain in agenda-setting research. Note that Rogers and Dearing (1988) concluded after years of research that mass media do influence the public agenda and that the public agenda, once set by the media agenda, can influence the policy agenda of elite decision makers. Iyengar (1988) believed, however, that there were serious methodological limitations in agenda-setting research because media may not be the only influence on the public. Personal experience must also be taken into consideration because one's personal experience can determine whether an individual is more or less receptive to the media's agenda. Iyengar wrote that media influence on public agenda is not limitless, but that "media contribute to agenda-building in government by *influencing the outcome of elections* [italics mine]" (p. 599). Iyengar did agree that one of the most significant consequences of agenda-setting is determining what issues voters decide are impor-

tant, and once an issue is given a certain amount of importance, that issue can help one make a voting decision. Additionally, Iyengar agreed that agenda-setting research has important implications for the governmental process and that we need to start asking new research questions about agenda-setting, especially the political consequences of agenda-setting and the psychological aspects of media influence.

In the 1990s, several scholars again looked at the status of agenda-setting research. Edelstein (1993) identified problems associated with the research. It should be noted that many of the finds were based on "salience discrimination" and that the research has been "vague in its use of criterion terms" (p. 85). Edelstein hoped that the next quarter century might bring forth scholars who would see the need to explore other criterion variables as well as to see the need for joining agenda-setting with other traditions in mass communication research.

Weaver (1994) points out that media influence has been a concern for most of the twentieth century. Scholarly research continues to show that media can be influential, but the media's power to do so is not limitless. There is, however, "increased concern over the media manipulation of the public" (p. 347). McCombs (1997) argued that agenda setting today is about "the transmission of salience" (p. 433). In other words, the news media can influence the salience or prominence of issues that come before the public. This dissertation shows how the DN and FP first decided which issues should be important and then pushed these issues in news stories, editorials, and polls they conducted.

In order for media to even attempt to engage in agenda-setting, media must also possess the power to do so. Kosicki (1993) wrote that a 1984 study of a U.S campaign suggested that media have discretionary power to shape agenda. Further, he added media could construct messages that emphasize certain aspects of an issue while ignoring others.

Thus, media add additional elements to public discourse by political candidates and also set their own priorities. Most important, Kosicki argues that powerful interest groups sometime try to keep certain information out of the public eye by making other issues seem more important, with the goal of distracting from the original concerns. One of the issues that the FP and the DN stressed most often was the importance of the new mayor being able to get along with the suburbs; other issues that should have been important to Detroit voters were often ignored.

Agenda-setting as an additional research tool cannot be trivialized because more and more newspapers and television stations are becoming part of conglomerates with economic, social, and political agendas. These conglomerates do not use newspapers just to sell advertising, but also to set agendas for readers and perhaps influence voters in election outcome.

Political Communication Research

This research project involved an analysis of the rhetorical strategies used by media in their coverage of a political campaign. Political communication played an important role in this regard. Therefore, it is essential to review literature that discusses this form of communication. Political scientists and communication scholars recognized that communication technology had forever changed politics, and this recognition resulted in the creation of the Political Communication Division in the International Communication Association. Hart (1993) wrote, "Political communication brings together the old world of political science with the new world of communication study." This action is carried out "in the spirit of harmony and mutual exploration" (p. iii).

Green (1987) discusses the importance of language in politics. Note this view:

"Language is...the most fundamental of political weapons" (p. ix). Interestingly, he wrote that "political discourse generally revolves around a few key terms or labels that serve as organizing concepts and thus as political weapons" (p. ix). In the Archer/McPhail mayoral campaign, some of the key terms were "race," "gender," "Black," and "White." These terms were used by the DN and the FP as "political weapons" in addition to their being used in rhetorical strategies. Green also discusses how "the abstract nature of political labels not only gives them their evocative power, but causes politicians to fight over them" (p. 2). This is consistent with certain words being socially constructed, such as race and gender.

According to Nimmo and Sanders (1981), the political communication field had its beginnings in the 1950s. By 1972, over 1,000 articles were included in a bibliography on political communication. By the early 1980s, the literature published and unpublished on political communication had surpassed cataloguing possibilities and had expanded to a cross-disciplinary effort by scholars to increase knowledge in this area. Political communication was designated as one of the ways political influences are mobilized and transmitted. Nimmo and Sanders also argue that persuasion is at the core of political communication. Swanson and Nimmo (1991) describe the state of the political communication field. They argue that political communication is both diverse and interdisciplinary. They posit that political communication's main identity has been the proposition that "communication in election campaigns constitutes the field's paradigm case" (p. 8). This paradigm is voter persuasion. There is debate, however, over whether this is the appropriate paradigm, but for my purposes, the voter persuasion paradigm is useful.

As far as political language is concerned, Graber (1981) says that politics is a word game. Without language, "facts and ideas are mute, unable to generate thought and

communicate meaning" (pp. 195, 197). The major functions of political language are dissemination, agenda-setting, interpretation, and linkage. Political messages oftentimes carry much more explicit information than the literal meaning of a message might suggest, and I argue that the DN and FP used certain code words in reporting on the Detroit mayoral campaign. This aspect of political communication can aid in understanding why the Detroit media used these strategies.

Another facet of political communication is political rhetoric. The tenets of political rhetoric are useful in this project because of my use of rhetorical criticism as a methodology. Bitzer (1981) takes the position that political rhetoric deals with issues that affect the public and the public's business, and often presents itself as dispassionate and objective but, in reality, it can disguise partisan motives. Bitzer argues that "political rhetoric has served good ends and bad, used intelligence and defied it, and harnessed the noblest of motives and the worst" (p. 233). Political rhetoric can also promote lies and be dangerous. This rhetoric is also diverse, ranging from campaign rallies to press reporting.

Dowling (1989) identifies print journalism as political communication. He shows how contemporary rhetorical theories suggest the importance of examining a range of communications, including media news reports. His study illustrates how one rhetorical-critical method, fantasy-theme analysis, "allows critics to discover the rhetorically created social realities of groups of people" (p. 129). Although I use race and feminist rhetorical criticism in my analysis, Dowling's study clearly shows the impact news coverage can have on politics. His research was a result of the recommendation that came out of the Wingspread Conference suggesting that rhetorical scholars should expand their studies to include a full range of rhetorical transactions including the study of mass media messages (p. 130). For example, Dowling's study of the Iran hostage crisis reveals the

political as well as the persuasive nature of the print medium's coverage of this crisis, and he theorizes that how the media chose to cover the event was influential in determining who was eventually elected president (Reagan won over Jimmy Carter, who was viewed as being unable to resolve the hostage crisis). Also, Dowling's study suggests that print media do more than just objectively report on reality; they can influence political decisions. His research demonstrates that "rhetorical and communication scholars may play an important role in determining how communications not consciously rhetorical may influence political agendas and climates" (p. 145).

Johnson (1991) wrote that, in the field of political communication, interdisciplinary approaches and perspectives are common and encouraged. Communication during elections is still the primary focus of political communication. The media's influence on campaign coverage has probably received the most attention. Johnson also looked at the attention and treatment given to minority candidates by so-called mainstream media, e.g., the type of coverage given to Jesse Jackson.

The relationship between the press and politics is important for this project. Weaver (1990), another political communication scholar, argues that a relationship exists between the press and politics. In one research project, he concludes that news media could influence the political process. His study also suggests that print media play a major role in making one candidate more prominent than another and can influence not only voters' early perceptions of a campaign, but the final choices on election day. Weaver also hypothesizes that the characteristics of candidates who receive the most emphasis from the press are similar to the ones voters cite to support their election choice (p. 205). Media reported Archer as being better equipped to communicate with Detroit's suburbs. McPhail, on the other hand, was perceived as being antagonistic toward the suburbs.

The media, in attempting to influence voters, are also influenced by others. Roberts and McCombs (1994) argue that a number of potential sources influence the media's agenda, from government sources to private sector sources. Newspapers often influence each other and can influence television coverage as well. As conglomerates continue to purchase local newspapers, power sources have more control over local communities. The *Detroit Free Press* and *The Detroit News*, for example, are owned by national organizations that can and do influence the editorial slant of their papers. As a result, Hart (1993) believes that mass media are becoming a major threat to politics in the United States, and, as a result, the need for research into political communication should not be ignored.

McCombs (1997) provides some interesting information about political communication, especially concerning the issue of agenda-setting. He takes the position that in a democratic society, news media do not deliberately set agendas; however, they may do so inadvertently by choosing for readers or voters which topics are important. With almost 30 years of agenda-setting research available to media organizations, however, certain news organizations may consciously and deliberately set agendas by consciously and deliberately deciding what is important. McCombs' research of political communication also included looking at the gender gap in voting. Men and women often have different voting patterns, but news media, using the agenda-setting influence, can bring these groups closer together by determining which issues are salient. Conversely, media can use the same influence to separate groups, an important aspect to examine in the Detroit mayoral election, e.g., dividing White and Black voters.

Power and the Media

In order for media to attempt to persuade a group of voters, they must have the power to do so. Thus, I deem it important that some literature on power and the media be reviewed. Cornfield (1992), in his study of the political power of the media, wrote that in political communication, scholars often rely on documents and dialogues to find the truth. He argues, "A well-told story of politics can get us to consider dialectical and rhetorical messages we would otherwise ignore" (p. 48). For example, Reese (1991) discusses how media organizations might manifest power by defining reality. Usually, certain groups/individuals have power and are able to manipulate media. At the same time, media sometime assert their own power by determining their own agenda. Reese posits that media have a powerful and pervasive effect on public opinion. They demonstrate their power by limiting and prioritizing which issues they want the public to perceive as important.

Some critical scholars make the argument that media are a power center and that this power is clearly defined to the entire news organization. The power of media has grown exponentially over many decades, and the way media organizations manifest this growth is in their ability and willingness to define reality by determining what is important (Reese, 1991). Reese's comments have implications for Detroit's two major dailies, because defining reality in the Detroit mayoral race meant deciding which issues were important and then making sure those issues were effectively presented.

The power of the media can be strengthened by their joining forces with others who have similar interests. For example, in one study, it was determined that certain elite media centers, e.g., *The New York Times*, were closely interconnected with other power centers such as Fortune 500 companies. Elite media are part of the "inner circle of the

capitalist structure" (Reese, p. 332). They seek to maintain power because of their long-term interest in preserving the capitalist system. These elite groups also include rich businessmen and their families. Williams (1967) reveals that there is a national upper class, an 'American business aristocracy', and this class controls "foundations, universities, *mass media*, opinion molding associations," etc. (p. 184). Bagdikian (1983) states that between the 1965-1980 period, American mass media came under the maximum control of national and multinational corporations. He states that newspapers are no different from other large American corporations but that they can affect the "roots of democracy." This is strong language, but Bagdikian continues to argue that when media corporations feel they are in jeopardy, nothing will prevent them from protecting their power by "altering news and other public information" if necessary (p. 224). Archer was perceived as a friend of big business; McPhail was not. It was in the interest of the Detroit news media to have a mayor they believed would protect business interests.

Media do attempt to influence readers, especially voters, but it is easier for media to merely reinforce attitudes as opposed to totally changing these attitudes. Wilson and Gutierrez (1995) hold that media are most influential when they reinforce existing attitudes and opinion—providing one-sided stories, for example, or stereotypical portrayals that reinforce racist attitudes. Particularly in Southeast Michigan there is a high degree of racial polarization, and local media often build on that polarization by the strategies they use to report the news. I will argue that the DN and the FP are part of an elite media owned by Knight-Ridder and Gannett conglomerates, and their interest is to preserve this capitalistic system. Some perceived Archer as more a part of the capitalist structure than Sharon McPhail and more in sync with the interests of power. He was not only a member of one of Detroit's most prestigious law firms but he had also been a Supreme Court Jus-

tice.

Wilkins (1997) believes in a power media, especially with regard to African Americans. He wrote that media could define reality for Blacks or, as might be the case for the Detroit news media, determine for them what should be important. Concerning this power he wrote: "The greatest power turned out to be what it had always been: the power to define reality where Blacks are concerned and to manage perceptions and therefore arrange politics and culture to reinforce those definitions" (p. 660).

In Detroit, the DN and the FP sought to create a reality that they argued was in the best interest of Detroit residents, but the reality was that it was more important for the business community, which included the newspapers, and for suburban interests. Detroit's newspapers have played a significant role in arranging politics and culture to reinforce those definitions by portraying women, Blacks, and other marginal groups in stereotypical ways.

This review of literature shows the interdisciplinary tools that are available for an analysis of the rhetorical strategies used by Detroit's newspapers and also for the gender and race issues that were prominent throughout the campaign.

Dissertation Outline

Chapter I of the dissertation introduces and provides an overview of my research purpose. The research looks at news stories and editorials about the 1993 Detroit mayoral campaign in *The Detroit New* and the *Detroit Free Press* covering a period from January 1, 1993, to November 4, 1993. It also looks at articles contained in the *Michigan Chronicle* for the period September 1, 1993 to November 4, 1993. The chapter provides information concerning the significance of the project, poses specific research questions, and

offers a review of literature that addresses the research methodology. Chapter II discusses additional information concerning my research methodology and feminist rhetorical criticism, and how they can be useful in addressing the dualism of race and gender. Specifically, it addresses how *The Detroit News* and the *Detroit Free Press* used gender and race as rhetorical strategies in an attempt to influence voters as to which issues were important. To accomplish this, all news stories and editorials in the DN and the FP that discussed the campaign and the candidates during the time period between January 1993 and November 1993 were analyzed. The *Michigan Chronicle*, a weekly Detroit newspaper, was also examined for the same time period to determine its perspective on the campaign and the rhetorical strategies used in this regard. Chapter III contains a brief history of the DN and the FP and their evolving news reporting strategies. This chapter also provides a report on the political climate in the City of Detroit during the administration of Coleman Young and contains a brief history of African Americans in Detroit and in media. Chapter IV includes a critical analysis of DN and the FP and the rhetorical strategies they used in covering the Dennis Archer/Sharon McPhail 1993 mayoral campaign. Chapter V provides an overview of the project and presents the research conclusions.

Summary

A feminist rhetorical criticism that addresses both race and gender in analyzing the Sharon McPhail/Dennis Archer mayoral campaign reveals a campaign that has significant historical importance. Because of the need for economic development in the City of Detroit as well as decaying surrounding suburban communities, and because of escalating social problems, many believed the right mayor could revitalize the city and truly make a difference. The right mayor could bring jobs and businesses back to the city,

could be a leader and role model for children, and could repair the broken relationship between Detroit and its suburbs. After twenty years of Coleman Young's stewardship, those in the business community were extremely concerned about electing a new mayor because Detroit was not unlike a multi-billion dollar corporation, a corporation that issues contracts and grants to private businesses and community organization. Many also realized that the possibility of casino gambling might be a part of the city's future. I theorize that the DN and the FP believed that Dennis Archer was the right candidate, and the news media wanted him to appeal to those residents (and non-residents) and monied elite who had the most to gain (or lose) financially, as opposed to low-income Detroiters. Thus, they used gender and racial strategies in their attempt to influence voters to support their favored candidate.

To suggest that local Detroit newspapers may have engaged in agenda-setting by attempting to influence or persuade voters into believing what should be important to them has extremely important implications. It prompts the question: Are we truly in control of our own lives and our votes, or have media conglomerates taken these away from us? This issue demands further research and an academic response to help determine if democracy as we define it is at risk, with voting becoming a futile and perfunctory exercise. Voters and academia should be aware if the DN and the FP influenced or attempted to influence voters by employing unfair and biased reporting tactics and rhetorical strategies that favored one candidate over the other for media's own purposes.

CHAPTER II

INTERROGATING GENDER AND RACE

In analyzing the 1993 mayoral campaign, it was important to use a methodology that could address both race and gender issues. The tenets of feminist criticism are useful in this regard because traditional methods have often ignored or downplayed the role of gender and race in rhetoric, and particularly the intersection of gender and race. A feminist perspective for analyzing rhetoric is also useful in my research because of my personal experience with Detroit's daily newspapers. Nothstine, Blair, and Copeland (1994) argued that "critics should begin the search for things worth writing about as critics by reflecting on their own experiences, curiosity, and commitments" (p. 10). For a number of years, I have been a critic of both the DN and the FP. I often challenged or criticized in writing a particular news story or editorial that I believed was offensive to women or to Americans of African descent. On one occasion I criticized what I believed was a negative story about American Indians. On numerous occasions I criticized the media for their negative portrayal of the City of Detroit and Detroiters. For example, I criticized the media for denigrating Detroit students' low scores on tests but never commenting on the low scores found in other school districts. I was particularly offended by the Detroit media's on-going effort to assign a Black female face to welfare recipients.

Upon entering the field of Communication, I discovered there was a method of

criticism that would aid me significantly in my analysis of the media—rhetorical criticism. Brock, Scott, and Chesebro (1990) wrote about methods of rhetorical criticism and argue, "The criticism of rhetorical discourse is steadily assuming a more vital role in American life" (p. 7). They also argue that popular journalism continues to be the province of rhetorical criticism, and that communication scholars continue to use communication journals that are read primarily by students and educators for their discussion of issues. Campbell (1974) wrote many years ago that "professional journals should not be the primary vehicle nor professional colleagues the primary audience for such efforts" because sometimes the audience that criticism needs to reach is the general public (p. 10). Because of my personal focus on gender and race, feminist rhetorical criticism as a methodology aided in an analysis of the DN and the FP. Hopefully, the result of this research will be useful to the general public and media as well, and add to the body of knowledge on criticism.

I'm aware of only a few communication scholars in the Metropolitan Detroit area who use their skills as critics to address many of the issues raised in Detroit's daily newspapers. Campbell (1974) laments the failure of rhetoricians to "produce any significant numbers of practicing critics of public discourse." She wrote, "We are failing to fulfill both our social and professional functions" (p. 9). Without question, in a society that has a serious gender and racial communication gap and in a society where politics play a major role, scholars should offer their assistance in showing how certain communication issues should be addressed. Additionally, feminist communication scholars have done very little to challenge the efforts by some politicians, along with the mass media's assistance in some cases, to change the words "feminism" and "feminist" into negative terms. Rac-

ists are now called "victims" of persons "playing the race card," and those who criticize racism are now called "race-baiters." In the 1980s, to be "politically correct" meant to be "left-leaning graduate students, typically students of cultural studies, who were using the term to identify a minority cultural/political position" (Burgoon & Bailey, 1992, p. 84). In the 1990s the term is used by media to "refer disparagingly to a host of campus attempts to deal with a wide range of issues" (p. 85), including multiculturalism. For the most part, there has been silence, except in communication journals, from the community of rhetorical scholars. This research project shows the necessity of analyzing how language use involving gender and race has changed and how these changes have influenced the media's reporting strategies. In order to analyze how media disseminate information concerning issues involving race and gender, a critical look at the rhetorical strategies used by media is demanded, and I take the position that a feminist perspective is the most useful in this regard. I sincerely hope that my efforts will also challenge other communication scholars to address, in the print media, many of the issues involving gender, race, and politics that are currently being debated in the press.

To better understand the functionality of feminist criticism, it is important to operationally define feminism and to discuss rhetorical criticism in greater detail. For this project, I define feminism as the belief that women should have opportunities equal to men, that they should be covered similarly by media, and that they should have the same opportunities for self-expression. At the same time, a feminist approach must go beyond this definition to recognizing the need to identify certain social issues that are problematic for women and, by extension, other marginalized groups. Thus, in order to analyze socially constructed gender and race, a sociological perspective is appropriate for this re-

search. Specifically, a feminist approach is used to identify the problems associated with race and gender issues, and once identified, pursues a solution.

Foss, Foss, and Trapp (1991) address doing research from a feminist perspective and asserted that research is done to improve women's lives and to empower them. They also comment that the "ultimate consequence of research informed by a feminist perspective is social change" (p. 276) and that a feminist perspective does not only seek to identify how gender is socially constructed but how to change that construction. This same argument can be reconceptualized to show how race is socially constructed and how to change that construction. The DN and the FP used rhetorical strategies that took into consideration race and gender issues. A feminist sociological perspective, then, helps to identify and understand why these strategies were used.

Black (1989), in adding to the definition of feminism, argued that feminism is the extending of rights now enjoyed by dominant groups, i.e., White males, to persons who have historically been denied those rights. Thus, certain aspects of this definition can be expanded for the purpose of arguing that Blacks and other marginalized groups should also have the opportunity to enjoy equal rights and to be treated equally and fairly by media. Research into the intersection of gender and race can assist in understanding this concept. It must also be addressed that the study of the intersection of race and gender is not limited to a decision to include non-White women in feminist research by discovering that Black women or Chicano women, for example, have different life experiences. Analyzing the intersection of gender and race can also mean looking at how Black or White males play a role in this process.

Understanding why a feminist perspective is a useful approach to the study of

gender and race rhetorical strategies used by media requires that gender and race be operationally defined in this research project. Both have been socially constructed, but they also have a biological basis. Additional information will be provided in this regard in subsequent sections of this chapter. Equally important is an understanding of the historical use of gender and race. Rhetorical critics must be concerned with historical issues, since the primary dimensions of rhetorical criticism are descriptive, interpretive, and evaluative. Historical data can be used to provide context for criticism because events do not occur in a vacuum. Cantor and Schneider (1967) argue that in looking at documents to criticize, we should read them "in the light of values contemporary with the source itself" (p. 42). Critics should also be aware that "our judgments of value are characteristically dependent on attitudes peculiar to our own place and time" (p. 43). At the same time, in observing present-day documents, it should be recognized that editorial writers and journalists can and are influenced by history. Thus, it is important to know the history of race and gender in the United States, how it has been socially constructed, and how it impacts today's events and today's journalists and editorial writers. Chapter III of this dissertation provides an overview of this information.

A feminist approach is also useful because it argues that how we view the world is sometimes shaped by language. The study of language has been carried out from a male point of view because our culture has been strongly influenced by the experiences and values of men. As a result, feminist scholars are concerned with gender inequities and believe that it is not enough to merely recognize these inequities, but these equities must also be challenged (Wood, 1997). Rakow (1992) argues that feminist approaches to rhetorical criticism are challenging how the study of communication has been divided and

conceptualized, and these scholars believe that many of the topics in the field's traditional categories have not been useful for analyzing gender. Specifically, Rakow argues, "The topics that arise from the field's traditional categories are not conducive to analyzing gender or race or the experiences of White women and people of color, even while the starting points and categories are passed off as gender and race-neutral" (p. 10). She adds, "Feminist scholars who take gender and race as a starting point produce far different and more interesting and useful questions and research topics" (p. 10). Another significant aspect of criticism from a feminist perspective is that feminist scholars "have sought to develop new paradigms of social criticisms that do not rely on traditional philosophical underpinnings" (Fraser & Nicholson, 1988, p. 353).

A feminist approach that takes gender and race into account will also question how gender and race are constructed in communication, and how gender and race inform or impact communication. Brock et al. (1990) wrote that, "One of the most striking of the initial perspectives shaping the feminist approach to rhetorical criticism is the claim that all communication is genderized" (p. 301). This is one of the central tenets of feminist rhetorical criticism. Therefore, if all communication is gendered, then a society that has historically focused on race must also have communication that is racialized. When feminists concluded that all communication is gendered, they opened the door for the argument that communication can be racialized. When feminist critics argued that their efforts were to seek out sex- or gender-related biases in language, they left the door open for arguments that race-related biases exist in communication and need to be identified. The implications of these biases should be the goal of a rhetorical critic. For example, feminists have argued that women and minority groups have only recently been repre-

sented in power positions, e.g., positions in political office, media, academia, and in major corporations (Lerner, 1972; Freeman, 1984). Thus, many feminists make the connection between race and gender and often use both in their research. In my research, I am using feminist rhetorical criticism, with the theoretical foundations of critical race theory, to identify, describe, interpret, and offer solutions whenever possible.

Hart (1997) provides some important and useful information in this regard. He discusses discussed how feminist rhetorical criticism can be used to analyze media, and reports on some of the major themes that characterize the feminist perspective. For instance, he wrote that feminists expose the politics found in written text. Additionally, they seek to "expose, and offset, the patriarchal customs that have silenced women for so long" (p. 288). Feminist critics first examine text for the general description of the human condition and then ask whether these descriptions are really "general" or are really what men consider general or standard. This is important because men often see themselves as nongendered and as "the standard" (p. 288). A feminist analysis reveals that females are not "the standard" and that females are "gendered." In other words, Sharon McPhail was often referred to as the "female candidate" but Archer was never the "male candidate." Similarly, Blacks and other minority groups have not been considered "the standard." "White" is identified as "the standard" and all other groups are viewed as "the other." As an example, in news media stories Blacks are often compared to Whites, with Whites being considered "the standard." As a result, Blacks are chastised for having lower test scores than Whites or lower graduation rates. This, in a sense, has resulted in the "dumbing down" of America because Whites are challenged only to be better than a group that has been and continues to be discriminated against.

Feminist critics have also looked at how women have been marginalized by a White male patriarchy and have determined that Blacks and other minority groups are also marginalized by that same White male patriarchy. This information is useful because it is important to understanding whether media attempted to marginalize the female candidate for mayor in the Detroit mayoral campaign. Hart (1997) wrote that males are placed in authoritative roles and, therefore, can speak to the condition of all groups. Women, on the other hand, are usually authority figures on issues that are more closely associated with women. Hart argues that this results in a "rhetorical ghetto-izing of women" (p. 290). In other words, women who are not seen as authority figures, except in gender-specific roles, will not be taken seriously. Sharon McPhail, the lone female candidate in the mayoral race, was no doubt impacted by this. Women who are in the political arena face additional problems in this regard. Kahn (1993) discusses how "people believe that women are less competent than men" (p. 485). She also argues that "Reporters, like voters, are likely to hold sex stereotypes," and these beliefs "may lead reporters to consider male candidates more 'legitimate' than female candidates" (p. 494). Minority groups' voices, like women's voices, are usually not authoritative voices either, and their voices are often muted.

The feminist perspective addresses and seeks to change the following: power, discrimination, discourse, and relationship (p. 291). All of these issues affect non-white racial groups as well, thus showing the close connection between race and gender in this area and how a feminist perspective can address these issues. Black, Chicano, and other ethnic women's writing have forced feminists to acknowledge the issues facing non-White women and have helped them understand the connection between race and gender

issues and between racism and sexism (Hart, 1997). Thus, being forced, in some instances, to deal with a variety of feminist perspectives and with feminists of various racial and ethnic backgrounds has allowed all feminist rhetorical critics to see beyond gender and to see the interaction and connection between gender and race rhetoric.

In identifying the intersection of race and gender, Dow (1995) discusses how feminist rhetoricians have intervened in a rhetorical tradition dominated by the study of elite White males. She emphasizes the importance of becoming "more conscious of the potential limitations we create for our practice by basing it on assumptions about gender differences that may be accurate only when comparing certain types of women with certain types of men" (p. 113). This shows the efforts by some feminists to not ignore other issues that operate along with gender. Thus, some feminist scholars are making an effort to be inclusive of all women by taking race into account (Andolsen, 1984; Campbell, 1989; Charles & Hintjens, 1998; hooks, 1984; Joseph & Lewis, 1981; Lerner, 1972; Rothenberg, 1992; Tobias, 1997).

Andolsen (1984) makes the connection between gender and race by arguing that White women have been disadvantaged "on the basis of our sex," but also "draw social benefit from our membership in a privilege race" (p. xiii). She discusses the "interstructuring" of oppressions—sexism and racism—that are the result of the construction of race and gender. She states that "racism and sexism have been closely interrelated historically," although she adds that they are not just "parallel columns both supporting the weight of white male privilege" (p. 109). Kaminsky (1994) also addresses the issue of race and gender and reports that "many white academic feminist...have made a concerned effort to pay attention to issues of race" (p. 7), a change that has affected the

way gender itself is understood (p. 7). She argues that it was not enough to challenge the homogeneity of race but feminist should also analyze "the instability of race and the part gender plays in naturalizing what gets called 'race'" (p. 7). Kaminsky provides some useful observations concerning race and gender, e.g., scholars should be careful that race is not merely a "lump in the batter of feminist theory," but race must be conceptualized so that we can "make sense of the ways in which it interacts with the differently nuanced category of gender" (p. 9).

The similarities between gender and race, the fact that women and Blacks (and other minorities) have been oppressed, and because language has been used to denigrate and oppress these groups, are all reasons a feminist perspective can help identify the gender and racial rhetorical strategies used by journalists and in editorials covering the campaign. Feminist rhetorical criticism challenges "business as usual" and demands that power inequities be examined and exposed (Hart, 1997). This statement can apply to women as well as to powerless racial and ethnic groups. More important, feminists believe that "oppression runs deep in a patriarchal culture" (p. 308). This same patriarchal culture, this White patriarchal culture, has also oppressed non-White groups.

Issues involving race and gender have often followed similar paths. For instance, one feminist wrote that "many changes have occurred in the roles of blacks and women during the past 40 years with respect to their function in American society and the awareness of the impact of their collective behavior" (Jagger & Rothenberg, 1984, p. 189). Both groups became aware that they were underpaid and unappreciated workers, that they were both oppressed, and that their common enemy was a patriarchal system dominated by White males. Both have engaged in movements to demand their human and civil

rights. This system has not only kept Blacks in "states of dependency, deprived of prestige, power, and advantages in society" but has kept women controlled as well. Racism and sexism, then, have been described as the "intertwining oppressive structures operating under this paternalistic patriarchalism" (p. 190). Additionally, "Racism and sexism are related evils in the system, affecting their subjects in strikingly similar ways" (p. 190), and both result from how race and gender have been socially constructed to maintain a patriarchal system. This argument shows the closeness of gender and race issues and why feminist rhetorical criticism is capable of identifying these issues. Just as women once fought for women's rights and for the abolition of slavery using a rhetorical strategy Campbell (1989) identifies as "feminine style," feminist rhetorical criticism can be used in the fight for the rights of women and the rights of non-majority groups by identifying the use of gender and race rhetorical strategies to influence voters by Detroit's daily newspapers.

Tobias (1997), too, identifies the connection between gender and race when she notes that once it was determined that female identity was socially constructed to allow males to maintain power and privilege, "it was only logical that other 'identities' might be similarly constructed as well" (p. 255). These other "identities" would, of course, include racial groups. Tobias also observed that White women and women of color "share many of the same degrading experiences in a sexist society" and that "issues of race, class and women's specialness weave in and out of feminist politics" (p. 9).

The historical relationship between gender and race appropriately allows for a feminist analysis because many of the issues involved are similar and are a result of a system that has historically been controlled by powerful White males. Many of the things

that have oppressed women have also oppressed persons of color, although Blacks and other minority groups have suffered considerably more physical violence, including death, than White women. The psychological damage to both groups, however, cannot be denied or trivialized. Thus, in the Archer/McPhail mayoral campaign, it is imperative that both gender and race issues and how they affected the campaign and the media's reporting strategies are addressed. A feminist perspective is capable of addressing both concerns. Also, once a feminist analysis identifies a gender issue, its racial counterpart can also then be identified, where it exists.

In the past, it has been sufficient for rhetorical critics to criticize only traditional artifacts such as speeches and to communicate within their field. In this regard, Campbell (1974) argues it is important for critics to study contemporary events that affect society. Communication scholars should offer their expertise to the community by challenging, questioning, and analyzing what journalists and editorial writers report as news. Hart (1997) wrote that the discipline of rhetoric was "invented to deal with the great declarations of individual orators," but just because public discourse has changed, critics must still "show up for work" because "too many important questions are still unresolved" (p. 207). One unresolved question is: In what ways did the DN and FP attempt to influence voters in the 1993 Detroit mayoral election? Concerning the usefulness of rhetorical criticism, Hart (1997) states, "Rhetorical criticism is the business of identifying the complications of rhetoric and then explaining them in a comprehensive and efficient manner" (p. 23). He also notes that rhetorical criticism is "criticism of life itself, of our own participation in the experience of living" (p. 26). Hart states that when we look at what people say and how they say it, we are taking "the human enterprise seriously," and that "the

imagination necessary for productive criticism" derives from inside the individual critic (p. 36).

Media decide how to cover individuals and what issues are relevant. They also decide which political candidates they will support and then determine what information should be presented about that individual. Newspapers are becoming more powerful in this regard because they are now part of conglomerates that have as one of their goals the earning of profits. Media can also determine, however, the way readers view individuals, groups, and world events.

Hart (1997) also discusses some of the tenets of feminist criticism. He says this criticism interrogates business as usual, demands we examine power inequities in every-day life, and asks why women are ignored or trivialized in popular culture. He notes that the oppression of women "runs deep in a patriarchal culture." Hart also discusses the importance of assessing the consequence of rhetoric "that historically has treated half the human race as inconsequential" (p. 309). If women historically have been inconsequential in our society, how much more so have Blacks and other minorities been perceived and treated as "inconsequential." Feminist criticism can identify the role of rhetoric in this regard. Finally, Hart adds that "all of us, in part, should become feminist critics" (p. 309). Ruthven (1984) argues that it was not important that we all write criticism, but that we "incorporate the lessons of feminism" into our criticism. These are all strong arguments for the use of feminist criticism in this analysis.

The use of feminist methodology to identify and analyze the rhetorical strategies used by Detroit's local newspapers in their reporting on the 1993 mayoral campaign can be a catalyst for providing answers to many of the gender and race issues affecting

Americans today.

The Social Construction of Race and Gender

One of the most striking similarities between gender and race is that they have both been socially constructed for the benefit of the dominant group in our society. Chafe (1992) wrote that "sex and race have been cornerstones of the social system, and the source of values and attitudes which have both reinforced the power of the dominant class and provides a weapon for dividing potential opposition" (p. 386). Although the similarities between gender and race are clearly evident, initially it is also important that the social construction of each term be discussed separately.

Gender Construction

Wood (1995) wrote, "Gender is a socially created system of values, identities, and activities that are prescribed for women and men" (p. 313). Society determines the meaning of certain words and then imposes them on individuals. For example, there is a difference today between the meanings of the words "sex" and "gender." Sex, according to Wood, is absolute and permanent while gender, on the other hand, is fluid. Also, gender can vary across cultures and across periods of time. Foss, Foss, and Trapp (1991) argue that gender was socially constructed to put women in a different position from men. Specifically, "Gender is a social and psychological construction that involves the cultural notions of appropriate behavior for women and men" (p. 275).

Reeder (1996) wrote that gender in community research usually refers to differences not necessarily biological, but those based on "psychological, social, and interactive

characteristics" (p. 318). Therefore, many researchers, when studying gender, look at it from a sociological standpoint rather than as biological sex because this "perpetuates misinformation about the meaning of male-female differences" (p. 319). Campbell (1995) defines gender as "a title identifying the social roles deemed appropriate for persons of both sexes (p. 479). As an example, women were once prohibited from speaking in public, not because they were biologically incapable of doing so, but because society had determined this was improper behavior for a woman because of created social roles (p. 479).

Feminist research into gender differences has shown not only how each group acts, but also the relationship between the two groups. Reeder suggests that, from a historical standpoint, women have not only been different from men but also considered as "less than" men (p. 323). Although the last decade has seen significant changes for women in this regard, our society, for the most part, still expects men to be assertive and independent and women to be relationship-oriented. For instance, men are supposed to control their emotions, and women are expected to outwardly express theirs. Additionally, Western culture has until recently placed more importance on the research of males, their experiences, and their history. Wood suggests that because "language powerfully shapes our views of the world" (p. 315), our patriarchal society has forced us to see the world from a male point of view.

Interestingly, Carter and Spitzack (1990) argues that gender is first created through communication. Once created, these gendered individuals produce communication. Additionally, the way in which women are discussed in media has more to do with their socially-constructed gender than their biological sex. Rakow (1987) believes it is

important that in doing gender research, we observe how "gender is accomplished and enforced in interaction, in organizations, and through media" (p. 80). Rakow (1992) also suggests that the importance of looking at gender issues in research lies in helping us understand how the differences between men and women are often a result of language and that media often help promote gender issues and differences.

Because one candidate for mayor was female and the other male, it is important to determine whether the language used by media treated the candidates differently because of their gender. Finally, Wood wrote that there continues to be disagreement among scholars concerning whether gender differences actually exist, and, if so, how important these differences are. Regardless of whether or not there are differences, a socially-constructed gender is what allows people to believe that these differences exist.

Race Construction

As some scientists continue to study biological race in an effort to determine whether or not it exists, the definition of race as biological or sociological continues to be hotly debated. Rothenberg defines race as "an unstable and 'decentered' complex of social meanings constantly being transformed by political struggle" (p. 33). Mahoney (1997) states that race is a social construct that has no natural truth separate from its historical development. Thus, the concept of race has had different meanings at different points in history, and its social and cultural meaning continues to evolve and change. Scientists, particularly anthropologists, disagree on what constitutes a race. Some have concluded that race does not exist, and most physical anthropologists and biologists have "abandoned the quest for a scientific basis to determine racial categories" (p. 27). Jones

(1997) wrote that "race, for all its rhetorical power, is an incoherent fiction," and that "racial categories are neither objective or natural, but ideological and constructed" (p. 67).

Mahoney (1997) provides an important definition of race: "a social construct, a concept having no natural truth, no truth separate from historical development, and possibly no truth comprehensible apart from domination" (p. 305). Additionally, Mahoney argues that although race is a social construct, it is still a reality. She states that social and legal rules have determined racial identification. Race is partly about culture, and particularly in the United States, "race has been anchored to an obsession with skin color and phenotype" (p. 305). Wright (1992) wrote about four racial doctrines that exist in our society: (1) status race, or the belief in the inferiority of Blacks; (2) formal race, where race is merely a difference in appearance; (3) historical race, where race is defined in its relationship to power and oppression; and (4) cultural race, which incorporates all aspects of culture, community, and consciousness (p. 321).

All of these definitions of race operate in our society today. Historical race is important for this research, however, because the way media have used race historically can affect how race issues are discussed today. The historical reality of race in America is extremely important as we look at the rhetorical strategies used by a majority White news media in their coverage of the McPhail and Archer mayoral campaign in a predominantly Black city. We cannot merely look at race in a vacuum or outside of its historical context. It is imperative that we understand why Black and White exist today as polar opposites and why media continue to report news that divides groups based on race. The importance of acknowledging race rhetoric in this campaign must not be trivialized.

Kaminsky (1994) states that "Race is legitimated by something that looks like biology, made scientific in the nineteenth century by the newly developing field of physical anthropology" (p. 10). Kaminsky further discusses how, unlike gender, that "breaks down into a pair of bipolar opposites" (p. 10), race cannot be split so neatly in two.

For most Americans, regardless of racial heritage, race is a visible reality. Many are unaware of this country's long history of race and the effort to define groups by race. Regardless of how one interprets race, an analysis based on race is important in this research because Detroit's media are constantly discussing race and issues identified with race. On a regular basis they provide information based on race categories, i.e., how are Whites affected by this or that phenomenon or how are Blacks affected? The issue of race has significantly more importance in the Detroit metropolitan area because of its large Black population. Although the majority of residents of Detroit are Black, those who control Detroit's daily newspapers or those in positions of power are predominantly White.

In order to have a comprehensive understanding of the role of race in American society, it is imperative that we understand the history of race and how it has been used to create and sustain many of the systems in place today. Race issues have permeated American society, particularly from the seventeenth century, starting with the introduction and maintenance of slavery in a country built on the principles of freedom and democracy. Hacker (1992) states our dilemma clearly: "That Americans of African origin once wore the chains of chattels remains alive in the memory of both races and continues to separate them" (p. 3). From the time the first 20 Blacks are recorded as arriving in North America, race has been an issue, although during the early days of the American

colonies, we were not so clearly defined as Black and White. Hacker notes that race was an obsession from the time the first Europeans identified the indigenous people of America as "savages," but race in America took on a deeper and more disturbing meaning with the importation of Africans." By the end of the seventeenth century, enslaved Africans were identified racially as Black, and a new specific racial identity was given to the European Americans (Rothenberg, 1992). First they were Christians, then free English, and, finally, toward the end of the seventeenth century, they became "White."

Initially, it was argued that Blacks were enslaved because they were heathens, but when some Africans became Christian and "civilized," justification had to be given for the continued enslavement of these Christians. Davidson and Lytle (1992) wrote that one of the reasons for the continued enslavement of Blacks in the early American colonies was because of labor shortages. Thus, by the 1660s, laws were passed that separated Blacks from Whites and that recognized slavery as a legal institution. For example, in 1667, the Virginia legislature passed a law that allowed enslaved Blacks to remain enslaved regardless of whether or not they converted to Christianity. Also, "conscious racism" or "a belief that Whites were destined by God or nature to rule over people whose physical characteristics denoted their innate inferiority" was developed at that time (Frederickson, 1981, p. 70).

One of the most significant ways persons of African descent and other minorities were "raced" in America was through the use of language. Language was particularly useful in the social construction of race. Jordan (1968) wrote how the use of specific language strategies helped ensure the separation of Blacks and Whites. For instance, Christian and freedom were associated with White, while Black was equated with heathenism

and slavery. Because laws were passed that restricted the freeing of Blacks, America, in a sense, became two societies—one White and free, the other Black and enslaved (Frederickson, 1981). For almost 300 years in America, a distinction has been made between Americans, and this distinction for the most part has been between Black and White. Hacker wrote that initially some immigrants were not considered White, especially those from Southern Europe and from Ireland, but today, as we enter the twenty-first century, these groups are now considered White, and some members of these groups today do not even know they were once considered non-white. Hacker further argues that, for all practical purposes, "whites of all classes and ethnicity now prefer to present a common front" (p. 12).

Interestingly, to show that race has not been strictly biological in America but more a social phenomenon, Black people have not always been just part of one racial group. For instance, in the 1890 census, Blacks were classified as Negroes, mulattos, quadroons, and octoroons, depending on the percentage of "Black blood" visible to the census takers. The 1910 census counted a Black population of 9,827,763 Negroes and 2,050,686 mulattos, or approximately 20% of the total Black population. Of course, whether one was classified as "Negro" or "mulatto" depended on the census enumerator (Historical Statistics in the US: Colonial Times to 1970). The effort by the United States government to attempt to classify its Black population in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century shows the ongoing dilemma we have with race. Today there is once again an effort to create a mixed-race category, a move that would guarantee the race issue will continue into the twenty-first century. It also shows how race continues to be socially constructed for the benefit of the majority. DuBois stated it brilliantly when he

wrote that the problem of the twentieth century would be the color line (Lewis, 1995). If he were alive today, he would have to expand his statement to include the twenty-first century. Hacker (1992) wrote, "A huge racial chasm remains, and there are few signs that the coming century will see it closed" (p. 219). Without question, a discussion of race is important for this research project because it, along with gender, is at the very foundation of the news media's reporting strategies.

Delgado and Stefancic (1997) questioned the validity of race because today's scientists show that groups, including Blacks and whites, often have more in common than attributes not in common. They note that "the variability between the average white and the average black, in genetic makeup and physical appearance, is less than the variability within each group" (p. XVII). Ross (1990) argues that race has been socially constructed from the beginning of the enslavement of humans of African descent. Blacks had to be established as "non-human" in order for legal slavery to be justified. Roberts (1997) wrote that "Whites justified their enslavement of Africans by the idea of a hierarchal ordering of the races" (p. 1986). He added, "Only a theory rooted in nature could systematically explain the anomaly of slavery existing in a republic founded on a radical commitment to liberty, equality, and natural rights" (p. 186). Because of the obvious contradiction between a country that demanded the right of freedom for all its citizens and a country that enslaved an entire group of people for generations, many Whites recognized the importance of creating a hierarchy based on the superiority and inferiority of races. Robert argues that "Whites invented the hereditary trait of race and endowed it with the concept of racial superiority and inferiority in order to resolve the contradiction between slavery and liberty" (p. 187). A scientific racism allowed one group to be "master"

(Whites) and another group to be "slaves" (Blacks).

Sometimes when the term "race" is used, there is the assumption the discussion will be about Blacks or some other minority group. Race, however, is not just about blackness. Whites are also an integral part of the equation called "race." Because Whites are in the majority, they often do no see themselves as being raced. Mahoney (1997) stated, "White privilege therefore includes the ability to not see whiteness and its privilege" (p. 331). The White race has been socially constructed just as the Black race has been socially constructed, but as Cleaver (1997) wrote, "To link the idea of race with the social construct of whiteness is uncommon...white Americans no longer see race in relation to their own identity (p. 157). By denying they are "raced," Whites can also deny they are beneficiaries of White privilege. Roberts (1997) comments that "the status of being white in America brings with it benefits and privileges that whites have come to expect" (p. 188). Feagin (1997) argues that "the 'white race' emerged as a constructed social group for the first time" in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: "In this period, the Anglo-Saxon ruling elite developed the ideology of a superior 'white race' as one way of providing racial privilege for poorer European Americans and keeping the latter from joining with black Americans in worker organizations" (p. 350). Although the public ideology has become nonracist, "the culture continues to teach racism" by allowing racial stereotypes to pervade our media and our language (Ross, p. 28).

An Overview of Rhetoric and Criticism

Before I discuss the relationship between rhetoric and race and between rhetoric and gender, I find it useful to have a brief overview of the research that defines and dis-

cusses both rhetoric and criticism. In this regard, Foss, Foss and Trapp (1991) wrote that most persons today would define rhetoric as "empty words with no substance" or "talk without action" (p. 1). Ong (1990) wrote that "the term 'rhetoric' commonly suggests to the modern mind...verbal profusion calculated to manipulate an audience, an operation whose aims are suspect" (p. 1). Centuries ago, however, rhetoric was "one of the most consequential and serious of all academic subjects and of all human activities" (p. 1). Rhetoric, however, has a long history dating back to Greece in the fifth century BC when rhetoric was considered an art. At that time, a group of teachers of rhetoric known as the sophists offered the basic underpinnings for a rhetorical philosophy.

The Greek philosopher, Plato, provided a foundation for the development of rhetoric even though he was an opponent of rhetoric. He believed that rhetoric ignored true knowledge and that it was not beneficial to man. Aristotle defined rhetoric as "the finding in any given case the available means of persuasion" (Ong, 1990, p. 3). First, one uses certain rhetoric to take a position and then attempts to skillfully persuade others to that position. In Aristotle's time, rhetoric was concerned with oral discourse, but rhetoric eventually began to include written argumentation. Ong argues that it occurred "only very slowly and imperceptibly over the centuries" (p. 3). Kinnearey (1990) also argues that in contemporary rhetoric, one of the most overpowering concepts is the belief that "a piece of discourse must be judged against the situational and cultural contexts in which it was produced and in which it is interpreted" (p. 192). Aristotle organized rhetoric into a body of thought, and some consider his work, *Rhetoric*, as the foundation for the discipline of Speech Communication.

The Romans later "borrowed" Greek rhetoric, adopted its basic principals, and re-

ferred to it as a practical art. Interestingly, with the rise of Christianity, rhetoric was condemned by many as a form of pagan art. During the Renaissance period (1400-1600 A.D.), with the rise of humanism, a rhetoric developed that was similar to the rhetoric of the Greek Sophists. Some humanists relegated rhetoric to the level of poetry and oratory. Harvard University offered the earliest rhetorical instruction in the United States, and in the mid-eighteenth century, there was a renewed interest in the rhetoric of Aristotle. By the nineteenth century, rhetoric had declined as an area of study in America's colleges, but by 1910, a small group of teachers of public speaking formed the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking, and eventually, the Cornell School of Rhetoric was formed. Particularly since World War II, there has been concern about persuasion and propaganda by scholars in various disciplines, including journalism and political science. These concerns eventually led to a new field of study known as mass communication (Foss et al., 1991; Horner, 1990).

My dissertation seeks to attract a larger audience than the communication community, an audience that might not necessarily have a background in rhetoric. I, therefore, believe it is important to provide an overview of the way rhetoric has been defined by various scholars. Bryant (1953), for example, wrote, "rhetoric is a social study, the study of a major force in the behavior of men in society" (p. 37). Further, he argues that, "whatever we do or say or write, or even think, in explanation of anything or in support, or in extenuation, or in spite of anything, evinces rhetorical symptoms" (p. 15). Bryant acknowledged that problems arise when attempts are made to define rhetoric, which no doubt explains why there are so many definitions, but he concludes by saying that "a word means what responsible users make it mean" (p. 16). Thus, the definition that most

scholars have agreed on is that rhetoric is "the art of spoken discourse, especially persuasive discourse" (p. 20).

Foss et al. (1991) provide a useful definition of rhetoric. They state that "rhetoric is an action human beings perform" and that it is a "perspective humans take" (p. 14). They argue, "When we engage in rhetorical action, not only do we make a conscious decision to communicate, but we also make conscious choices about the strategies we will employ" (p. 14). They discuss how a definition of rhetoric should meet two criteria, and that the definition should be "broad enough to include all of the interesting and important examples" and "narrow enough to distinguish the rhetorical from the non-rhetorical" (p. 14). Rhetoric is also defined as a perspective humans take. In other words, one sees the world based on experiences, and these experiences can be influenced by race, gender, and religion. (p. 17).

Additional information concerning rhetoric is provided by Mark McPhail (1994), who wrote that rhetoric is capable of bridging gaps and overcoming barriers, and it has been useful in the study of both African Americans and women. He sees rhetoric as a vehicle for the generation of knowledge. Hart (1997) argues that rhetoric exists because it helps to bridge the chasm between people who are different. Because not all rhetoric builds bridges (the DN and the FP, for example, have helped to create polarization between certain groups), "the critic's job is to distinguish the bridges from the chasm" (p. 80). Eubanks and Baker (1962) wrote that rhetoric aims to influence human conduct. *The Detroit News* and the *Detroit Free Press*, I will argue, set out to influence human conduct by using specific rhetorical strategies. For Detroit's mayoral campaign, the "human conduct" was voting. The newspapers set out to influence the outcome of the

mayoral race so their reporting on the campaign went beyond merely reporting the news.

Based on these definitions of rhetoric, the DN and the FP used specific rhetorical strategies in their reporting on the McPhail and Archer political campaign, strategies I believe they consciously chose for specific purposes. In this regard, Van Dijk (1991) wrote that rhetoric in media "deals with the special verbal ploys, such as alliterations and metaphors, that help catch the reader's attention, and which therefore are primarily used with a persuasive arm" (p. 209). Also, the second definition by Foss et al. (1991), "rhetoric is a perspective humans take," is also useful because journalists and editorial writers at the two major daily newspapers clearly have their own perspective. Foss et al. describe "perspective" as lenses through which a person sees the world and these lenses can often determine how one interprets phenomena. Writers for the daily papers clearly have a political perspective, if not agenda, and the DN in particular has a conservative ideological slant that the newspaper does not hesitate to acknowledge (p. 273).

Research has determined that newspapers are capable of engaging in agenda-setting, as discussed in Chapter I. McCombs and Shaw (1972) set the foundation for this type research in their study of the 1968 presidential campaign when they concluded media did influence the public agenda in that case. In 1993, McCombs and Shaw (1993) re-evaluated the status of agenda-setting research and wrote of the "fruitfulness of the agenda-setting idea" (p. 59). The importance of research into agenda-setting by media must not be trivialized in this research project because it can show that newspapers can have specific reasons for using certain types of rhetorical strategies in their reporting on political campaigns.

The importance of studying how journalists and editorial writers create news sto-

ries and their obligations associated with reporting news stories must be emphasized. This is especially important within the context of the 1993 Detroit mayoral campaign. Bryant (1953) talks about the obligation a journalist has in writing for an audience: to provide "the highest grade of informative and suasory discourse that the conditions will permit" (p. 24). Even though rhetoric has been associated more with oratory (Hart, 1997), Bryant recognizes that the printed page is also rhetoric when he labels journalism as "the rhetoric of the press" and it is the rhetoric of today's press that I will analyze. I also believe that journalists have a responsibility to their readers. They continue to attempt to persuade readers, but their motives are sometimes suspect. Political agendas and economic considerations now influence the direction taken by many journalists in what I believe are their efforts to manipulate the public mind. Bryant felt that journalists and others who attempt to persuade should not automatically be emulated, but "they must be studied as highly significant social phenomena, lest we be ignorant of them and hence powerless before them for good or for ill" (pp. 24, 25). Bryant has "thrown down the gauntlet" and I accept the challenge to look and analyze the writings of journalists and editorial writers at the DN and FP and the rhetorical strategies used in one of Detroit's major political campaigns.

In addition to defining rhetoric for this research project, it is important to define criticism, since it is also one of the tenets of feminist rhetorical criticism and because it is my methodological focus. Campbell (1974) wrote that the social function of criticism is to raise issues and encourage public discussion, and that it is important to perform social criticism of contemporary events. Also, criticism should "perform a unique function for society" (p. 9). The issue I am raising has to do with the rhetorical strategies used by the

news media. Brock et al. (1990) describe criticism as "an art of evaluating with knowledge of propriety." Further, they argue that "it not only posits a judgment, the judgment is explained, reasons are given for the judgment, and known information is marshaled to support the reasons for the judgment." They argue that "criticism is an inherently ethical activity, for future actions can be affected by the work of the critic" (p. 13). Northstine, Blair, and Copeland (1994) argue that acting critically means to speak or write about an event. The event I've chosen to write about is the 1993 Detroit mayoral campaign. Acting critically also means to use language. Critics are a product of their experiences, and, therefore, they speak the language of their community and their culture. Critics must be aware that "good criticism should fulfill the demands of all language use." Thus, criticism should be "clear, interesting, appropriate, and forceful" (p. 5). Further, criticism is a public act that should "provoke socially responsible thinking and acting" and should be "responsive to the concerns and well being of the communities in which it resides and to which it is addressed" (p. 7).

An Analysis of Race Rhetoric

Van Dijk (1991) argues that race, more than any other topic, is riddled with varying opinions. Thus, in reporting on issues involving race, rhetoric plays an important role. Ross (1997) shows racial demarcation was maintained by rhetoric that supported the institution of slavery and continued segregation of Blacks once slavery was legally ended. For example, when slavery was legally ended, the myth of the "Black rapist beast" was created, Blacks were identified as being shiftless and lazy, and Black women were described as immoral. As Ross argues, "This particular rhetoric took various forms

but always avoided any real conflict in values and principles by placing blacks outside the community of humans." He also wrote that "the best of rhetoricians constructed exquisitely horrific rhetorical structures to justify choices that society has since discredited" (p. 89). For example, in the Dred Scott decision before the Civil War, Chief Justice Toney concluded that Blacks, including free Blacks, were not citizens of the United States and that the Founders had no intention of including Blacks. He also argued that he was not personally saying this, but that the U.S. Constitution denied citizenship to Blacks, thus freeing the "majority culture at that time from any responsibilities for their actions" (pp. 90-91). Similarly, 83 years before, Thomas Jefferson attempted to blame King George for slavery in the early drafts of the Declaration of Independence (Ellis, 1997).

An Analysis of Gender Rhetoric

A feminist approach allows the critic to discover bias toward women that is inherent in rhetoric, and the social implication of those biases. This research project investigated whether there is evidence of gender bias in the rhetoric or language used by Detroit news media in their coverage of the mayoral campaign. In this effort, Rakow (1992) wrote that the feminist approach has allowed feminist researchers to identify sexism in language even where so-called value-free methods are being claimed. This approach also allows scholars to redefine what we mean by "legitimate" text, which events are "significant," and what is "valid" to study—all of which in the past have included primarily male voices and events (p. 39). Humm (1986) makes an additional point when she argues that "one of the features of patriarchal literature was its ability to use language to 'naturalize' stereotypes of women" (p. 42). Minister (1991) states that our gender-based

communication system continues to sustain differential treatment of the sexes, and that most persons are unwitting victims of language use that is learned early in life. Through feminist research, women are learning what language stereotypes women.

Bosmajian (1992) wrote that the language of sexism, or the rhetoric of sexism, is both subtle and pervasive, that it reflects male as superior and female as inferior. Women are often identified as "babe," "chick," and "doll," terms that associate them with children and "result in a portrayal of mature females as weak, silly, irresponsible, and dependent" (Bosmajian, 1992, p. 347). Language has been used in media to demean women, and it is clear that media sometimes treat stories about women differently. For example, when women make news, their sex is often identified at the beginning of the story. Language is used to describe females in news stories "which report on their personal and sexual characteristics, a language seldom ever used in news features about men" (p. 345). During the Detroit mayoral campaign, the female candidate was referred to as a "Barbie doll," and in one news story about the candidate, a picture of a Barbie Doll was placed next to the story.

Using rhetoric that focuses on gender has also helped perpetuate the hierarchy that places women at the bottom and reinforces cultural attitudes. Many feminist scholars who are conscious of this are attempting to change this rhetoric of oppression.

The Intersection of Race and Gender

Using feminist rhetorical criticism as a tool to look at the role of gender in media can certainly add to the research in this area. Even more important, using gender in combination with race will be significant in determining whether race played a more impor-

tant role, or whether media skillfully used both issues to pursue their agenda.

Rothenberg (1992) argues that it is impossible to make sense out of our past or our present without using race, gender, and class as "central categories of description and analysis" (p. 1). Rothenberg adds that if we truly want to understand our lives and our social, political, and economic institutions, we must not only study race and gender in depth, but we must recognize the importance of understanding how race and gender function together. She notes, however, that they are not identical nor are they "reducible to each other" (pp. 1, 2).

Rakow (1992) argues that feminist scholars who use gender and race as starting points "produce far different and more interesting and useful questions and research topics," and that "feminist researchers have come to theorize the difference between women and men as the product of language and interaction" (p. 10). Spitzack and Carter (1987) discuss how studies about women are attaining more visibility in communication. It is important that feminist scholars recognize that they are not merely substituting one form of exclusion for another—thus the necessity of including all women regardless of race, class, or sexual orientation in their research.

Feminist scholars have made it very clear that gender is an important issue in research. Their observation that women are being ignored makes them aware also that other issues are being ignored or trivialized in scholarship. Thus, race, because of feminist scholarship, has becomes a significant factor in research. The importance of using gender and race is increased when those institutions that are being criticized are those that have a history of using both race and gender in their reporting to ensure that issues they deem important remain prominent in the conscience of Americans. My use of feminist

rhetorical criticism is determined by the need to examine if the Detroit media focused on race and gender issues in their attempt to persuade voters to chose a specific candidate. The historical aspects of both clearly show that they have been used throughout American history to cloud issues and to create issues.

Rothenberg (1992) finds that some people want to believe that racial and gender differences are natural and that societies that create social policies that ensure hierarchies in this regard are only reflecting what is natural and that result in division among races and genders. The study of race and gender would not seem so important if, historically, harm had not been done to certain groups because of their race and gender by white supremacy and male domination. Although overt racism and sexism are no longer openly acceptable in American society by the majority, the vestiges of the past continue to influence how certain groups are treated, especially in the media.

This chapter has shown the importance of using feminist criticism as a methodology, with theoretical support from critical race theory, for analyzing the 1993 mayoral campaign. This perspective was particularly important for interrogating race and gender and for understanding the rhetoric of race and gender. In this regard, Charles and Hintjens (1998) discusses the importance of a feminist perspective that takes into account "gender and the complexities of racial, ethnic, and national divisions" (p. 46). A feminist perspective also acknowledges and argues for the importance of history in understanding how race and gender have been socially constructed, as the following chapter will address.

CHAPTER III

HISTORICAL CONTENT

A critical analysis of the Detroit newspapers' coverage of the 1993 Detroit mayoral campaign cannot be appropriately analyzed in a partial vacuum of current events. To have an understanding of the events that unfolded prior to the decision by two African American candidates to run for mayor in a predominantly African American city requires that the campaign be placed in historical context. The history of Blacks and Black politics is important to this analysis because it provides the background for many of Detroit's voters in the 1993 mayoral campaign. In fact, understanding the 1993 campaign is impossible without an understanding of historical events that have affected the news media and the people of Detroit. For example, who were those people the media were attempting to influence? Where did they come from? What were their backgrounds? Why did the media believe that certain issues would be important to Detroiters? Were Blacks new to the political arena? Finally, what was the historical relationship between Blacks and Whites, between women and men, and, most important, Blacks and media? These questions are answered in this historical overview.

This chapter addresses the role of newspapers in American history in order to compare the DN and FP to newspapers in general, and also addresses the media and their historical relationship with African Americans. There is also a section that provides a brief history of the DN and FP to show how they have historically reported on Blacks and

women and how their reporting has changed over time.

Since newspapers have played significant roles in American society throughout history, the section on Blacks and politics in Detroit is extremely important for understanding how Blacks have participated in Detroit politics over the years. Finally, a discussion of the Coleman Young era is imperative for any research that analyzes politics in Detroit because for 20 years Young dominated politics in Detroit. A recent news story described Young as "the most colorful politician in modern Detroit history" who ruled Detroit "by sheer force and will" ("Tough Town," 1999).

Historical Role of Newspapers

Newspapers have played significant roles in American society from the beginning of this republic. They have played a particularly important role in American politics. Aufderheide et al. (1997) wrote that, "historically newspapers have been part of the glue that holds America's counties, towns and cities and states together by keeping the citizenry informed" (p. 61). For this research, the historical role of newspapers is important for comparing them to the DN and the FP. One of their roles has been to maintain the status quo, and it is important to look at newspapers from a historical standpoint to be cognizant of their role in the maintenance of a system that supports a race-conscious society.

Early newspapers were inextricably linked to partisan politics. Alexander Hamilton, for example, argued for the creation of a newspaper that promoted the politics of George Washington. Hamilton used the *Gazette of the United States* to attack the policies, ideology, and even the character of Thomas Jefferson. In response, Jefferson supported the establishment of the *National Gazette*, a paper diametrically opposed to the

Gazette of the United States, and used it to make personal attacks on Hamilton because Jefferson considered him "a host within himself" (p. 129). In return, Hamilton accused Jefferson of circulating "poison thro' the medium of the *National Gazette*" (Ellis, 1997, p. 130).

Newspapers were almost totally dependent on the financial support of political parties, which guaranteed the newspapers would serve as official mouthpieces for these parties. Therefore, they made no attempt to be objective, and there was no impetus to do otherwise. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the circulation of newspapers was limited because they were printed by hand, although by 1814 a British paper was using a steam-powered printing method (Keane, 1991). As technology advanced and machines were used to print papers, newspapers were no longer dependent on local politicians for financial assistance. The invention of the telegraph in the 1800s allowed local newspapers to receive political news directly from Washington and other big city markets, resulting in more persons wanting to read the newspapers and willing to pay for them. Thus, newspaper revenues increased and newspapers lost their dependency on local governments and politicians (Patterson, 1995), but there was still no impetus to attempt objectivity.

In the late 1800s, there were several large newspapers throughout the country printing over 100,000 copies a day. Although newspapers no longer depended on political parties for support, they now found themselves, especially in the larger markets, competing for circulation dollars with other newspapers in their own towns. The *Detroit Free Press* and *The Detroit News*, for example, were newspapers that competed with each other for readers at that time and still compete in the 1990s. For some dailies, this competition segued into "yellow journalism." It has been suggested that the reporting methods

of the Hearst newspapers contributed to the start of the Spanish American War. At the turn of the century, however, many newspapers proposed moving away from yellow journalism and made an effort to be objective in reporting the news. This effort to be objective was also taught in the new journalism schools that were developing in various universities. By 1920, professional journalism schools were training many of the country's reporters to make sure their reporting was not influenced by "the political agendas of owners and advertisers" (Hazen & Winokur, 1997, p. 159). Unfortunately, as some newspapers became more dependent on advertisers for economic support, newspapers that once relied on political parties for their support now relied on advertisers.

In the twentieth century, newspapers seem more interested in profit-making than in providing useful information to their readers. When newspapers emphasize their First Amendment rights, it is not necessarily for their readers' benefit but often to benefit their own business and economic agendas (Pilgrim, 1992). If the reader happens to derive information concerning a subject, it is a coincidence. In the United States, mass media, including newspapers, are often called the Fourth Estate or fourth branch of government "because of the freedom and power they have under the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States" (Jeter et al. 1996, p 215). Additionally, "Media has [sic] become central to our politics, practically a branch of government" (Hazen & Winokur, 1997, p. 153). This First Amendment allows newspapers to basically write whatever they want as long as there is absence of malice. Both the DN and the FP during the Archer/McPhail mayoral race could write whatever they wanted about the candidates in an attempt to persuade voters because of the so-called freedom of the press. In this regard, Hazen and Winokur wrote that instead of having a media that enlightens the public, "we have a media system that has become all powerful itself and threatens to overwhelm

democracy in the process" (p. 1).

As newspapers fall prey to an increasing number of mergers, there is no longer a local voice, but one central voice controlled by national or international conglomerates. Fifty years ago, more than 400 cities had a minimum of two newspapers; today fewer than 25 cities can make this claim. Where they do exist, they exist under joint operating agreements, e.g., the DN and the FP.

The Media and African Americans

A brief analysis of how national media have historically portrayed African Americans is important because it helps to understand local media's efforts in this regard. The historical relationship between Blacks and the White press shows how race has been used to create a negative image of an entire group of people for the purpose of maintaining control. As a result, the historical relationship between Blacks and the press has, for the most part, been adversarial (Jeter et al., 1996). This is largely a result of a United States Constitution that allowed the enslavement and powerlessness of the majority of Black people in this country, while concurrently granting special powers to newspapers under the rubric of the First Amendment and freedom of the press. The history of the relationship between African Americans and the media is important to this dissertation because both mayoral candidates were African Americans who were being covered by a White press. Adding to this dynamic was the fact that this press was also located within a city with a majority Black population.

Historically, many American newspapers have contributed to the negative images of African Americans. Thus, they have assisted in attempting to maintain Blacks in subservient positions by portraying them in negative situations—portraying them as charac-

ters not to be taken seriously, or by ignoring them altogether. Some may challenge the media's ability to create these negative images, but what cannot be challenged is the $130 billion advertisers spend today in mass media in the belief that media *can persuade* Americans to buy certain goods and services. If they can be persuaded to buy products through advertising, cannot they also be persuaded to entertain certain beliefs about certain groups?

Media do have the ability to reflect culture, and these reflections become part of a historical record that future generations of historians use in their efforts to discover the habits of and truths about certain groups of people during a given time period. Therefore, how groups are portrayed in media often determines how they will be viewed from a historical perspective (Jeter et al., 1996, pp. 215, 216). Critics have long argued that media have attempted to present Blacks as less intelligent, less hardworking, and less patriotic. Surveys of Americans provide empirical data that support the argument that these beliefs are firmly held by many Americans (Duke, 1991). Additionally, African Americans are the primary focus of the illegal drug crisis even though the vast majority of those who use and peddle drugs are White. Black women are usually the focus of reports on welfare and unwed mothers. This focus, which concentrates on their sexual behavior as opposed to economic factors, has a historical foundation (Hazen & Winokur, 1997). Arguably, local news media, e.g., the DN and the FP, are affected by how national media portrays Blacks.

Newspapers from the beginnings of this new Republic were used to support the status quo. Newspapers were used to advertise slave auctions or to advise the community of runaway slaves and rewards that were being offered for their return. Thomas Jefferson used the Virginia *Gazette* to advertise that one of those he owned had escaped, and offered a reward for his return. Newspapers were also insidiously used to present to the

citizens of the new United States images of enslaved humans as happy and content. These images implied that if these grinning, shuffling people were stupid enough to be enslaved, they must be inferior. Early Black newspapers challenged these images, but these newspapers reached a very limited audience. Note that in 1827, Black Americans started the *Freedom Journal*, the first Black newspaper. This newspaper challenged how Blacks were being represented in White newspapers (Jeter et al., 1996). Their first editorial argued that "From the press and from the pulpit we have suffered much by being incorrectly represented" (Aptheker, 1951, p. 84). There were some abolitionist newspapers before the Civil War that called for the emancipation of slaves and condemned the treatment of Blacks, but with the end of slavery, these papers went out of existence.

Blacks in America, as portrayed for over 250 years by many newspapers, had gone from "one of heathens in a Christian land in the colonial period to the contented slave, happy to be in the servitude of whites in an idyllic antebellum setting" (Jeter et al., 1996, p. 224). Davidson (1992) discussed an article written in Frank Leslie's *Illustrated Newspaper* during the Civil War that described slaves as having a good time as Yankee soldiers pillaged a nearby southern town. Leslie wrote, "They are having a merry time, thoughtless creatures, they think not of the morrow." Davidson wrote that the picture "reflected the popular stereotype of slaves as cheerful and ignorantly content with their lot" (p. 153).

The end of legal slavery in 1865 by Constitutional Amendment did not result in African Americans being accepted as full citizens of the United States. In fact, another 100 years passed before they were allowed something as simple as full access to public accommodations (Patterson, 1992). Also, after the Civil War, African Americans still faced a media that degraded them. These new images portrayed Black men as rapists and

Black women as Jezebels or mammies. These portrayals of Black men as rapists, especially after Reconstruction, led to a significant increase in the lynching of Black men. Williamson (1984) wrote that pictures were painted of Black men roaming the rural South, that "white women...were virtually besieged by Negro brutes who roamed almost without restraint" (p. 116). A Southern Methodist editor wrote, "Three hundred white women had been raped by negroes within the preceding three months" (p. 118). in an article entitled "The New Negro Crime," *Harper's Weekly* wrote that rape of White women by Black men was on the rise. In the newspaper, the *Caucasian*, the editor wrote that "the negro was elevated under the conditions of slavery" and that "his animal nature so preponderates over his intellectual and moral natures, that in the age of puberty, when the animal nature develops, that the moral and intellectual qualities are clouded by the animal instinct and not only cease to develop but really retrograde" (p. 184).

By 1889, rape and lynching commanded national attention in the press. These negative images were enforced by so-called scientific studies that argued for the genetic inferiority of Blacks. For example, Shaler wrote about the "retrogression theory" in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1884. The article stated that "Blacks were imitative" and had imitated Whites during slavery. As free persons, however, they reverted to their natural state and became savages again. The editor of the *New York Evening Post* wrote in 1884 that he was fearful that Negroes were "falling away from their prewar level of civilization" (p. 121). Walter Willcox, a Cornell University professor, wrote in 1902 that the African was reappearing in the American Negro and that "the many faults often attributed to the debasing effects of American slavery, are faults which he shares with his African ancestors and contemporaries" (p. 123). Around the turn of the nineteenth century, "the mass media had sequentially treated Blacks as if they did not exist, as childlike simpletons who

could not survive on their own, as a problem that had to be dealt with and a threat to society" (Jeter et al., 1996, p. 225; Davis, 1983).

A special myth was created for Black women, a myth that would allow the exploitation of Black women to continue long after slavery ended. Sharon McPhail, in the 1993 mayoral campaign, would serve as an example of how this myth still lingers in the dark recesses of the collective mind of media. The myth was that all Black women were "eager for sexual exploits, voluntarily 'loose' in their morals and, therefore, deserved none of the consideration and respect granted white women" (Lerner, 1973, p. 163). Media, particularly newspapers, have attempted to perpetuate this myth by their portrayal of Black women in media today, i.e., they do not want to work, they are drug-addicted, they have children so they can obtain welfare benefits, and they are responsible for the recent phenomenon: the underclass. Reed (1993) wrote, "While media bombards the public with images of black women as irresponsible cocaine mothers, statistics indicate that the white suburban rate for cocaine pregnancies is about the same as that in the inner city" (p. 5). Reed further argues that, "In the print and electronic media, pictures of blacks are associated with social pathology" (p. 7). Both the DN and the FP have portrayed Black women primarily as single mothers on welfare. Their historical portrayal of Black women would certainly affect how they chose to portray Sharon McPhail in the 1993 mayoral race. There is a long history of many newspapers in this country portraying Blacks negatively, and in some cases today these stereotypes apparently continue. Reed wrote, "Even when a reporter on a news show presents the facts regarding a particular social malady...the pictures accompanying the narrative usually depict blacks" even though blacks are not the majority or only group on welfare (p. 11). The historical treatment of Blacks and women in newspapers is important for understanding how they are

represented today.

Detroit's Daily Newspapers

The *Detroit Free Press* and *The Detroit News* have long histories. They have been full participants for more than a century in Detroit's racial politics and the effort to keep Blacks and women in less powerful, if not powerless, positions. A brief overview of the DN and FP histories will help us understand how both papers came to believe it was their responsibility to attempt to influence the outcome of the 1993 mayoral race and why they chose race and gender strategies in this regard. The media did not just decide in the 1993 Archer/McPhail campaign to use these strategies, but rather the media have a long history of doing more than merely reporting the news.

The DN has been in existence for 125 years and the FP for more than 150 years. In today's volatile business climate, it is nothing short of remarkable that they have survived as long as they have, what with major upheavals at both papers that almost caused their demise. The DN is perceived by some Detroiters as a conservative newspaper, and many of its editorials reflect a conservative ideology. Conversely, the FP is arguably more liberal and identifies, at least in some of its editorials, with Democratic ideals. Both papers, however, have not always pursued their conservative or liberal ideologies. This is probably a result of the Democratic and Republican parties having evolved ideologically from what they were 100 years ago. For example, the FP was founded by John Pitts Sheldon in 1831 and was referred to as a "drab five-column sheet that pandered to the Democratic Party" (Gruly, 1993, p. 126).

The Detroit Free Press

From its beginning, the FP contained negative articles about persons of African descent. For example, Katzman (1975) wrote that in the 1830s, the FP was "Negrophobic" and used "vulgar and bigoted language" in attacking Blacks (p. 45). During the 1863 Detroit riot, the FP made every effort to fan the flames of racism, and throughout the nineteenth century, the FP used every opportunity to mock Blacks, including writing articles about Black inferiority and the evils of miscegenation.

In those early days, *Detroit Free Press* editors admitted their reporting strategies were influenced by their owners' Democratic beliefs and, therefore, they reported the concerns of the Democratic Party. They unashamedly admitted they were not objective and stated that those newspapers that claimed to be objective should be viewed with suspicion (Katzman, p. 126). By the turn of the century, the FP had a national reputation as an innovator. Note that it was the first newspaper to print an exclusive section for women. Over the years, the direction of the FP was often determined by the personal ideology of the editor. One editor, Wilbur Storey, printed sensationalized stories and thrived on scandals. A later editor, William Quinby, disliked sensationalism and was more interested in articles about local and national news. He also reported on book reviews, provided stories that aided the rearing of children, and spoke to women's rights issues.

In 1905 the FP was sold to a group of local businessmen who brought in Edward Douglas Stair, owner of another Detroit newspaper, the *Detroit Journal*. By 1917 Stair became the sole owner of the FP and was known for intimidating his editors and hating unions. Later he criticized Franklin D. Roosevelt, trade unions, and America's impending role in World War II. When Jack Knight brought the FP in 1940, the FP, under

Stair's management, had been transformed into a conservative paper. Even when the FP followed a liberal ideology, it did not prevent persistent reporting of negative stories about Detroit's African American population. Knight pledged the FP would be an independent paper free of politics, and special interest groups would not control the newspaper's editorial stance. Under his leadership, the FP committed to performing a service to the community, and although the newspaper remained conservative, the editorials made an attempt at least to be fair, except, of course, to the Black population of Detroit.

In the 1960s, the *Detroit Free Press* moved from its conservative position by first criticizing the Viet Nam War and then by supporting a Black candidate for mayor, Richard Austin. With Joe Stroud at the helm in the 1970s, the FP supported the Civil Rights Movement and supported Jimmy Carter for President of the United States, the first Democrat supported by the newspaper since Grover Cleveland. Clearly, the FP has shown flexibility in its ideological position, which is perhaps due in part to the power given the editor's position.

The Detroit News

The Detroit News was founded in 1873 by James Edmund Scripps, almost 40 years after the *Detroit Free Press*. The grandson of the publisher of the *London Daily Sun*, Scripps came to the United States from England when he was nine years old. On reaching adulthood, Scripps observed that none of Detroit's four newspapers addressed the needs of the working masses and concluded that a newspaper should be created that appealed to this group. He presented these ideas to the newspaper he was working for at the time but they were rejected, causing Scripps to resign. Shortly after his resignation, the building housing the newspaper caught fire and was totally destroyed. Since he

owned a share of the newspaper, he received a $20,000 share of the insurance settlement. He used this money to start the newspaper he had envisioned and called it the *Evening News*, the forerunner of *The Detroit News*. Early issues of the paper were tabloid in size and cost only two cents, one cent less than other daily newspapers (Gruley, 1993; Lutz, 1973).

When Scripps first published his newspaper in 1873, Detroit was not yet an automobile town, but rather was a city that produced stoves, beer, shoes, furniture, etc. Gruly (1993) wrote, "The center city, with its gaslights and brick streets, was home to the well-to-do, while the working classes scattered along the riverfront and to the outskirts, clustering in tenements plagued by lawlessness, pestilence, and infant death" (p. 14). Newspapers printed prior to the *Evening News* catered to the social elite. Scripps set out to attract that one-third of Detroiters who did not normally read newspapers by creating a paper that was reasonably priced and easy to handle. He also felt it was important to have a paper that contained articles that were brief and concise because working people lacked the free time to sit and casually read newspapers. Scripps also decided that it was important to publish the newspaper in the afternoon instead of in the morning when most working-class people were going to work or already at work. Although the *Evening News* lost more than $5,000 its first year in production, it became a profitable enterprise by 1876. The profits from the paper allowed Scripps to purchase two other Detroit daily newspapers, the *Daily Mirror* and the *Tribune*, and incorporate as the Evening News Association.

Lutz (1973) wrote that in the early days of the DN the paper was "daringly independent of party politics and private interests" (p. 9). On one occasion, Scripps editorialized that "there should be papers in which only such things are published as are of in-

terest to the great mass of our readers (p. 9)," which included the working class. The paper increased its circulation rapidly, and in 1878 some of Scripps' family members used the growing profits from the paper to start newspapers in other cities, i.e., the *Cleveland Penny Press*, the *St. Louis Chronicle*, and the *Cincinnati Post*. Although these papers followed the same successful format that the *Evening News* utilized, Scripps was concerned about his family members expanding his newspaper business. He did not agree with the idea of syndication, but the Scripps-Howard group at its peak eventually owned over 35 newspapers across the country. Scripps, however, continued to believe philosophically in the concept of a locally-owned newspaper.

By the early 1880s, *The Detroit News* had a circulation of over 36,000 newspapers, outselling all the other Detroit newspapers. The DN was also the eleventh largest newspaper in the United States. The DN editors continued to be concerned about the common people and sought to improve Detroit by attacking in their editorials the role of powerful corporations. For example, DN editorials pushed for city ownership of the street transit system and condemned private ownership of public lighting (Lutz, 1973). Today, demonstrating a complete change in ideological direction, the DN pushes for *privatization* of many city-owned facilities, including public lighting. Yes, in the late nineteenth century, the DN supported the working man, even arguing in its editorials for an eight-hour workday. One of the most important successes of the DN was its efforts to get Detroit's privately owned gas company to lower its rates to customers, rates that were the highest in the country. After numerous attacks in DN editorials, the gas company finally agreed to lower the rates 30%. Although the DN was primarily interested in political reporting, in the early 1900s the newspaper started the first photographic department, and introduced a comic supplement, a sports page, and a women's page (Lutz, pp. 21-26).

James Scripps died in 1906, but before his death he made sure the DN would continue in the direction he had previously set, and for 30 years after his death, the newspaper was held in trust by persons who believed in Scripps' method of running a newspaper. In fact, three men were charged with ensuring Scripps desires were followed: his son, William E. Scripps, and his sons-in-law, George Booth and Edgar Bancroft Whitcomb. At the end of the trust period, Scripps' share in the DN was distributed to all his descendants.

Unlike other newspapers in Detroit that were openly supported and financially backed by political parties, the *Evening News* identified political corruption in editorials and fought for the rights of labor. During the 1930s Prohibition era, the DN was unrelenting in its reporting on crime, especially crime involving those persons known as rumrunners. The DN reported how rumrunners openly operated on the riverfront and obtained contraband liquor from Canada with impunity. This period was a very violent one in American society as rival gangs dealing in illegal liquor sales tried to put each other out of business. This period was in later years referred to as "incomparable to any other in police history" (Gruley, p. 100) and it was stated that the narcotic wars in the 1960s were reminiscent of the 1930s era. Unlike other Detroit newspapers, the DN was seen as a crusader against vice and violence. The paper also fought against illegal gambling by using its editorials to support the passage of an act that would outlaw illegal gambling. Gambling continued as a primary source of crime as Prohibition ended in 1933, but the DN wasted no time in investigating and revealing illegal activities, and even played a role in cleaning up Detroit's corrupt police department in the mid-1930s.

The DN also covered the race riots of 1943 and 1967. Gruly argued that the 1943 riot was preceded by a period of intense animosity between Blacks and Whites. For the

most part, this was a true assessment of the time period, but some oral histories write of the friendships that existed between groups. For example, Winston Lang wrote that in 1943, "We did choose our friends on the basis of who's a good guy...and many of my friends were nonblack" (Moon, 1994, p. 207). Most of Detroit's Blacks at that time lived in Paradise Valley, an area that was extremely overcrowded because discrimination against Black citizens prevented them from moving into less crowded areas. In just 10 years, the Detroit Black population had increased 100% from 100,000 persons to 200,000. The DN staff rightly concluded that something was not quite right in Detroit, and upon sending reporters to various areas, they discovered there were indeed signs of stress and unrest. This unrest culminated in one of the worst riots in Detroit's history. Meier and Rudwick (1979) wrote that it was "one of the most serious racial conflicts in twentieth century America" (p. 175). Coincidentally, when the riot started, the editor of the DN at that time, George W. Starks, was returning to his office after dropping his wife off at work. Suddenly, he was bombarded by rocks and bricks thrown by rioters and received injuries severe enough to be hospitalized. He later wrote about his personal experiences during the riot. The uprising left 34 persons dead—25 Blacks and nine Whites—and more than three-fourths of the Blacks killed being killed by the police (p. 129).

Because of the magnitude and severity of the 1943 riot, both daily papers covered the story extensively, using more than 40 reporters and photographers. Interestingly, even though there are numerous stories and photographs in the newspapers' archives about this riot, the DN and the FP today focus more on Detroit's 1967 riot, which involved primarily African Americans. They report that the 1967 riot was the beginning of racial polarization in Detroit, totally ignoring Detroit's historical propensity to erupt in racial conflict.

The DN and the FP have been fierce competitors since the introduction of the DN

in the1870s. By the late 1950s, the DN had fallen behind the FP in circulation: 480,673 versus 482,850. The DN has on several occasions fallen behind the FP, but for the first time in 1960, the DN lost the lead for over a year (Gruley). One of the reasons suggested for the DN falling behind the FP was its continued use of outdated presses. In fact, the DN was referred to as the "Old Gray Lady of Detroit newspapering" because the DN used presses that were over 30 years old and refused to borrow money to purchase new ones.

In the early 1950s, middle-class Detroiters started moving to newly developed suburbs, and by the mid-1950s, the city had lost over 200,000 people. The economic fluctuation of the automobile industry also affected Detroit and the DN, and by 1960 over 78,000 Detroiters were without jobs as auto suppliers also left the city for the suburbs and other states. Although the DN was behind in circulation, it was a much more viable and stronger paper because of its higher advertising revenues resulting from more advertisements. The purchase of the *Detroit Times* by the DN allowed the DN to once again take the lead in circulation over the FP by 193,000 newspapers.

In 1967 Detroit experienced another riot or what some historians have identified as a "civil disturbance" since it was not a conflict between Blacks and Whites, at least not to the extent that they directly confronted each other as they had in 1943. During this disturbance, the DN seemed to once again possess the spirit of activism that was reflected in the newspaper in its early years. When President Lyndon Johnson accused Michigan Governor George Romney and local officials of being unable to handle the riot situation and recommending the 101st Airborne Division be sent to Detroit, the DN fought back with an editorial charging the President with playing politics and using a tragedy for political gain. In another example reminiscent of the DN's more liberal past, the DN challenged police officers' explanation of an incident that happened at Detroit's Algiers Hotel

during the 1967 riot. Three young Black men were shot and killed at the hotel because the police claimed they were snipers. The DN sent out reporters in an attempt to verify the police officers' story and the circumstances surrounding the event. In fact, one reporter traveled all the way to Kentucky to interview a discharged Army veteran who had been present at the incident. This interview called into question the police officers' version of the event, causing Detroiters for the first time to recognize something was seriously amiss. The killing of these young men by the police added to the continued distrust of police officers by the Black citizens of Detroit, a distrust that continued to grow and eventually led to the election of Detroit's first Black mayor, Coleman Alexander Young. A survey about the state of the City of Detroit since the 1967 riot, conducted prior to the election of Young, indicated a continued distrust of the police by African Americans and the failure of the police to enforce the laws equally and fairly.

On the heels of the 1967 riot, both the DN and the FP were shut down by a strike that lasted more than 10 months. During that time, it was reported that crime increased significantly in Detroit, forcing many of Detroit's businesses to change their hours of doing business and causing others to leave the city altogether. The DN took similar (though mostly symbolic) action when it enclosed its front windows in slate. While the DN and the FP were on strike, small local papers quickly attempted to fill the void. The method they used to attract readers was to increase awareness of the crime problem in Detroit. One newspaper, the *Detroit American*, by attacking African Americans, saw its circulation quickly increase to 185,000 during the strike. When the strike was finally settled, the DN began a similar strategy in reporting Black street crime, apparently hoping to win back some of the *Detroit American*'s readers. This tactic soon had the desired result and the *Detroit American* folded. The DN's reporting methods or strategies were criticized by

many in the Black community. The FP had been known historically for its race-baiting in the nineteenth century, and in the early twentieth century, the newspaper was called "Negrophobic." The DN did not previously have the same reputation as the FP in this regard, but when the DN began printing daily police reports on crimes and included the description of the suspects, most of whom were Black, Detroit's African American community began charging the DN with racism (Gruley, p. 146).

Black Detroiters were not alone in their criticism. The *Detroit Times* also attacked the DN and its biased reporting methods with regard to Blacks and Whites. For example, the *Times* reported that when a Black person killed a police officer's son, the incident was reported by the DN for six days. Conversely, when a Black man was killed as he defended his wife against an attempted rape, there was only one news story about the incident. The DN responded to this accusation, of course, and attempted to justify the reasons for the differences in its reporting methods. It argued that because the police officer's son was killed at Cobo Hall, a large conference center in downtown Detroit, it warranted more coverage than a Black man being killed in a small city park. Also, before being killed, the Black man had been drinking with the White men who killed him and who had attempted to rape his wife. In other instances, the DN continued to rationalize its reasons for sensationalism of certain crimes in Detroit, and on one occasion challenged then-Mayor Jerome Cavanaugh when he criticized its methods (Gruley). Lutz (1973) posited that "the paper's determination to maintain law and order, letting the chips fall where they may was soon obvious" (p. 148). Even when Black leaders and some White civil rights leaders called their tactics racist, the DN responded that it was done because of its support for law and order.

The Detroit News also attacked the morality issue and decided to stop accepting

advertisements from X-rated movie houses. Readers overwhelmingly supported its stand on this issue. Thus, almost 100 years after the DN was started, the paper originally known as the *Evening News* was the largest evening newspaper in the country (Lutz, 1973). The newspaper had also evolved its editorial ideology to that of conservative, a position it continues to maintain in the 1990s. The ideological stance of the newspaper is extremely important in researching the rhetorical strategies used in reporting on the 1993 mayoral campaign.

The *Detroit Free Press* continued to be the primary competitor to *The Detroit News*. In 1986, however, the DN and FP agreed to form a Joint Operating Agreement (JOA). This agreement would allow, in theory, the newspapers to continue as separate and independent papers but would combine their printing and business operations including advertising and marketing. The DN, however, would basically control the JOA. Moreover, this JOA ended decades of competition and rivalry and allowed the parent companies of these two newspapers, Knight-Ridder and Gannett, to pursue their primary goal of turning profits (Gruley). Many believed that without the JOA, the FP would have gone out of business (Garley). The JOA initially met with strong resistance from both the unions and politicians. In fact, opposition to the JOA was challenged all the way to the Supreme Court. Coleman Young, who was mayor of Detroit at that time, was initially a vocal opponent of the JOA. Gruley argued that Young's opposition came primarily because the JOA would give the newspapers too much power in the political arena. Also, both papers had already challenged and criticized everything about Young's administration. Gruley stated "they criticized his policies" and "made fun of his projects." Young also believed that the DN and its parent company, Gannett, would be the power source in the agreement, and since the DN at that time was considered conservative, it "was the

more hostile to Young's administration," although both papers were "as likely to skewer Democratic Young." In fact, he was often portrayed in the newspapers' cartoons as a "grinning, arrogant buffoon" (p. 274). Young eventually stopped his opposition to the JOA when he determined that a JOA was better than a one-newspaper town, especially when that one newspaper would be *The Detroit News*. Also, he recognized that the demise of the *Detroit Free Press* would also result in lost jobs and a loss in tax revenues for the city of Detroit.

The prior history of the DN and FP reveals newspapers that were fiercely independent and powerful. History also shows how the newspapers changed from being family-owned to ownership by conglomerates. Regardless of whether they were family-owned or part of a conglomerate, the newspapers continued their efforts to create the wedge between Black and White Detroiters and to present Blacks as not equal to Whites. The newspapers have, therefore, played a significant role in the polarization between the races in Detroit.

Blacks and Politics in Detroit

A historical overview of Blacks and politics is important for this research project primarily because members of the African America community were major players in the 1993 mayoral campaign. It is important that we understand the participation of Blacks in politics from a historical standpoint. Have they been full participants or have they been complacent in their political activities? This brief overview will provide answers to these questions.

Detroit's Black community has a long history of participating in political issues even before it had the legal right to vote in elections (Katzman, 1973). Not only was

slavery legal in Michigan until 1837, but Blacks were prevented from voting until the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution in 1865. The fact that slavery was once legal in Michigan and that Blacks could not vote clearly is important history for Black voters today. In the 1993 mayoral campaign, the demographics of the city were totally different than they were in early Detroit. Sixty-seven Black persons lived in Detroit in 1820 compared to a white population of 1,355. By 1830, however, the Black population had more than doubled. In those days, the Black population was very small, but in 1993, the Black population had become the majority in the City of Detroit. Interestingly, the increase in the Black population back in the 1800s was significant enough for Michigan, in 1827, to pass a law that required all African Americans who lived in Michigan or who later came to Michigan to carry a certificate of freedom (Katzman, 1973).

The first of several riots involving race occurred in Detroit in 1833. This riot and future riots provide insight into race relations in Detroit covering the decades and supports the argument that race has always been a part of Detroit politics (Katzman, 1975). This riot had significant political overtones because it occurred when Black citizens objected to an attempt to enforce the 1793 Fugitive Slave Law. This law permitted bounty hunters to come to Michigan and search out persons they believed had escaped enslavement in the South. The riot was called the Blackburn Riot because the Blackburns, a married couple who had escaped slavery in Kentucky, were targeted for capture by bounty hunters. Although the number of Blacks in Detroit was small, the Blackburn incident caused Blacks from surrounding Canadian communities to assist in preventing the bounty hunters from returning the Blackburns to a condition of enslavement. This early effort by the Black community to challenge what they believed was an unjust law was a clear indi-

cation of its interest in the law and in the Detroit political arena. Its actions at that time set the stage for future race relations in Detroit. As a result of Detroit's Black citizens assisting the Blackburns to escape from the bounty hunters, a riot developed between the Black and White citizens living in the area. Federal troops were eventually called in to help quell the disturbance (Ashton, 1981; Katzman, 1975).

In the aftermath of the riot, White law officials began to strictly enforce black codes and to severely restrict the freedom of Detroit's Black citizens. These black codes which existed all over the country, argued for the belief in Black inferiority and White superiority (Blackwell, 1985). Because Canadian Blacks had assisted Black Detroiters during the riot, laws were passed to prohibit Blacks from landing boats on the Detroit side of the Detroit River. This negatively affected the Black population because many worked in Detroit but lived in Canada because of their fear of bounty hunters.

Despite restrictions, Blacks saw the importance of organizing their communities. and in the next two decades, they worked diligently to remove their second-class citizenship status as well as the "social and political stigmas" placed upon them (Katzman, 1975, p. 13). The *Detroit Free Press*, however, persisted in its reporting of all the negative aspects of the Black community, i.e., Black crime, joblessness, etc., which encouraged Whites to believe that many members of the Black community were criminals. Despite their hardships, Black Detroiters not only engaged in the politics of ending legal slavery but also participated in the suffrage movement and fought for the right of their children to attend Detroit's public schools. (Katzman, 1975).

There were almost 600 African Americans in Detroit by 1850. Many were descendants of free Blacks who had earlier left the South because of the tightening black codes in southern states that made it difficult for them to find work in their trades. Con-

currently, European immigrants were also coming to America and finding their way to Detroit in search of jobs. The competition for jobs between these groups eventually led to another riot in Detroit. With just a cursory view, we find the historical reality is that race has always been an issue in Detroit; it did not begin with Sharon McPhail. The 1863 riot involved Irish and German immigrants who not only resented participating in the Civil War to preserve the Union but who were concerned that the end of slavery would result in former enslaved persons descending upon the North and taking their jobs. Oestreicher (1986) wrote that the Irish in Detroit "occupied a position in the economic structure below that of the most successful English-speaking immigrants" (p. 34).

The *Detroit Free Press*, considered by some to be a "negrophobic" newspaper, fanned the flames of racism and intolerance by using inflammatory and racist rhetoric against African Americans—a common practice for the newspaper. Thus, the FP, long before the 1993 election, engaged in race-baiting tactics and racial reporting. As a result of the hostilities created between certain groups, it was only a matter of time before a minor incident would create the spark for another riot. The spark for a riot was the alleged rape of two little girls, one Black and one White. Both of the girls accused William Faulkner, a Black man, of rape. Although Faulkner was tried, found guilty, and given life imprisonment, Katzman(1975) wrote, "A part of the citizenry, mostly the Irish and Germans, was aroused by the crime and stirred by the *Free Press*, threatened to lynch the prisoner. Unable to get to Faulkner, the mob decided to go to the Black section of the city and shouted that they wanted to kill all the niggers" (p. 48). The uprising left two Blacks dead, injured numerous persons, and destroyed much of the Black community. Faulkner was later found innocent of the crime of rape after the young girls admitted they lied about the entire incident. Those who started the destructive riot, however, were never

charged with any wrongdoing. This incident is a clear example of the racial tensions that existed in the city and the effort by newspaper media to exploit them. The mistrust and severed relations between the races that resulted from this event affected race relations for generations to come. Interestingly, even though the riot devastated the Black community, many Black men in Michigan eagerly enlisted in the first Black northern regiment of soldiers established during the Civil War (Ashton, 1981; Katzman, 1975; Oestreicher, 1986).

During and after the Civil War, Blacks continued their political fight for equality. For example, in 1865 the Michigan State Equal Rights League of Colored People and the Equal Rights League of Michigan were organized. Blacks also joined the Republican Party because of the party's commitment to the welfare of African Americans in Michigan. This occurred at an appropriate time because the Civil War caused the realignment of the party system in the United States and resulted in the Republican party becoming the majority party (Patterson, 1995). Blacks worked closely with the party in Michigan to achieve many goals, including the end school desegregation in 1867, and by the early 1870s African Americans in Detroit believed political equality would finally be achieved. Little did they realize the long and treacherous road that was before them. Both political parties courted the Black vote in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Some Democrats even supported equal rights for African Americans and agreed to accept Blacks on some of their councils and committees. On occasion, they nominated Blacks for certain elective offices. For the next 50 years, however, Black Detroiters, for the most part, maintained their Republican ties (Katzman, 1975; Ashton, 1981).

Around the turn of the century, Michigan changed from nominating candidates at conventions to a new primary system where candidates for political elections were elected by majority vote. The reason some argued for the crusade against party conventions was

to eliminate the "subversion of democracy and for domination by sinister forces" (Katzman, 1975, p. 202). Others suggest it was a way of preventing Blacks from being nominated for office. Since Blacks were only 2% of Detroit's population, the operation of the new system caused those of African descent to lose much of the political power they had gained over the years. This power was not regained until they increased their percent of the population in the city of Detroit and in the state of Michigan. Katzman argued that, because Blacks were cut off from politics at the turn of the century, their connection to the White community, except in their status as workers, was severed (p. 211). This action set the stage for future race relations between the Black and White populations. It also showed that the effort to polarize the city was firmly entrenched and became a part of the political landscape for most of Detroit's history. It also demonstrates the effort by Blacks to be a part of the political system, to become fully enfranchised citizens, but their efforts were often thwarted in the early days by violence and in more recent years by de jure and de facto laws.

Detroit's population began to increase substantially after 1910. Marks (1989) wrote that from 1910 to 1920 the Black population increased by 611%. Detroit's Black population increased from 5,741 in 1910 to 40,838 in 1920, and this increase exponentially affected the political power of Blacks in the city. Additionally, Henry Ford's announcement of five dollars pay for a day's work caused a change in Detroit's Black and White population as the need for jobs resulted in both groups leaving the South in search of jobs in the automobile industry. Paradoxically, although the increase in the number of Blacks would give them increased political power, many of the so-called better class of Blacks resented these new Southern migrants (p. 160). At the same time, tensions between Southern White and Black migrant workers competing for the same jobs increased.

The period after the first World War was of great concern for Blacks in Detroit and nationally. Blacks lost political ground throughout the United States just as women, primarily white women, were gaining political clout, specifically the right to vote. In Washington, President Wilson re-segregated the Federal workforce and put most Black civil servants out of work. Simultaneously, the Ku Klux Klan was gaining power nationally and in Detroit (Rich, 1989). Widick (1989) wrote that in 1924 and 1925, the Ku Klux Klan in Detroit mounted a campaign based on white supremacy and to a lesser extent anti-Catholicism. Its candidate for mayor espoused racism and a belief that Blacks should be kept "in their place" (p. 4). The Klan candidate won the election, but the election was overturned when 17,000 votes were invalidated. Widick argued that this campaign "left a legacy of prejudice more visible than ever today" (p. 3). Again, this was clear evidence of the polarization that has always existed in Detroit. Both Blacks and Whites left the South looking for work in Detroit's automobile industry, but, unfortunately, Whites brought with them prejudices which were a result of the legacy of enslaving others. Widick (1989) wrote that many of them "brought their prejudices, customs, and language with them" (p. 27). The fact that just 65 years ago Detroit was so polarized that there were enough votes to elect a member of the Ku Klux Klan to office speaks volumes about Detroit's race relations today and the effort by some to promote and maintain White supremacy.

Shortly after the Klan attempted to elect one of its own as mayor, Henry Ford decided to get involved in Black politics (Meier & Rudwick, 1979). There is still disagreement over the root cause of Ford's benevolence toward African American workers, but it has been argued that Ford hired Blacks in order to maintain a built-in strike force and to help prevent the establishment of unions in his company. Many also question his motives

because of his virulent anti-Semitic views. He accused Jews of a conspiracy to take over the world and promoted this view in his own newspaper, the *Dearborn Independent* (Ridgeway, 1990). Ford donated money to Black churches and used ministers to recruit workers for his plants. Henry Ford, therefore, became a powerful force in the Black community, and he in turn gave power to Black ministers to control who was hired to work in the Ford plants. Again, some may have considered his actions as benevolent if not paternalistic. Widick (1989), however, called Ford's maneuvering "plantation politics" (p. 44). I argue that Ford's actions controlled the political power of Blacks while, at the same time, creating further tensions between other groups for his own self-serving ends.

Ford's efforts were instrumental in continuing Republicanism among Blacks, but his efforts were short-lived. The collapse of the American economy in the 1930s resulted in Republicans losing the support of Blacks, not just in Detroit but throughout the country. From the Reconstruction era to 1928, Black voters overwhelmingly voted Republican, but this support waned when blacks began to suffer considerably more than the majority population during the Depression. Specifically, a greater number of them were out of work and the few relief efforts that were available were denied them. Roosevelt's New Deal offered more support for Blacks than they had ever known. The Depression had been especially hard on African Americans because they were the "last hired, first fired" (Badger, p. 25). Thus, in the election of 1932, 90% of Black voters voted for Franklin Roosevelt, a Democrat. In the 1936 election, the number rose to 95% (Nash, 1992).

The early 1930s was a period of high unemployment in Detroit. Fifty percent of all workers were unemployed but 80% of Blacks were without jobs (Badger, 1989). As the Depression continued and as more jobs disappeared, some unemployed Detroiters

who had earlier migrated to Michigan in search of work were actually given a bus ticket by governmental agencies and told to return to the South. More important, the political climate changed in a city where Blacks had been politically involved since before the Civil War. Black Detroiters who had been staunchly Republican since the end of the Civil War became Democrats. This ideological change occurred not only because Blacks began to receive more economic support from the Democrats but also because the Democratic Party had changed. Twelve major cities that had supported Republicans in 1920 now gave Roosevelt their vote in 1936, including Detroit. Badger argued that "No group of lower-income voters shifted allegiance more dramatically in the 1930's than blacks" (p. 251). Polls showed that in every northern city except Chicago, 60% of the Black vote went to Roosevelt. The New Deal did not mean the end of discrimination against Blacks, but what Blacks did receive in assistance was more than they had received under any other administration. Prior to the 1930s, Blacks realized their needs were for the most part ignored. Since the volatile 1930s, Detroit has remained a Democratic city. This historical overview shows that African Americans did not become Democrats overnight. Over 60 years later, Detroit was a Democratic-controlled city and the two candidates who survived the primary in 1993 were both Democrats. The conservative media, particularly the DN, had to determine who was the best Democrat to address its self-interests.

Although Roosevelt won the presidency with over 60% of the popular vote, the party was prevented from attaining greatness because its "New Deal had created a schizophrenic Democratic Party." For instance, Badger (1989) wrote that, "on the one hand, a northern urban wing, backed by organised labour, lower-income voters and blacks, pushed for liberal reforms; on the other, a conservative southern wing, entrenched in Congress in alliance with the Republicans, was determined to block any advance of the

New Deal along urban liberal lines" (p. 246). This dichotomy was especially true in Detroit where organized labor and Black voters demanded liberal reforms. Conservatives, on the other hand, tried to block advancements for African Americans.

During the 1930's and 1940's, Blacks gained power in the union movement and this translated into more political power for them in the City of Detroit. The United Automobile Workers, for example, recognized the importance of having the support of Black workers as opposed to their being hired as in-house strikebreakers. Rich (1989) argues that one of the things that distinguished politics in Detroit from other cities was the strong Black/White union coalition. In fact, in those years a Black man who wanted a career in politics would have to get his start in the unions. Coleman Young, for example, started his political career as a union organizer. In the 1950s in particular, long before the passage of civil rights legislation, Blacks showed their new-found political power by electing Charles Diggs, a Black man, to the United States Congress from the Thirteenth Congressional District of Michigan.

African Americans have had a strong political history in Detroit resulting from coalitions and organizations. These coalitions and organizations also helped organize and support the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, starting with Martin Luther King giving the first "I Have A Dream" speech in the City of Detroit (Rich, 1989, p. 55-57). The election of Jerome Cavanaugh in 1961 was also a political turning point for the City of Detroit. The *Detroit Free Press* wrote that Cavanaugh had been elected by Blacks, blue-collar workers, and persons who were unemployed—a strange coalition for Detroit. Cavanaugh gave the city a new image and strongly believed the city was on the road to racial peace because of the many policies and programs he instituted (Widick, 1989). Clearly, race has always been an important issue in Detroit and has been used in mayoral

campaigns before 1993.

The history of Blacks in Detroit shows they were not just bystanders for the last 100 years, but full participants to the extent they were socially and legally able. They worked hard, fought for their civil and human rights, and participated in the political arena just as other Detroiters participated, including recent immigrants. Unfortunately, Black Detroiters were not permitted to realize the American dream primarily because of their socially constructed "race," a construction that dates back to the beginnings of this Republic. Blacks being prevented by law from participating in politics because of their small numbers and the Klan being able to legally maneuver into politics are excellent examples of what the critical race theorists call "the historical centrality and complicity of the law in upholding White supremacy" (Crenshaw et al., 1995, p. xi).

The Coleman Young Era

One of the most significant changes in Detroit politics came with the election of Coleman Alexander Young, the first African American elected mayor of the City of Detroit. This Black man would significantly affect "politics as usual," and change the racial climate of the metropolitan area. Young was mayor of Detroit for two decades, and because of his involvement in politics long before he became mayor, his impact on Detroit politics was substantial. The political climate in Detroit before the 1993 Detroit mayoral race strongly influenced the direction of the campaign and, no doubt, how Detroit's newspapers chose to cover the campaign. When the McPhail/Archer campaign began, most Whites perceived Coleman Young as a race-baiter and as being antagonistic toward them. Some believe this attitude was a direct result of how media chose to characterize Young. It should be noted that local newspapers blamed Young for the polarization that

existed between the City of Detroit and the suburbs and between Whites and Blacks. Widick (1989) argues, however, that history clearly shows that there have always been two Detroits—one Black and one White—so Young was incorrectly blamed for a polarization that, as this research paper shows, existed long before he became mayor. Anything Young attempted to do to help the city was usually criticized. Interestingly, the local newspapers never mentioned that Young socially dated Black and White women and that some of his closest confidants were white men. This information, of course, was not useful to, and flew in the face of, a media bent on promoting Young as a racist. Few also were aware that, for most of his life, Young worked in interracial coalitions and had fought against the evils of racism. Critical race theorists would identify the ongoing effort by media to cast Young as a racist, as opposed to one who fights against racism, as an example of those in power using race to maintain power.

Labor unions were viewed as radical in the 1930s, and Detroit newspapers often proclaimed them as such. Thus, when Young decided to participate in the labor movement, he was going against the acceptable status quo. This was especially difficult for Black Americans. Many believed unionism's mission was to change the very fabric of American society, even though the very fabric of America was already being changed as a result of the Great Depression. In 1937 Young joined the United Auto Workers (UAW), which was at that time still part of the Congress of Industrial Workers (CIO), one of the most radical unions in the country. His union career was temporarily halted, however, upon entering the Armed Services and becoming a member of the now-famous Tuskegee Airmen, an all-Black group. When Young returned from his tour of duty, the UAW had organized Ford and integrated the workforce. Young noticed there were no Black representatives in the UAW higher ranks and so he joined the left-wing organizing effort of the

Wayne County CIO. By 1946 Young was elected a director within the CIO and almost immediately became a spokesperson for African Americans (Rich, 1989).

Young led the drive to repeal the Callahan Act in 1947, an act that required labor organizations to register as foreign agents, including the leaders of these organizations. Young also pushed for more Black leadership in the union. Unfortunately for Young, the Michigan CIO, under the leadership of Walter Reuther, purged all left-wing members from the CIO, including Young. Young continued his organizing activities, however, by helping organize the National Negro Labor Council (NNLC), a group that fought against discrimination in the workplace. One of their accomplishments was to force Sears and Roebuck to hire Black clerks. The NNLC was viewed by many as radical, and in 1951 the United States Attorney General branded the NNLC a communist front organization and placed it on a list of subversives. Young, because of his association with this organization, was also accused of being a communist, and in 1952 he was called before the House Un-American Activities Commission and asked certain questions about the NNLC. He was also asked to provide the names of all the members of the NNLC. He not only refused to answer questions about the NNLC but also refused to name any members. Instead, Young pled the Fifth Amendment in his defense, and in doing so, made many persons in Detroit's Black community admire his stand against a Commission many perceived as racists. This stand also assisted Young in later years when he ran for political office (Rich, 1989).

In 1961, Coleman Young once again became politically active and ran as the Democratic candidate for the Michigan Constitutional Convention. His winning the position allowed him to interact with politicians from all over Michigan. In fact, Young and George Romney were identified as the stars of that convention (Rich, 1989). Young's

achievements and his ability to participate in coalitions of Blacks and Whites calls into question the media's later attempt to brand Young a racist. His success encouraged him to run for a seat in the Michigan State Senate in 1964 and again he won, this time by a 2:1 margin. Young's term in the Senate was quite successful in that he introduced and helped pass several bills. During that time, he also gained a reputation as a defender of the poor. In 1973, almost 10 years after Young was elected to the State Senate, he was elected mayor of the City of Detroit.

Coleman Young benefited from a national reputation and was instrumental in achieving certain goals for Detroit including assisting in the government bailout of Chrysler Motors. Also, when a young black man died in the custody of Detroit police, Young's quick actions, which prevented a riot similar to what happened in Los Angeles after the Rodney King incident, were praised by other big city police chiefs. Of course, local media ignored his preventing a disturbance and instead focused on his incorrect use of the word "murderer" (Young, 1994).

Although Coleman Young was involved in politics for several decades and Detroit's Black community overall has had political involvement dating back to the Civil War, Rich (1989) wrote that "Detroit's electoral politics have largely been ignored in scholarly research and writing" (p. 91). He also argued, "The state of Detroit politics transcends its local dimensions because it affects how black politicians are perceived nationally" (p. 92). Additionally, because of Detroit's close connection with the automobile industry, the city has always received national and international press, and during Coleman Young's stay in office, most of it was negative. This negative press adversely affected the city and, mired in a "Catch 22" situation, local daily newspapers chose to blame the negative press on Mayor Young. The election of a new mayor was important

in changing Detroit's negative image, a change that would also benefit the state and the country.

Young's many years as a controversial politician and activist had a significant impact on Detroit politics and also on the Dennis Archer and Sharon McPhail mayoral campaign. During Young's tenure as mayor, there was an ongoing effort by media to report issues along racial lines. The mayor, too, was not adverse to sometimes exploiting the race issue to his advantage and in playing to the racial sensitivities of some of his Detroit constituents. The media, of course, were there to immediately expose and chastise *his* racial approach for political gain. Young is a vital component of any discussion on contemporary Detroit politics and on race issues. He was arguably one of the most influential politicians in Michigan history. It is, therefore, impossible to analyze the 1993 Detroit mayoral race without including a historical account of Coleman Young. For these reasons he is important for this research project.

Summary

Understanding the media's involvement in the 1993 mayoral campaign is impossible without knowledge of the events that led up to the campaign. There were several issues operating during the campaign, and a historical overview of each of those issues placed the Detroit campaign in a proper historical context. Race, gender, politics, and newspaper reporting were all important to the campaign, and understanding these issues in history helps us determine how we reached the point in Detroit where newspapers believed they could attempt to set an agenda and influence the outcome of a political campaign.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF MEDIA COVERAGE OF 1993 CAMPAIGN

The preceding chapters have detailed the importance of analyzing the 1993 Detroit mayoral campaign and have provided an overview of the history of Detroit politics, in addition to brief histories of both the DN and the FP. The appropriateness and usefulness of a feminist perspective in analyzing the reporting methods used by journalists and editorial writers have also been identified. This chapter provides information concerning a framework for the use of a feminist perspective in the analysis of the newspaper articles and also offers a brief analysis of the news media's ability to be influential. Additionally, it provides an analysis of the news stories and editorials that appeared in the DN and the FP to identify the rhetorical strategies used by the media in reporting on the issues of the campaign.

Specifically, it addresses how the media may have used race and gender issues as rhetorical strategies not only to justify their choice of priority issues in the campaign, but to present one candidate, Dennis Archer, as being more capable of addressing those issues. Also, as previously discussed in Chapter I, feminist rhetorical criticism, along with theoretical support from critical race theory, was used to help identify the rhetorical strategies used in news stories and editorials contained in the DN and the FP. This perspective assisted in identifying those race and gender strategies that may have been introduced by media and helped in interpreting and evaluating these strategies to determine if

they negatively affected the campaign of Sharon McPhail.

Concerning feminist criticism, Rakow (1987) argues that it was important that in our research for women that we "change, not perpetuate those conditions and systems that are oppressive to women" (p. 79). Hart (1997) wrote that feminist criticism exposes the politics sometimes found in written text. This perspective, along with the theoretical foundations of critical race theory, identified how women and minority groups have been marginalized by a white male patriarchy. Note that feminist rhetorical criticism challenges "business as usual" and demands that power inequities be examined and exposed (Hart, 1997). This challenge applies to women as well as powerless ethnic and racial groups. In summary, in the proceeding analysis of news stories and editorials covering the 1993 mayoral campaign, I used a feminist perspective to interrogate business as usual, to analyze power inequities, and to observe why women are sometimes treated differently because of their gender and because of their color.

Prior to the 1993 campaign, Detroit had been governed for two decades by one mayor, Coleman Alexander Young. Additionally, Rich (1989) the city had gone from a 44% African American population in 1970 to a 63% African American population in 1980. This change was significant in that Black residents no longer viewed themselves as minorities in the city. They were able to move into neighborhoods once closed to them but were now being vacated by whites. Unfortunately, the most important characteristic of the Detroit region at that time was the divisiveness and polarization that continued between Blacks and Whites. Polls showed the "continuous evidence of racism in the outside suburban community" (Rich, 1989, p. 279). In fact, Rich (1989) chastised the media for not helping to educate White readers about Detroit but helping to "feed their anxieties" instead (p. 281). This is consistent with what the Kerner Commission had reported

25 years earlier. It reported that major news media had not adequately analyzed and reported on racial problems in the United States and that media had "done little to assist white Americans in understanding and accepting black Americans" (Samuels, 1996, p. 106).

News stories before the campaign discussed Detroit's budget deficit and the need for then-Mayor Young to consider a pay freeze for the city's union workers ("An unrealistic city budget," 1992). Additionally, Young sought reduced bus services and considered privatization of some of the city's services if the unions refused to take pay cuts ("Young's proposals outrage city workers," 1992). An article appeared in November of 1992 that stated Detroit's future was at stake and that the entire nation was interested in who would replace Young ("The challenge," 1992). In a newspaper poll in January of 1993, 70 percent of the White population outside of the City of Detroit expressed "cold feelings" toward the present mayor and his administration (*The Detroit News*, 1/24/93, p. F4). Detroit was not only a city in severe financial trouble, but the entire region was racially polarized. Into this climate came two candidates for mayor, Sharon McPhail and Dennis Archer, and news media that believed they should determine the direction of the campaign and the choice for a new mayor. They would accomplish this by the use of specific rhetorical strategies as the following information reveals.

Utilizing Rhetorical Strategies

What does it mean to use certain rhetorical strategies in reporting the news? In order to give a comprehensive response to this question, the term "strategy" must first be operationally defined. Campbell (1996) provides a useful definition in this regard. She argues that "a strategy is a plan of action, a maneuver designed to overcome the obstacles

in a particular situation" (p. 297). The *Detroit News* and the *Detroit Free Press* used rhetorical strategies that involved race and gender to help them overcome obstacles that might prevent them from persuading their Detroit readers to vote for a specific candidate. Perhaps Campbell did not have in mind the use of rhetorical strategies by news media to persuade voters, but her definition of strategy for this research is apropos, e.g., her argument that "specific strategies are usually devices that exploit the capacity of language" and that some "strategies are designed to...create connotations" (p. 298). These explanations are relevant because Detroit's daily newspapers "exploited" the use of race and gender in their strategies, which were designed to create "connotations." More specifically, they used certain strategies to imply which issues were important to voters. Finally, Campbell argues that "some strategies resemble logical argument" (p. 298). In this regard, the media appeared to make a concentrated effort to present a logical argument for their position, e.g., it is for the good of the entire region that the next mayor get along with the suburbs.

Several studies have identified the use of rhetorical strategies in campaigns or other events for the purpose of attempting to persuade audiences. For example, Logan (1991) wrote about the rhetorical strategies used by Ida B. Wells in her crusade to end lynching. Wells uses rhetorical strategies that were shaped by her life's experiences. Specifically, her approach was "direct and confrontational, yet factually irrefutable" (p. 3). Bowers (1996) discusses the importance of rhetorical strategies by "oppressed collectives" (minorities) in fighting for their civil rights, especially to combat efforts by media to manipulate how certain oppressed groups are presented in news stories. Bowers argues that "oppressed collectives often are forced into adopting defensive strategies in which we must assert our rights" and are "constantly asked to define ourselves and establish our

credibility before we can reveal any facts, policies, or prescriptions" (p. 500). She also discusses how "the establishment relegates oppressed collectives to obscurity and insignificance by misstating, misspelling, or exaggerating facts about us" (p. 500).

Breuning and Ishiyama (1998) wrote about the use of rhetorical strategies by political groups in campaigns. Their study analyzes the "rhetorical strategies employed by two nationalist parties that claimed the same ethnic community in Belgium (p. 6). They identify "rhetorical strategies" as the "patterns of techniques and tactics used to persuade the receivers of the rightness of the speaker's position" (p. 6). Daughton (1994) provides another example of the use of rhetorical strategies when she discusses how "politicians often use rhetorical strategies to deal with issues affecting women. As an example, some politicians or their political parties will designate certain issues as "women's issues" and then allow them to "languish from neglect" (p. 109). In fact, she argues that "the ways in which they are discussed or avoided can tell us a great deal about...the ideology and rhetorical strategy of the speaker" (p. 109). Jorgensen, Kock, and Rorbech (1998) discuss how debaters sometimes use certain rhetorical strategies to win debates, e.g., some use "parallel, mutually independent grounds in direct support of their claim" while other debaters may use "one central or overarching reason" to support their claim (p. 293).

Wadsworth (1997) provides some excellent information concerning how evangelicals, or the Christian Right, employed certain rhetorical strategies for "expanding their influence and political resources" (p. 342). Evangelicals have used "race" as a rhetorical strategy to support their position on certain conservative issues. This is particularly useful for this research because I also argue that media used race as a rhetorical strategy. In pushing for an amendment to Colorado's constitution that would deny certain rights to homosexuals, the evangelicals appealed to race in their literature "as the 'true'

civil rights category,", and this effort "propelled a white evangelical rhetorical strategy in a campaign with a self-consciously 'family values' mission" (p. 344).

Another example of how the evangelicals used "race" as a rhetorical strategy is observed in the way they compared minorities to gays. They referred to gays as "pleasure-addicted gays" who made an average of $55,000 a year, who should not be compared to the "innocent suffering and crippling poverty of legitimate minority groups" (p. 351). They stated comparing gay rights to minority rights was an insult to those persons who had struggled long and hard "to achieve true civil rights in America" (p. 351). Wadsworth (1997) also reported how the battle to pass the Colorado amendment "reveals the ways race is being played out rhetorically and strategically" (p. 370). The choice of race as a rhetorical strategy by evangelicals is quite interesting, particularly since they have been perceived as harboring "racist elements" and having a "spotted history" concerning civil rights and social justice for minorities (p. 342). For a group that has, historically, been unconcerned about the civil rights of minorities to now use race to accomplish a specific goal helps us to understand how the Detroit media could also use race as a rhetorical strategy to pursue their agenda. All of the preceding examples of the use of rhetorical strategies help us to have a better understanding of how these strategies can be used to accomplish certain goals or set specific agendas.

Framework for Analyzing Rhetorical Strategies

In addition to understanding how rhetorical strategies have been used, it is important to work within a framework when using a feminist perspective for identifying and analyzing the rhetorical strategies used in news stories and editorials in the 1993 mayoral campaign. Campbell (1996) provides a useful framework in this regard. She also dis-

cusses what it means to be a critic and that our purpose as critics is to analyze and interpret rhetorical acts. She describes a rhetorical act as an "intentional, created, polished attempt to overcome the obstacles in a given situation with a specific audience on a given issue to achieve a particular end" (p. 9). Using Campbell's definition as a foundation, the rhetorical act is the media's creation of news stories and editorials to overcome the obstacle of understanding how we persuade voters to vote for a particular candidate.

In providing a framework, Campbell (1996) discusses the importance of strategies in discourse and how they are one route for "speakers and writers" to achieve some of their stylistic goals (p. 297). In this regard, Campbell describes a strategy as a "plan of action, a maneuver designed to overcome the obstacles in a particular rhetorical situation" and states that strategies are used to "cope with controversial and complex issues" (p. 297). Detroit's daily newspapers needed specific strategies to speak to Detroit voters, strategies they believed would pique their interests and raise their emotions. "Strategy" is also one of the elements of Campbell's framework, although other useful elements include "purpose," "audience," and "persona and tone" (pp. 24, 387). For example, for what "purpose" did media use certain rhetorical strategies? For this analysis, I suggest that the DN and the FP wanted to persuade voters about the significant issues of the campaign and advise them of the candidate who could best address those issues. The "audiences," of course, were the readers of the two newspapers. The "persona and tone" that the media tried to portray was authoritative, objective, impersonal, and fair. Further, I believe that the media wanted voters to believe they were merely observers, conscientious reporters, or bearers of the truth. These elements are all important, but most important for this research project are the strategies used by media. Campbell (1996) argues that strategies help achieve a purpose, and, for this project, race and gender were the

strategies that helped the media achieve a purpose.

In Detroit, race and gender issues have historically been controversial topics. As an example, during the years that Coleman Young was in office, race was one of the primary issues addressed in media. As discussed previously, there was an ongoing effort by both newspapers to show the polarization that existed in the area. Young was described as being responsible for the divisions that existed between Blacks and Whites and between city and suburbs. What better strategy for presenting the most important issues for Detroit and the best mayor in this regard than to use the very same issues that already divided Detroiters, issues that were already strongly felt in the minds of residents of the Detroit metropolitan area. Using these strategies, the media could perhaps present themselves as unbiased, innocent purveyors of useful information that would allow voters to chose the best candidate. Thus, Campbell's (1996) information concerning the necessity of a framework for identifying important elements in a campaign, especially strategies, is useful in the following analysis.

Comprehending Media's Ability to Influence

Before providing examples of the DN and the FP use of race and gender in their reporting strategies, it is important to understand more about what research has shown concerning the ability of media, e.g., newspapers, to set agendas or to determine which issues are important in a campaign. There is still debate concerning whether newspapers like the FP and DN are capable of setting agendas (Iyengar, 1988; Swanson, 1988). There is, however, considerable research that clearly shows that newspapers, along with other media, are more than just innocent, unbiased bystanders who merely report on campaign events and issues (Kosicki, 1993; McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Rogers and Dearing, 1988).

One of the reasons newspapers have so much interest in political campaigns is that newspapers today are no longer "mom-and-pop" operations. Rather, many newspapers like the DN and FP are now owned by conglomerates. The DN, for example, is owned by Gannett; the FP is owned by Knight Ridder. Profit seem to be the engine that determines the direction of media and the slant of their news stories. The former Chief Executive Officer of Gannett stated that "Wall Street didn't give a damn if we put out a good paper...they just wanted to know if our profits would be in the 15-20 percent range" (Hamilton & Krimsky, 1996, p. 29). In fact, Gannett's mission statement, which no doubt is also reflected in the policies of the DN, states that its "first priority" is to increase profitability, and wants "increased return on equity and investment" (p. 29). Hamilton and Krimsky wrote that "Gannett develops news and layout formulas it expects all of its papers to follow" and that editors from all the newspapers meet "regularly to critique each other's product, a group-think process that reinforces the inclination to conform" (p. 57). They also stated that in the United States, newspapers are a "highly profitable" business (p. 23). Thus, it could be argued that the economic factor can be a strong reason for having a political agenda.

Family newspapers or locally-owned newspapers have been forced, in many cases, to sell out to large corporations or go completely out of business. Consequently, a newspaper today is probably run by some corporate executive whose primary responsibility is guarding stockholders' interests. In fact, many of these executives are offered large incentives to carry out the corporate vision in a manner similar to other large profit-making corporations. Both the DN and FP have been in existence for over 100 years and both were once family-owned. Now they are both part of conglomerates that also include various newspapers across the country. Reporting strategies today, therefore, can easily

be influenced by economics. Sandman, Rubin, and Sachsman (1972) wrote that the economic function of the media is to make money. Wilson and Gutierrez (1994) argue that media have primarily two roles: to meet the needs of the corporate community but at the same time, because they are a private enterprise, to seek revenues and profits (p. 37).

What do the issues of economics and profits mean for newspapers like the DN and the FP? If their goal, similar to that of many other newspapers, is to increase profits and higher stock values, then, quite possibly, they would be more concerned with stories that increase readership and bring in more advertisers. The City of Detroit has lost much of its population, and businesses have been leaving the city in droves, especially in the last two decades. I argue that the media believed, and numerous news stories and editorials implied, that Coleman Alexander Young was in large part responsible for the economic demise of Detroit because of what they perceived as his confrontational manner and his efforts to divide the city and the suburbs (*The Detroit News*, 04/13/92, 01/24/93, 06/23/93; Rich, 1989). Thus, quite possibly their support in the 1993 mayoral campaign would be for a candidate they believed would slow if not stop the business decline in Detroit. The continuous loss of business in Detroit could adversely affect both newspapers because they are both located in the heart of the city. At the same time, both newspapers no doubt understood the role of race in the loss of population in Detroit as a result of the 1967 civil disturbance.

Numerous scholars have researched the relationship between newspapers and profits. For instance, van Dijk (1991) wrote about the close relationship between the press and elite groups in our society. Aufderheide et al. (1997) argue that the very purpose of news is to generate profits. Moreover, they wrote that "news is a business" and that it "has to make a profit" (p. 40). This would apply to the DN and FP. They have to

turn profits, and those profits diminish as they lose readership and as businesses that buy advertising leave the city.

Aufderheide et al. (1997) also wrote that, historically, newspapers were concerned with informing citizens, but their goal today seems to be to increase profitability. Downing, Mohammadi, and Sreberny-Mohammedi (1990) wrote that it is extremely important to understand how "media are connected with economic forces, political processes, and cultural values" (p. 385). Dowling (1989) takes the position that "popular print media do more than objectively report reality. Rather they may exert a great influence on...American attitudes relevant to making important political decisions" (p. 145). Since both the FP and DN are located within the city limits of Detroit, these papers could see an increase in profits if businesses would come back to Detroit, allowing the city to become economically viable once again. The FP and DN, therefore, recognized the role they had to play in the 1993 mayoral election.

This quest for profits by extension included the role of journalists. Boylan (1984) posits that journalists are not only ethnocentric but support the ruling elite. This suggests, according to Breed (1964), that media help confirm common values and avoid pointing out the flaws of major institutions (except when those institutions go against the ideology of the media conglomerate). This, of course, guarantees the continuation of the status quo. In 1939, Harold Ickes, a "New Dealer," stated, "Newspaper publishing and business involvement on a large scale go hand and hand with the result that the press is becoming more and more a spokesman for special interests" (Pilgrim, 1992, p. 4). What does this mean for the FP and the DN? The DN and FP believed that in order to put the City of Detroit on the road to profitability, which could also increase their profits, they had to have rhetorical strategies that would convince voters that one candidate was more desir-

able or favorable. That candidate was Dennis Archer. Scholars have debated for decades whether the media attempt to influence voters in political campaigns, but, overall, scholars "agree on the pervasive influence of media on American society" (Wilson & Gutierrez, 1995, p. 34). Wilson and Gutierrez argue that "this pervasive influence of the media in our society has been amply described and documented by other scholars who have analyzed communication media in modern society." Further, they wrote, "In a media-dominated society...all of us depend on the media...to portray and define those things that we have not personally experienced for ourselves" (p. 34). Most Detroit voters, obviously, had never met Archer or McPhail so they were completely dependent on the media to present the candidates' qualities and to present the issues. The media also had the task of determining the issues that were the most important in the campaign.

Wilson and Gutierrez (1995) also wrote how media behave "when a threat is perceived by the leaders of the system." As a consequence, the media will set out to "portray a consistent message that develops a cohesive opinion of that threat" (p. 35). I strongly believe that as the 1993 mayoral campaign progressed, the DN and FP both viewed McPhail as a threat because she began to identify more and more with the "grass roots" population while Archer identified more with big business. The "grass roots" population could do nothing to increase Detroit's disastrous economic situation, but, no doubt, big business could accomplish this.

Although scholars for fifty years have argued the extent the media can influence readers, many of the skeptics now agree there is influence, although limited. Interestingly, media have more influence over readers when their efforts are to reinforce already-held beliefs. In the mayoral campaign, newspapers no doubt recognized most citizens already had firmly-held beliefs about race and gender, so they used race and gender rhe-

torical strategies to reinforce these beliefs. Wilson and Gutierrez (1995) wrote that "media have their greatest effect when they are used in a manner that reinforces and channels attitudes and opinions that are consistent with the psychological makeup of the person and the social structure of the group with which he or she identifies" (p. 44). Gunther (1998) also wrote that media influence those voters who are still undecided about which candidate to support in an election, and that an uncertain or undecided voter "may decide to go along with his impression of the majority view" (p. 486). This view is learned when the media present polls about the candidate various groups are voting for. In other words, "people learn about public opinion from media coverage" (p. 487). The DN and FP ran several polls showing the preferred candidate for Black and White Detroit voters and the preferred candidate for suburbanites. The DN and FP also decided race and gender were the important issues for the campaign. Archer was the "why can't we all get along" candidate who wanted to extend the olive branch to the suburban White community, while McPhail was perceived as being more concerned about issues that directly affected Detroit residents. It was important to get along with the suburbs, but should this be a greater issue than reducing crime and providing better education and services affecting Detroit's citizens?

Gandy and Baron (1998) wrote that mass media "select, amplify, and redistribute their views in ways that influence not only what we think about, but also how we feel about these things" (p. 506). Noelle-Neumann (1991) argues that "most researchers assume the mass media have a decisive affect on people's conception of reality" (p. 157). So, it can be argued that studies show media do attempt to influence voters. Today's media, however, are not really interested in studies that show they have influence. In fact, past research that argued the media did influence readers was all but ignored by media,

and research in this regard only appeared in academic journals. Noelle-Neumann wrote that in some cases, "the researcher was vehemently discredited in public" (p. 159). Media want to be perceived as "objective" so if some researchers argue that journalists can influence their readers, it creates conflict. When newspapers insist they are objective, that they are not influenced by political ideology, then "their political point of view is inconsequential and the problem of legitimation does not arise" (p. 161).

Not surprisingly, many newspapers today do not disguise their ideology; e.g., the DN makes it perfectly clear in their editorials that they are a conservative paper. Of course, for the Detroit mayoral campaign, both candidates, Archer and McPhail, were Democrats, so the DN had to support the candidate whose belief system most closely resembled a conservative ideology. That candidate was Dennis Archer. Additionally, Sigelman, Sigelman, Walkosz and Nitz (1995) provide research that shows that as far as Whites who vote for Black candidates are concerned, these voters "preferred moderate to more extreme candidates and preferred candidates whose ideological persuasion resembled their own" (p. 62). Black candidates find it easier to gain White support when they are perceived as possessing mainstream values and are more conservative or middle of the road. Archer was perceived as having those mainstream values; McPhail was perceived as combative, confrontational, and more extreme.

Although the Detroit mayoral campaign was a local campaign, it had significance with regard to other political campaigns. Barber (1980), for example, wrote about the enormous power of the media to influence presidential campaigns. To influence votes at the presidential level, to have a professed political ideology, and for a newspaper to be a part of a conglomerate that owns newspapers across the country is scary. That a "handful of men responsible only to their corporate employers" determine what millions read is

cause for concern (Olson, 1994, p. 45). Barber also wrote that journalists are "the new kingmakers" (p. 342). They can analyze the character of the candidates, question their values, and then determine how they connect to voters. The DN and the FP talked about the character and values of Archer and McPhail and then set out to tell voters what they believed were the important issues of the campaign. In this regard Casty (1998) states, "Media create and shape not only the values, taste and attitude and the art and entertainment experience of their audience, but also the patterns of fact and opinion about the world of that audience" (p. 260). Clark and Blankenburg (1973) argue that media decisions often have an enormous effect on society, and they can determine not only what is important but "what opinions are socially accepted" (p. 275). Chomsky (1989) argues that media now go far beyond the role of "watchdog" but serve the needs of those in power.

Race as Rhetorical Strategy

The preceding section revealed there was a significant reason for the media to have a favored candidate and, once chosen, to support that candidate in the way the media knows best—in news stories, in polls, and in editorials. They accomplished this by using race and gender issues as rhetorical strategies. In arguing that local media used gender and race rhetorical strategies in reporting on the 1993 mayoral campaign, it is necessary to consider how media continues to deal with the issue of race. Wilson and Guiterrez (1995) wrote that for many newspapers located in large urban areas, e.g., the DN and FP, their economic strategies have historically had racial overtones. When minority issues are covered, they dwell on the negative, bizarre, or unusual elements, e.g., gangs, drugs, and welfare. So-called racial minorities are usually seen or stereotyped as "problems."

Historically, Blacks and other minorities, as Chapter III of this dissertation revealed, have been outside the focus of mass media and have been marginalized and deemed unimportant except in negative coverage. For example, prior to the campaign, the DN was engaged in writing numerous negative articles about Blacks, specifically negative stories about Black women. Before the 1993 campaign, the stage had been set for race and gender to be used as rhetorical tools in reporting news stories. The DN reported that Black women have more illegitimate children, a higher rate of AIDS, and are on welfare. For example, one story stated that nearly 14 times as many Black mothers as White mothers are infected with the AIDS virus(1/16/91, p. B1). Other stories reported that twice as many Black men are in Michigan jails (1/25/91, p. B3); Black automobile dealers have thin cash reserves and lack experience (1/21/91, p. F1); and Blacks must accept some blame for lack of economic progress (2/25/91, p. B3).

There were also stories that discussed how the Black community "accepts crime and violence" (3/15/91, p. A10), and how young Black males are caught up in the cycle of drugs, crime, and murder (3/19/91, p. A3). The following stories were also reported by the DN: Blacks drop out of college at higher rates (5/31/91, p. A1); Blacks have more health problems because they engage in more self-destructive behavior (5/10/91, p. A8); Black males are an "endangered species," a pejorative usually reserved for animals (6/2/91, p. F4); Blacks are more likely to develop lung cancer (6/20/91, p. B2); dental problems disproportionately affect African Americans (7/8/91, p. F1); Blacks should stop blaming the Government for their woes (9/8/91, p. F1); and, finally, Black males, more than any other group, are living violent lives (9/10/91, p. B1). Black women were described in one story as "obese" and then advised how to combat it. Another story told of how Black women had lost their self-respect (*The Detroit News*, 1/4/93, p. D3; 9/16/93,

p. C1).

The above stories suggest that long before the campaign, Detroit newspapers were race conscious. In fact, in May of 1992, an article appeared in the DN that stated, "Race will be a factor in several Detroit elections that have Blacks pitted against Whites or racially-mixed candidates. The candidates say skin color will not play a role in their campaign but rhetoric suggests otherwise" ("Lip service," 1992). In other words, the media insisted that race would be an issue even after the candidates advised them otherwise. They talked about the rhetoric of the candidates, but ignored their own rhetoric that insisted race would be a factor.

In looking at the media's reporting strategies involving Dennis Archer and Sharon McPhail, there is evidence that the media were using race rhetoric before the campaign was fully underway, and particularly before McPhail announced her candidacy. For example, in July of 1992, an article appeared on Archer that stated some of his critics do not think he is "Black enough" ("They are wrong about Dennis Archer," 1992). Since I was monitoring the stories on Archer, I was surprised to read this. Which individuals, beside his so-called "critics," were saying Archer was not "Black enough"? Pete Waldmier, a journalist for *The Detroit News*, lamented that only the "suburbs and exurbs" saw Archer as a popular candidate ("Archer's problem," 1992). Columnist Bob Talbert wrote that some Black people in Detroit would have a hard time being convinced that Archer is "their candidate" (*The Detroit News*, 11/22/92, p. G6). Clearly, then, before most of the candidates announced they were running for mayor, race was being used as a rhetorical strategy by Detroit's daily newspapers. The use of race, of course, would sometimes be obfuscated in other language, e.g., "suburbs," "businesses interests," etc.

In addition to presenting race as an early issue, journalists for the DN quickly be-

gan to identify having the support of business as important. For example, to show Archer's immediate support from the business community as opposed to McPhail's grass roots support, a September 1992 story reported that Archer was quietly attracting prominent businessmen and the support of civic leaders. Why it was necessary for Archer to "quietly" attract businessmen was not discussed (*The Detroit News*, 9/3/92, p. A1). Another story identified a White businessman who decided to move his business back to Detroit based on the *possibility* that Archer would be elected mayor ("Archer's mayoral bid," 1992). It is important that media emphasized Archer's strong support from business because the previous mayor, Coleman Young, was blamed for numerous businesses leaving the city.

The record is clear that race was injected into the campaign before Sharon McPhail even entered the race, although in a final analysis of the campaign, *she* was accused of injecting the race issue. A survey conducted by Market Strategies, Inc. concluded "McPhail invoked the issue of race in the campaign by trying to pit the suburbs against the city" ("Detroit by the numbers," 1993). This comment, incidentally, is extremely important because it implies a nexus between the word "race" and the words "suburbs" and "city." Therefore, if McPhail was invoking the issue of race when she used the term "suburbs" or "city," then the media were unwittingly acknowledging that they, too, were invoking race whenever they used these terms. To state it more specifically, when the media used "suburbs" or "city," they really meant "White" or "Black." So, issues involving race, city and suburban issues, and business concerns were established long before the Archer/McPhail campaign began. In fact, these issues, as the historiography reveals, have always been issues for both the DN and the FP.

In the early months of 1993, numerous articles in Detroit's newspapers discussed

Archer and his relationship to the suburbs as well as his support by the business community. Note that an article appeared in February in the DN that detailed Archer's monetary support from suburban contributors (2/2/93, p. A1). Later that same month, Archer provided to the news media a list of prominent business leaders who supported his campaign, including the Chairman of K-Mart Corporation and Edsel Ford II (2/24/93, p. A1). Archer also had a $500-a-couple fundraiser in March (3/14/93, p. C2). Needless to say, few so-called "grass roots" Detroiters attended. In May, business people from Grosse Pointe, including the mayor and the *Grosse Pointe News*, contributed $20,000 to Archer's campaign (5/3/93, p. B1).

In August of 1993, the DN ran a poll that showed "Detroit voters overwhelmingly perceived Dennis Archer as the mayoral candidate favored by suburbanites" ("Suburban support isn't a negative factor," 1993). Inquisitive minds might ponder why the DN would use a poll that indicated Archer was favored by suburbanites, when suburbanites could not even vote in the election. This is also an example of how media may have used code words such as "suburbanites" instead of "Whites" to prevent it from appearing that the newspapers were developing race as an issue. Interestingly, after creating these issues before McPhail had officially announced she was running for mayor, the DN would quickly report these issues as "race-baiting" or "playing the race card" when they were used by McPhail. For instance, in a debate between Archer and McPhail in October of 1993, the DN discussed how race-baiting and city-suburban relations were prominent in the debate. Journalists for the DN also quickly jumped on the race and city-suburb issue. Jon Pepper, a journalist for the DN, for example, wrote about Archer's relationship with suburbanites (Whites) and then concluded he was the best qualified for mayor. Another story discussed Archer's ability to build coalitions between even the most disparate forces

("Racism in any venue," 1993; Campaign trailers, 1993). These news stories seem to suggest that the writers at the DN were using cleverly disguised race rhetoric in support of their preferred candidate. An article by Aleksander Kropiwnicki took this one step further. He surmised that for McPhail to accuse Archer of being supported by outside interest (the suburbs) is tantamount or reminiscent of the charges communists used against the people of Poland. He stated, "It reminds me of the unfounded charges that the Communists often used against people in my native Poland and which people in former Soviet bloc countries still use to smear people running for elected office" ("Unfounded attacks," 1993).

When Archer officially announced his candidacy for mayor in November 1992, he immediately found it necessary to defend against charges that he was a "silk-stocking lawyer" who was "out of touch with the average Detroiter" ("Archer takes campaign to the streets," 1992). Again, this was before McPhail had entered the race. These perceptions did not materialize out of thin air, but rather, numerous articles on Archer's support from business, his membership in a prominent law firm, and his being a former Michigan Supreme Court Justice helped forge his image.

Race was the most important issue in the campaign whether it was presented as a Black versus White issue or the more subtle city versus suburbs. McPhail was accused early in her campaign of invoking race in the campaign, but McPhail did not create the race issue nor is she alone guilty of perpetuating the race issue. Race has long been used by both the FP and the DN in a city polarized by race long before McPhail (and long before Coleman Young), although journalists at both papers have blamed Young for racial polarization in the Detroit Metropolitan Area. Did the FP and the DN use rhetorical strategies involving race to persuade or influence voters? There are numerous stories that

dealt with race in the 1993 Detroit mayoral campaign starting with the early article that stated Archer was not "black enough" ("'They' are wrong about Dennis Archer," 1992). Almost a year later, Jim Holly, a Detroit Minister, raised the issue again and condemned Detroiters who believed Archer was not "black enough" ("Holly rakes Young over the coals," 1993). A story in September 1993 discussed how Archer raised the majority of his campaign money from "suburbanites" (DNF, 9/5/93, p. A1).

After winning the primaries, a story told of McPhail talking about Archer's White" support, but that she was *not* going to play "racial politics" ("Archer vs. McPhail," 1993). A few days later, DN journalist Pete Waldmier wrote an article that chided the candidates for worrying more about "who's blackest/whitest" as opposed to worrying about the city ("Archer, McPhail should drop the black-and-white bit," 1993). On September 24, Archer admitted he supported Justice Clarence Thomas, at least initially, *because he was Black* ("McPhail jabs foe's support of Thomas," 1993). Bob Talbert wrote a story that said "his sources" told him that Blacks think Archer is a phony (*The Detroit News*, 10/3/93, p. F7). In another story, both Sharon McPhail and Dennis Archer agreed that race was one of the "most pressing problems" in the city, along with crime, jobs, education ("A plea to Detroit's mayoral candidates," 1993).

One thing is certain from the above research: one single person cannot be blamed for the injection of race into the 1993 mayoral campaign. Obviously, there is enough blame to go around, but only the media had the power to present the information to voters, since the majority of voters never personally met with either candidate. One has to wonder why, in a predominantly Black city, race should be considered the most important issue in a mayoral campaign. Is race the primary issue in cities that have predominantly White populations? Are politicians who run for mayor in suburban communities of De-

troit advised that the criteria for getting elected include their ability to peacefully co-exist with the City of Detroit? Was Brooks Patterson of Oakland County elected because of his ability to get along with Coleman Young? An analysis of news stories written by the DN and FP clearly shows they used rhetorical strategies that suggested that race was an important issue, especially the issue of the importance of getting along with the suburbs. Once these issues were introduced, the candidates took full advantage of these issues in their campaigns.

Gender as Rhetorical Strategy

Both race and gender were issues in the campaign, and a feminist perspective can help identify these issues. McPhail, however, had achieved goals many women had not achieved—lawyer, Wayne County Prosecutor, Police Commissioner—so the gender issue was not as pronounced in the campaign as it might have been in other campaigns involving women. She was not the "traditional" sit-at-home mom who suddenly decided to run for office. Gender strategies, however, were clearly part of the campaign and adversely affected McPhail.

From the beginning, McPhail was linked to Coleman Young. Even before she announced her candidacy, articles about her always managed to mention Young, and the day after the election, a special article appeared about the making of a mayor. Of McPhail it was written, "As a female, you've got to be seen as effectuating a relationship, and not be seen with anyone holding your hand." The media made sure McPhail was seen as "holding someone's hand" when she was always associated with Coleman Young. Her decision to not announce her plans to run until Young retired or decided against another term was also used against her. After the election, a story in the FP stated that

Archer had "established his independence by leaving the State Supreme Court to launch his campaign" ("Dennis Archer stands out," 1993). Of course, the story failed to mention that, unlike McPhail, who was single-parenting, Archer had left the Court after being offered a high-paying job at one of Detroit's most prestigious law firms. His wife Trudy was a judge and could economically support his run for office, and Archer was already receiving support from businesses that wanted him to run for mayor. Was Archer really independent?

The rhetorical strategies identified here are those that tried to portray McPhail as the "weaker sex," as inferior to her male opponent. McPhail's constantly being compared to Young gave the impression that she was dependent on Young and that she did not have her own autonomy and identity. Thus, she was perceived by some as weak because in this culture women are often perceived as weaker than men, especially when they are running for an office that has never been held by a woman. Even before Young endorsed McPhail, media linked her to him at every opportunity. This served a two-fold purpose: As a woman, she could not run independent of a man, and her identification with Young gave the impression that she was a stooge of Coleman Young. One FP reader, in revealing why he voted for Archer, stated, "We don't need a female Coleman" ("Archer triumphs," 1993). In the first 10 stories that appeared in the DN about McPhail, eight mentioned her name along with Young's. Young was also described as McPhail's "long-time mentor" (*The Detroit News*, 1/17/93, p. C1) and McPhail was a "staunch supporter of Young" ("Ex-Young ally plans kickoff," 1993). Interestingly, Archer had actually worked on one of Young's campaigns and had also been a strong supporter of Young, but the media did not tie Archer to Young. So even though Archer and McPhail had similar backgrounds in politics, McPhail, because she was a woman, was considered

dependent on Young, while Archer was viewed as independent.

Some of the not-so-subtle gender discussions started with McPhail being described as "the best known female mayoral candidate" and stated that she was going to Washington to "shake the women's money tree" ("McPhail looks for campaign funds," 1993). None of the male candidates were ever described as the "male candidate" and they never "shook the men's money tree" when receiving contributions from male businessmen. Another article stated that McPhail's "biggest strength was her gender" ("Archer vs. McPhail," 1993). The gender issue that garnered the most publicity, however, was the Barbie doll incident. McPhail was labeled an "overassertive Barbie doll" by the wife of one of the candidates that did not survive the September primary, Paul Hubbard ("McPhail and Barbie collide," 1993). This reference was no doubt an attack on McPhail's long, thick hair, her height, and the fact that most men around town thought she was pretty. Barbie is an inanimate object, a puppet, if you will, that has to be manually manipulated by a human in order for her arms, legs, and head to move. McPhail was also being compared to a puppet whose strings might be pulled by someone else.

This issue would have no doubt dissipated except for the fact that a few days later, the FP, coincidentally they said, juxtaposed a picture advertisement of a Barbie doll next to an interview with McPhail. A week after the issue ran, a DN journalist wrote about the incident and how "Barbie" was now a part of the campaign. The news media, of course, did not make the original Barbie doll comment, but they certainly capitalized on the issue. I would suggest there is probably no one in the entire readership of the FP who believed the picture of Barbie next to the McPhail interview was not by design and on purpose. A feminist perspective has been useful in identifying those news stories that used rhetorical strategies that trivialize women.

McPhail, throughout the campaign, was described as "aggressive," a term usually reserved for strong women. She was also described as "strong-willed" and "arrogant" (*The Detroit News*, 10/21/93, p. T4). One story less than two months before the election said that in order to defeat Dennis Archer, McPhail was going to have to persuade more men that she should be mayor. In the September 14 primary, only 24% of men had voted for McPhail compared to 33% of women. Political columnist George Weeks, however, wrote in this regard that "gender loses significance when specific issues come into focus" (*The Detroit News*, 10/28/93, p. B2). Another poll highlighted that McPhail's support among women had eroded "despite her stepped-up attacks" ("Archer lead continues," 1993). What "stepped-up attacks" have to do with eroding support from women is unclear.

The FP also reported on a racial harassment lawsuit filed against McPhail and other members of the Wayne County Prosecutor's office. McPhail was prominently featured in this story even though she was not the primary defendant. The story described the person who filed the lawsuit as a "black woman" and interjected, "McPhail, who is black" ("McPhail named in lawsuit," 1993). This apparently was stated to make sure that everyone made the connection that a *Black* woman was filing a racial harassment suit against another *Black* woman. Although this was a gender issue, it was also a subtle way of questioning McPhail's "blackness" and grass roots loyalty. Many of the issues that McPhail encountered were simultaneously gender and race issues as this incident suggests.

The FP also reported on an incident at one of McPhail's campaign appearances involving a reparation activist named Raymond Jenkins. Jenkins asked her if she was married to a White man because, if she were, she would "take orders from this white hus-

band." Apparently, Jenkins not only had problems with intermarriage (race), but he also felt McPhail had to take orders from a man, also making it a gender issue. Her response to Jenkins was brilliant, however. She stated, "I was married once to a white man, once to a black man. And neither one of them worked" ("McPhail warns of influence," 1993).

Another gender issue, although it was couched as a race issue, involved McPhail's daughter and her problems in school. Very little was revealed about Archer's family except his was reportedly the ideal family. McPhail, as a single parent, was severely criticized when it was reported that she tried to enroll her daughter, Erika, as a "White" student at a Southfield school. McPhail denied this accusation. ("Dilemma for biracial children," 1993). This story, however, probably attempted to show voters that Sharon McPhail was not the "grass roots" candidate, since she apparently did not want her daughter going to Detroit schools. Another aspect of the race issue raised its head in this incident—the issue of multiracial children. McPhail's second husband and father of Erika was White. McPhail also has White ancestry, including a White Irish grandfather. How should McPhail identify her daughter racially? The media's preoccupation with race did not, however, cause them to address the issue of what it might mean to McPhail's daughter to be multiracial or ask the question relative to McPhail's dealing with the Black and White issues within her own family. It might be suggested that her ability to deal with Black and White issues within her own family would ideally suit her and better prepare her for dealing with race issues in the community.

At this juncture, it should be noted that McPhail helped to sustain some of the race and gender issues in the campaign. For example, her campaign slogan was, "You Go, Girl!" This was popular slang at the time and thought to be chic, but it helped perpetuate the image of McPhail as "girl." The term "girl" is condescending when it is used

with reference to an accomplished and highly-educated woman. Another FP story discussed how McPhail was called a "girl" in some circles but it was not meant to be derogatory. This story related how men, particularly older men "have a hard time taking women seriously as executives" ("Election '93," 1993). There were no stories justifying Archer being called a "boy" with a journalist saying "but it was not meant to be derogatory."

Initially, McPhail sought to capitalize on her gender because of the high number of women voters in Detroit. In the end, an article that appeared in the FP after McPhail lost the race summed it up appropriately. "One of the slogans of McPhail's campaign was 'You Go, Girl.' On Tuesday, a sign circulating through the Prosecutor's Office was meant as a sarcastic comment to her race. The sign said: 'You Go(ne), Girl.'" ("Archer's win sets new course," 1993). I must add it was also a sarcastic comment to her gender.

In August of 1993, a FP journalist wrote a story entitled "McPhail gets reminded she's different." The byline might prompt some readers to ask the following questions: How is Sharon McPhail different? Is something wrong with her? Why is McPhail "different" but Archer is not "different"? Feminist rhetorical criticism addresses how men have always been viewed as "the norm," and when women go outside of the roles society has bestowed upon them, they are referred to as "different." The journalist wrote that in addition to McPhail being the lone woman in a race that initially included seven mayoral candidates, she "has borne the brunt of several demeaning, sexist incidents during this year's campaign" ("McPhail gets reminded," 1993)). Paul Hubbard's wife Georgia said McPhail was "not very feminine at all," while John Conyers, Jr., another candidate, said she was "so pretty, so attractive and intelligent, that it isn't funny."

Sharon McPhail was aware that gender rhetoric was being used against her. In

one instance, McPhail used the term "political sexism" to describe how she had been treated and stated this treatment had prevented her from raising money and buying political ads "like her male counterpart." The story also discussed how most female candidates have a problem getting voters to take them seriously, and there is usually more concern about their clothes or their hair. Interestingly, there were no comments on Archer's lack of hair. McPhail said during the campaign that men as well as women had made comments about her looks. Some would say her skirt was too long and others would tell her it was too short. One man told her that even though he believed that she was the smartest person running for mayor, he could not vote for her because she was a woman ("McPhail gets reminded she's different," 1993). Another article suggested that McPhail's "gender and dramatic looks sometimes worked against her" and that when campaigning at auto plants, some of her own campaign workers would actually tell the workers to come and "shake hands with the pretty lady" as opposed to the next mayor of Detroit ("The making of a mayor," 1993).

Jon Pepper of the DN also got into the gender discussion when he wrote that he was surprised how tough Black leaders were on Dennis Archer because Archer could serve as a Black role model for young Black men who were disproportionately unemployed, victims of crimes, and involved in criminal activities ("Election will show," 1993). Apparently, Pepper did not see McPhail as a role model for young Black women and never even addressed the issue. Of course, it was out of the question that Pepper could visualize McPhail as a role model for young Black men because he could not see past her sex.

In addition to the "Barbie doll" story, the "Aunt Jemima" story also received a lot of press. In reality, the Aunt Jemima story involved both gender and race, and McPhail

was responsible for creating the issues surrounding this story. After not receiving the positive press she hoped from Black female journalists, she referred to some of them as the women "on the pancake box," a reference to Aunt Jemima. It was meant, of course, as a reference to female Uncle Toms or those who follow the bidding of the "master" (in this case, the *Detroit Free Press*). The FP management responded immediately by having one of its Black female reporters write a story that seemed to imply Sharon McPhail was insulting all Black women who had worked so hard as domestics to support White families and their own families. Columnist Susan Watson, a Black woman, wrote, "Aunt Jemima is more than a picture on a pancake box. She is every hard-working, self-sacrificing, weary and yet hopeful African American woman ancestor who suckled other people's children while nurturing a dream of freedom for her own." She wrote that Aunt Jemima is "our symbol" ("A symbol all right," 1993).

Most historians of Black women's history are aware that images of Black women such as Aunt Jemima, or the "mammy" figure, were created by Whites and had nothing to do with their hard work nor their sacrifice (Davis, 1983; Fox-Genovese, 1988; hooks, 1981). The symbol was meant to demean, to prove inferiority. Watson, however, presented an effective argument to the contrary, including her comment that "Aunt Jemima's skin is black as the soothing night sky," and if we do not approve of her, we devalue all that is Black. She then told McPhail, "Don't mess with Aunt Jemima" because by doing so, she insults all Black women. Needless to say, McPhail's skin was not "black as the soothing night sky" and Watson no doubt made that particular comment to resurrect the skin color issues that have always divided African Americans. This story perhaps opened old wounds, especially in Detroit where light-skinned Blacks were often called "elites" by darker-hued Blacks. McPhail had already been accused of race-baiting and being a racist

toward Whites, and now Watson had raised the issue of light-skinned Blacks vs. darker-skinned Blacks, and McPhail once again found herself in the middle of controversy.

Rhetorical Strategies of the Michigan Chronicle

The *Michigan Chronicle* (MC), a weekly local newspaper, also reported on the Archer/McPhail mayoral campaign, and its rhetorical strategies are useful to this research because it provides an example of how a newspaper that has historically focused on the African American community reported on this campaign. This is useful because both candidates identified themselves as African Americans. An analysis of news stories and editorials in the MC can address whether they used rhetorical strategies similar to those used by the DN and the FP. The MC, unlike the DN or the FP, had a limited staff and was also limited in its investigative reporting abilities.

Even though the African American community was basically divided as to its support of Archer and McPhail, the MC endorsed Dennis Archer. Based on an analysis of news stories that appeared in the paper during the campaign, the MC did not, for the most part, use race and gender as major rhetorical strategies. In the year before the campaign took place, 1992, one article appeared in the MC that profiled McPhail along with several other persons, including Archer, who were "vying to become Detroit's next mayor" (11/25/92, p. A1). Three articles appeared about Archer in that same year and the reporting was merely informative. One story suggested Archer was "in for the fight of his life in his bid for the coveted position of Detroit's mayor" (11/25/92, p. A1).

In January 1993, the MC showed how Archer discussed a racial issue and said Detroit's problems were directly related to Detroit's lack of Black-owned businesses and that the "city's revitalization depends on more black business and depends on these black

businesses being supported" (1/6/93, p. A1). I found no articles in the DN or FP where Archer spoke so poignantly about the importance of Black-owned businesses. On September 1, 1993, the MC reported the "racist campaign" that was going on and Archer being charged with not being "black enough" (p. B10). Perhaps one might debate whether Blacks calling another Black "not black enough" is racist, but the MC described it so. Of course, the major dailies described it similarly.

A news story in the MC reported that Archer was discussing plans for new development in the city (3/21/93, p. A1). The paper also reported that Archer was also focusing on transportation and employment, two important issues for the residents of Detroit, since they had seen so many jobs leave the city for suburbs they could not get to (10/6/93, p. A1). Another story detailed how both candidates, Archer and McPhail, were invited to an association of Black businesses and contractors that was concerned with the loss of City of Detroit minority set-asides (10/6/93), p. A9). The MC did report on issues that involved African Americans or their organizations, but these stories were not meant to create tensions among the races, as many of the stories in the DN and FP attempted to accomplish. For instance, one story discussed bringing together members of the public and private sectors "as a driving force to community renewal" (10/27/93, p. C5).

Stories about Archer in the MC were more about addressing the needs of the Detroit community. In fact, after Archer was elected mayor, an article appeared that stated one of the major challenges facing Archer was how to "convince city residents to do business within the city limits" (11/10/93, p. A6). The MC's focus was entirely different from the daily newspapers. Its stories seemed, for the most part, to be more concerned with the issues facing Detroit and Detroiters. This was true regarding both candidates.

Stories about McPhail talked about her goal to target neighborhood development

(3/3/93, p. A1). Another story discussed how McPhail believed President Clinton's Economic Empowerment Act could help the City of Detroit (8/18/93, p. A7). McPhail was also mentioned, along with Archer, in the story that discussed the importance of transportation and employment as well as the story that discussed the mayoral candidates being invited to a symposium to address the needs of minority businesspersons in Detroit (10/6/93, p. A9). There were, of course, negative stories about McPhail in the MC, specifically concerns about her inaction on certain issues involving the community when she was a police commissioner. Another reported on a campaign worker being pushed aside after McPhail won the primary and discussed how McPhail had "lost sight of her goal" (10/27/93, p. A1). When this campaign worker sued McPhail for $2,562 in back pay, the MC also published the story (11/10/93, p. A1). At the same time, the MC did not report on Archer's sexual harassment case.

Overall, the MC's role in the campaign was extremely limited, especially since the newspaper came out only once a week, and the major campaign involving McPhail and Archer lasted less than eight weeks. The stories that were reported, however, showed that the MC's rhetorical strategy for reporting on the campaign did not use race and gender as wedge issues, although they did write more negative stories about McPhail. They endorsed Archer, but stories talking about race, gender, bridges to the suburbs, and support from White voters were absent. Interestingly, on the same day that the MC endorsed Archer, a news story appeared in *The Detroit News* that stated that the MC's endorsement of Archer gave him a "grass-roots boost" ("Nod from Chronicle," 1993). *The Detroit News* argued that the *Chronicle's* support showed Archer had widespread support in the community. Of course, this argument is somewhat laughable when it is also considered that this same MC supported the election of Republican John Engler as governor. So

much for "grass roots." Additionally, the MC also has a remarkably low readership in a city of over one million people, the majority of whom are African Americans. Its average distribution at that time was less than 40,000 copies per week. This also says a lot about the *Chronicle's* importance to Detroit's African American community as a whole and about its ability to influence voters. Its reporting methods and strategies, however, are important for this study because they provide an example of how alternative newspapers reporting on the campaign contrasted with the methodology and strategies used by the DN and the FP.

The Making of a Mayor

In November of 1993, Dennis Archer was elected Mayor of the City of Detroit, and the use of rhetorical strategies clearly influenced the outcome of the campaign. Not only were these strategies used during the mayoral campaign, but it is apparent from the historical record that race and gender had always been a part of the DN and FP reporting strategies. Early in the campaign, the media showed its preoccupation with race under the guise of "suburban relations" by asking all of the original candidates about the suburbs. The candidates were queried about the number of friends they had living in the suburbs. They were also asked what they liked about suburbia, and how much of their time was spent in those environs. An article written two days after the election stated that "race made the difference" in the campaign and that the "size of Archer's victory came from white voters." Race made the difference even more than socioeconomic status, according to an article in the DN ("Detroit mayoral outcome," 1993). In predominantly Black districts, regardless of income, McPhail received a higher percentage of the vote over Archer. Archer took the most votes in districts that had a high percentage of White vot-

ers. The story stated that McPhail's loss was also due to McPhail being more confrontational and Archer more conciliatory.

Did journalists play a role in encouraging White voters to vote along racial lines and in encouraging Black voters to vote for a candidate that could peacefully co-exist with the suburbs? Were these some of the rhetorical strategies used by the DN and the FP? I have provided numerous examples to suggest this may have been the case. In the days before the election, journalists made their plea to voters. Bob Talbert, for example, wrote a story about how the FP has changed in the last 25 years concerning the way it treated Blacks. He wrote that it was the biggest change he had seen—and, by the way, Archer was better suited for mayor ("Voices of Blacks become varied," 1993). The FP also endorsed Archer because he had "placed proper emphasis on inclusiveness and conciliation" without, of course, saying who he was including or who he was being conciliatory toward. They also spoke of how Archer had recognized the need for "regional cooperation." Appallingly, they wrote that Sharon McPhail had engaged in "confrontational, often coded, us-against-them campaign rhetoric" without acknowledging that their ink-stained hands, too, were soiled in this regard ("Voices of Blacks," 1993).

The media identified McPhail as being more preoccupied with race and using it as a wedge issue. Archer, on the other and, was usually described as being supportive of business and as wanting to build bridges to the suburbs. This, too, involved race, but the FP and DN did not associate Archer with race-baiting ("McPhail cites foe's White support," 1993). Even when McPhail stated clearly that she did not want to engage in racial politics in the campaign, Jon Pepper wrote a story the very next day saying McPhail was using race as an issue (*The Detroit News*, 9/17/93, p. E1). Editorialist George Cantor wrote that McPhail would be all too willing to "continue business as usual in the city"

and his idea of business as usual was the continued polarization between the city and the suburbs, between Blacks and Whites ("If you look into McPhail's character," 1993).

In discussing race and McPhail, John Gallagher wrote in the FP that McPhail, "rather than embracing Archer-style coalitions, tends to emphasize neighborhood empowerment programs and self-help efforts" and that her programs have a "strong flavor of African-American self-determination" ("Visions for development," 1993). Even Oakland County Executive Brooks Patterson was prominently featured in the FP when he proposed to have a mock fundraiser for McPhail. He was quoted as saying, "Her strategy is to paint Archer as a tool of white suburban interests who would sell out predominantly black Detroit" ("Patterson supports McPhail," 1993). This is a clear example of race-baiting and "playing the race card." Meanwhile, McPhail continued to deny that she was injecting race into the campaign.

Archer was not shy about using the race or gender issue when it was to his advantage, although he, like the newspapers, would sometime use code words like "suburbs" and "businesses." There is, however, an example of Archer attempting to embarrass McPhail over the race issue. At a mostly all-white function, attended by both Archer and McPhail, Archer "attacked" McPhail for questioning his "blackness." Even the news story written about the event stated how surprised the writer was that Archer "curiously declared" this and at the time he did. Apparently, Archer had learned the value of using race. McPhail responded, "This is neither the time nor the place for Mr. Archer and I to spar about commitment, who's blacker than who" ("Detroit candidates carry campaign to suburbs," 1993).

Summary

The issues of gender and race permeated the campaign, but the use of these issues cannot be attributed to one woman. McPhail, the media, the initial mayoral candidates, and even Dennis Archer focused on race and to a lesser extent gender. In this regard, the question must be asked: Why did the media pick Dennis Archer instead of Sharon McPhail as their preferred candidate? Both candidates had similar backgrounds and, in the beginning, pushed similar programs. Somewhere along the way, however, race and gender became issues, and efforts were made to find everything in McPhail's background that could hurt her run for office. Perhaps McPhail lost support of the daily newspapers when she announced her candidacy and said that "They may try, but the newspapers will not choose our mayor." She went on to state, "Not by their implied endorsements of other candidates. Not by their explicit accusations or by trivializing what we have to say" ("McPhail declares a run," 1993). McPhail challenged the media at this time, and it appears that, as a result, the newspapers took advantage of every opportunity to provide negative coverage of her. Using a feminist perspective to analyze the rhetorical strategies used by media in reporting on both McPhail and Archer appears to support this hypothesis.

The 1993 Detroit mayoral campaign was arguably one of the most exciting political events to occur in Michigan in the last quarter of a century. Detroiters, the suburbs, and even many outstaters saw themselves as having a vested interest in this event. The campaign was of special interest because the previous mayor, Coleman Alexander Young, had created so much controversy for the region. Many had even accused Young of race-baiting and of racially polarizing the region. Although I question whether Young was the lone purveyor of race-baiting or that he alone was responsible for the division

between Blacks and Whites, it is clear that the 1993 campaign for mayor was overwhelmed by the ghosts of racism and sexism. Detroit's own history guaranteed that race and gender would be issues in the campaign, especially when the lone female candidate won the primary over several male candidates, including a U.S. Congressman.

I strongly believe that Detroit's daily newspapers ensured both issues would be at the forefront of the campaign by their ongoing reporting on news stories about race and gender, stories that would encourage voters to see these issues as important. This was especially true when media were able to interchangeably use the terms "race" and "city and suburbs." This campaign concluded by arguing who was better able to build a bridge to the suburbs or, more correctly, who could get along better with White politicians and White businessmen. Detroit's White voters were convinced this was an important issue and so were many of the Black voters. As a result, Detroit now has a mayor that the suburbs are especially fond of but, at the same time, a city that still has problems collecting the garbage, keeping the street lights on, educating its children, and clearing the streets and sidewalks of snow.

Feminist criticism, in conjunction with the theoretical foundations of critical race theory, has been instrumental in allowing news stories to be examined and analyzed to identify and determine how race and gender issues were used as rhetorical strategies. Journalists and editorial writers at *The Detroit News* and *The Detroit Free Press* may argue that they merely reported the news about the campaign, but a careful analysis appears to indicate they may have gone beyond merely reporting by their deciding which issues received more attention and their deciding which issues were important to voters.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

When Coleman Alexander Young announced his decision not to run again for mayor of the City of Detroit, it was the catalyst for one of the most polarizing, divisive, yet interesting and exciting campaign in the last quarter century. It was a campaign that Detroiters, suburbanites, and outstaters were all interested in, but those who had the most power over the outcome of the race were local media, specifically *The Detroit News* and *The Detroit Free Press*. Through the pages of these newspapers, Detroit voters and other interested parties gained much of their information about the candidates who survived the primary election in September of 1993: Dennis Archer and Sharon McPhail. Voters also learned which issues were deemed important from these newspapers.

A feminist perspective with the theoretical foundation of critical race theory was extremely useful for identifying not only gender-related issues but also the interconnection between race-related issues. Numerous incidences of gender-related issues were discovered throughout the campaign, with some voters admitting openly they did not want to vote for McPhail because she was a woman. Even voters who had no problem voting for McPhail were influenced by negative stories that were exposed about her primarily because she was a female. The DN and the FP, I will argue, may have used gender and race rhetoric to create an image of the candidate they believed would influence the voters in their decision-making. This was engineered not only by running certain news stories, but

by conducting polls that told readers which issues should be important. When the actual election day finally came in November of 1993, McPhail had been firmly identified as a candidate who was confrontational, a candidate who played the "race card," and a candidate who was not interested in "building bridges" to the suburbs. McPhail was also identified as the "champion to the inner-city masses." Archer, on the other hand, was identified as the "bridge-builder to Detroit's suburban neighbors" ("Detroit Mayoral Outcome," 1993).

Race was also later identified as making the difference in an analysis of the election race. White voters overwhelmingly voted for Dennis Archer. Blacks, on the other hand, regardless of socioeconomic status, equally divided their vote between McPhail and Archer. The question must be asked: What caused White voters to vote en masse for Archer even though Archer and McPhail had similar backgrounds? Both grew up in mix-race neighborhoods, both went to college, and both became attorneys. Both worked at one time or another in prestigious law firms, and both Archer and McPhail had worked with Coleman Young. McPhail had been married and divorced twice and was the mother of two children. Her second husband was White, and her daughter Erika was identified as multiracial. How did Sharon McPhail end up being portrayed as a "race-baiter" and responsible for interjecting race in the mayoral campaign? I will suggest that the DN and the FP played a significant role in this regard by using certain rhetorical strategies involving both race and gender that affected McPhail negatively.

Many months before McPhail entered the race for mayor, the issues of race and city and suburban relations were often hot topics. For example, Pete Waldmier, a DN journalist, wrote that Archer was enjoying much suburban (White) popularity six months before McPhail entered the mayoral race (6/15/92, p. B1). This is clearly a statement that

interjected race into the campaign. A few weeks later, a story was written that said some of Archer's critics did not think he was "black enough." Another story stated that Archer would have a hard time convincing Blacks he was "their candidate" (*The Detroit News*, 7/10/92, p. A11: 11/22/92, p. G6). Thus, race and the city vs. suburbs were firmly entrenched issues in the metropolitan area *before* Sharon McPhail entered the race. When she first announced her decision to run, she received a lot of favorable responses. In fact, her early coverage was favorable or at least neutral, although from the beginning she was identified as a Young supporter. Most of her early coverage, as detailed in Chapter IV, always mentioned Coleman Young somewhere in the story. This hurt McPhail because Young had been for many years described as being antagonistic toward the suburbs or, more specifically, toward Whites, even though Young had numerous White friends. One story was entitled "Young Likely Sees Himself in McPhail," although the story never mentioned that Young stated he saw himself in McPhail (1993). This statement and the story itself were, quite possibly, media creations. Unfortunately, only McPhail carried all the negative baggage associated with Young, even though Archer had been Young's General Counsel for his 1981 reelection campaign. Archer had also sought Young's advice and financial support.

When McPhail not only won the primary and began to make a respectable showing in the polls, the situation changed considerably as far as her news coverage was concerned. Within a week, a story came out alleging McPhail was being named in a racial harassment lawsuit brought on by, of all persons, another Black woman. Although other Wayne County employees were named in the lawsuit, the focus in the story was Sharon McPhail, and this story was not good news for her campaign. If she was trying to win the Black vote, especially the Black female vote, it did not bode well that she allegedly ra-

cially harassed another Black woman.

One of the biggest mistakes made by McPhail was to allow herself to fall into the race and gender trap that was set for her. She had used the dreaded code words for race—"suburbs" or, in another instance, "*they're* getting ready to take the city back" ("McPhail warns of influence of suburbs," 1993). Archer also tried to capitalize on the race issue. For instance, at one function Archer said that "suburbanites" had torn up homes and businesses to create freeways, and "When *they* left, we didn't say to *them*, 'If you want water, go dig a well'" ("McPhail travels to boost coffers," 9/20/93, p. 1B). Archer, more than McPhail, always seemed to get away with remarks like this because DN and FP journalists did not repeat them over and over again. McPhail's problems in this regard were repeated over and over, and her perceived lack of interest in creating bridges but interest in inserting race was also emphasized. Her use of "they" or "suburbanites" was always interpreted as a race comment. Archer, on the other hand, was reported on differently. When it was discovered that he had been involved in a sexual harassment lawsuit that he settled out of court, the DN and the FP reported on the story once in a small article and then, for the most part, ignored the story after that. They claimed it was because they could not find the person who had filed the lawsuit. Sexual harassment, especially of a White woman by a married Black man in a racially-charged and polarized region, should have been big news or should have at least been investigated more than it was, but it seemed the male-controlled news media let the story drop.

When a claim was made that a GOP lawyer had engineered Archer's mayoral bid, little research was made into the allegation, although the story was reporting on initially ("Archer denies there was a deal," 1993). The allegation charged that in 1991 Archer left the Michigan Supreme Court because he was recruited by one of Detroit's most prestig-

ious law firms specifically to run for mayor. Interestingly, Archer, in his defense, said this was untrue and that he joined the firm because he admired their commitment to *minorities*. This firm, incidentally, after Archer was elected mayor, was given a city contract. Again, the story was reported once and basically ignored after that. No investigative journalism was involved. Where McPhail's daughter went to school, however, was reported over and over again. In fact, when the FP endorsed Archer, the paper spoke of McPhail's "troubling personal conduct" as one of the reasons for endorsing Archer. They made no mention of Archer's "troubling personal conduct," specifically the sexual harassment case he settled out of court. Why this type of case would be settled out of court, especially one involving a potential politician who clamed he was innocent, is cause for concern, but more important, it begs the question why media would not pursue this incident if they were truly interested in one's *personal conduct.*

I believe McPhail had an excellent chance of being elected mayor, but the rhetorical strategies used by the DN and FP in reporting on the campaign, especially with regard to race and gender issues, negatively affected her campaign. She must also share blame, however, because she took advantage of race and gender issues when she thought they would benefit her. This was similar to how Coleman Young often took advantage of the race issue for his benefit. It can be argued that McPhail hoped to get the majority of the Black vote by exploiting the city versus suburbs issue. Did she, however, use words such as "suburbs" or "suburbanites" to really refer to Whites? McPhail had been a resident of the suburbs and was obviously aware the "suburbs" are not the White enclaves they once were. After all, 50% of her friends lived there. She must also have been aware that when she used the term "city," that the "city" included 175,000 White registered voters at the time. Those of us who live in the city clearly recognize the presence of the White popu-

lation that still resides here. Regardless of what McPhail understood or meant in her use of these terms, however, the DN and the FP were able to successfully portray her in such a way that she lost the overwhelming majority of the White vote in Detroit. It might be suggested that this is what the media had in mind all along—to influence the White minority in Detroit when they recognized Detroit Black voters might split their vote.

Interestingly, a few days before the election, a news story appeared that basically notified the city's 175,000 White registered voters that they could make the difference in the election because they were 30% of the total registered voters in Detroit ("Whites may tip scales," 1993). I believe this direct appeal to White voters was the most flagrant example of "playing the race card" by the news media, although they are more inclined to accuse others of "playing the race card." After Archer won the election, a news story reported, "The city's black community voted like majority voters; they split their vote almost equally between two candidates rather than voting as a bloc for just one. Meanwhile, the city's white voters voted like minority voters and swung the election to Archer, despite being outnumbered by black voters by better than a 4-1 margin" ("Detroit by the numbers," 1993).

The preceding chapters of this dissertation analyze how Detroit's daily newspapers used certain rhetorical strategies involving race and gender to present their preferred candidate as the best candidate for mayor of the City of Detroit. Specifically, it was the goal of *The Detroit News* and the *Detroit Free Press* to elect Dennis Archer for mayor over Sharon McPhail. The analysis showed that quite possibly these print media engaged in more than reporting the news about the campaign, and may have set out to tell voters what were the most important issues facing the city, and identified who they believed was the best candidate to support these issues. To carry out this agenda, they created specific

issues. Based on some of the news stories that appeared during the campaign, they seemed to conclude that getting along with Detroit's suburban neighbors was a priority. In this regard, they also wanted to make one candidate (Archer) appear more responsive to these issues, while portraying the other candidate (McPhail) as being opposed not only to building bridges to the suburbs, but as a person who engaged in race-baiting, thus focusing on race as a campaign issue. To further defuse McPhail's popularity, the news media focused on gender issues. McPhail was initially the favorite of many women, but media, through stories about Aunt Jemimas and Barbie dolls, eroded McPhail's support.

I have argued in this dissertation that I believe the DN and the FP had a mission, an agenda, if you will, to create a candidate. Race and gender issues have been used in the past by media, and their use has sometimes created controversy in the city. What more appropriate strategy than for them to present news stories that made one candidate appear cordial and friendly to the suburbs, e.g., Whites, while presenting the other candidate as hostile and racist? This study has addressed two research questions in this regard: (1) In what ways do rhetorical strategies used by the DN and the FP in their news stories and editorials focus on gender and race issues in their coverage of the Detroit mayoral campaign? (2) In what ways did agenda-setting operate to influence journalists and editorial writers in determining which issues in the campaign were deemed important to voters? The following addresses each of these questions.

Focusing on Race and Gender

In response to the first question dealing with the ways the DN and the FP used rhetorical strategies, it was apparent that throughout the campaign numerous news stories were powered by gender and race issues. In fact, media tried to make McPhail the race

scapegoat by arguing that she had introduced or injected race into the campaign. Historical records and contemporary information are clear on this, however. The media, e.g., the DN and the FP, have *always* used race as a rhetorical strategy. They have also used race in conjunction with gender over the years, as Black women in particular have been presented stereotypically in news stories. Before Sharon McPhail entered the Detroit mayoral race, even before she was born, the Detroit media was guilty of portraying Black women negatively. In more recent years, Black women have been described as welfare queens, as the primary reason for the so-called underclass because they have many illegitimate children, and as women who do not want to work. This line of reporting continued during the campaign when media focused on McPhail's problems as a single parent and with news stories about Aunt Jemimas and Barbie dolls.

Influencing the Campaign's Outcome

The unstated agenda of the DN and the FP was to play a significant role in getting Archer elected mayor. In this regard, they created an atmosphere using rhetorical strategies that benefited Archer and negatively affected McPhail. They orchestrated this agenda in such a way that many persons did not realize they were being manipulated or influenced by media, or that the issues presented as important issues were in reality manufactured by media. Was building bridges to the suburbs more important than curbing Detroit's rampant crime rate or fixing Detroit's abysmal educational system? Was it more important than turning on street lights or regularly collecting garbage? Was building bridges more important than providing living-wage jobs for the citizens of the city? Without question, a positive relationship with suburban communities is important, but a clean, safe city with an educated and working population goes a long way toward building

bridges and allows a city to negotiate rather than ask for handouts.

The effort by media to influence voters was not merely a superficial effort nor was it merely about reporting "business as usual." Feminist rhetorical criticism, used with the theoretical foundations of critical race theory, clearly identified an orchestrated effort to influence voters. This methodology helped to expose the media's effort to demoralize, marginalize, and trivialize one of the candidates in the mayoral race who happened to be a woman (Hart, 1997). It revealed how the candidates were treated differently because of their gender, e.g., McPhail's appearance was addressed much more often than the appearance of Archer; problems in McPhail's family life were magnified, while Archer's family was promoted as the ideal. This was all part of a media effort to present Archer as more closely resembling and representing "America's value system."

Race was also an important tool or strategy used by media to influence voters and to promote their agenda, and using the theoretical foundations of critical race theory helped identify how race was constructed for this campaign in ways similar to how it has traditionally been socially constructed in American society. The media's efforts in this regard are part of a time-honored effort by many of America's institutions to help maintain the status quo. Critical race theorists have identified race as "the most explosive issue in American civilization" and identified how it has been "negotiated in American consciousness" (Crenshaw et al., 1995, pp. xi, xiv). These theorists have also alerted us to "the realities of racial politics in America" (p. xxvii). Thus, although race has been socially constructed, it was very much a reality for many during the Detroit mayoral campaign. Race was made the most important issue of the campaign because media clearly recognize the explosive nature of race. Race was "just sitting there" in the consciousness of metropolitan Detroiters, waiting for media to use rhetorical strategies to disturb that

consciousness and exploit the one issue that has divided this country from its very beginning. The DN and the FP were no doubt aware that race could be a deciding factor in the campaign, and that how individual candidates chose to deal with the issue of race in a racially-charged and polarized environment could be their "nail in the coffin" or their route to being elected mayor.

The use of race as a rhetorical strategy helped engineer the direction of the campaign, specifically toward issues that are rarely addressed in suburban political campaigns. The media's decision to use race as a rhetorical strategy, just as their use of gender as rhetorical strategy, was not by chance but a carefully designed methodology for influencing voters' decision-making processes. It was artfully articulated to an audience that believed it was merely being provided information about the campaign.

Finally, the tenets of feminist rhetorical criticism and critical race theory provide tools to identify why and how the use of gender and race can help maintain a system built on male patriarchy, and as a result, it is the goal of this dissertation to not only identify those gender and racial strategies but to also make voters aware of them. Detroit voters should not be denied the opportunity to vote on issues that affect their lives, and they should be provided information that helps them make an informed decision about the candidate that best addresses their needs as Detroiters, as opposed to superficial race and gender issues that block the way.

Implications for Research

There are several implications generated by this research, and among them is the media's conviction that it was necessary for them to be involved in the election of a mayor. This necessity to be involved was no doubt a result of their understanding that the

position of mayor of the City of Detroit is a powerful position especially from an economic standpoint. Detroit is not unlike a major corporation in this regard. In fact, Coleman Young compared the city to a $2 billion corporation ("Archer has a lot to learn," *Detroit Free Press*, 11/13/93, p. 1A). The mayor not only has control over a city airport, a zoo, and police and fire unions contracts, but he is also responsible for 15,000 employees and 7,000 vendors. The media are not immune from the power of the mayor because both newspapers are located within the city limits and can be affected by its economic situation. As an example, in the past few years the DN and the FP have been hampered by an ongoing labor dispute and have been deeply concerned about the ability of newspaper unions to feed off the solidarity of the collective union movement in Detroit. The media have also been concerned with the privatization of city services, a move that would cripple unions and affect city workers' jobs. Needless to say, they were interested in a mayor that would be friendly to privatization. Since Archer was the more conservative candidate for mayor, they no doubt assumed he would be more responsive to privatization efforts. For McPhail, with her grass roots support, a similar position was not an option. City unions are extremely powerful, and the demise of these workers through privatization would take away negotiating power from other union groups, including newspaper unions.

Another important implication of this research is the knowledge that media's attempt to influence Detroit voters had national ramifications. Detroit is not only the largest city in Michigan, it is one of the largest cities in the United States. If local media's interests in a mayoral campaign were strong enough to cause them to influence the outcome, then media on a national level would no doubt have similar interests in national elections, e.g., if race and gender rhetorical strategies can influence the outcome of local

campaigns, then similar strategies can be used to influence presidential campaigns, especially since race and gender are issues important not only to Detroit, but are the most pressing issues facing America as a whole. In fact, the race issue was already used in a national campaign in the form of "Willie Horton." Wicker (1996) wrote that "George Bush's successful presidential campaign of 1988 unabashedly played the race card with the famous Willie Horton commercial" (p. 188). Further, he added that "Black and white candidates in other volatile races have been tools willing to 'play the race card'" (p. 188).

The importance of the Detroit mayoral race went beyond local boundaries because the DN and the FP were part of national conglomerates that maintained newspapers in cities around the country. The economic health of a local newspaper owned by a conglomerate is important for both local and national managers. The success of the local paper ties directly into the success of the conglomerate. The DN and the FP were concerned that their physical environment was deteriorating because of the loss of business to the suburbs and the loss of readership by the people they wanted their advertising to reach. The print news media, then, recognized the importance of rebuilding the city and bringing suburbanites and businesses back. Media were also cognizant of the need to change the image of the city—from one that was perceived as not welcoming Whites to one that courted their return. The DN and FP saw all of these things being realized with the election of Dennis Archer, a man who was not perceived as being intimidating or threatening and whose ideology more closely matched the ideology of the writers at the newspapers. Additionally, in the last two decades, Detroit's publicity nationally, if not internationally, has been negative, and these negative images have prevented businesses from relocating here and have prevented Detroit from being elected as a convention site. The right mayor could make a difference in this regard.

Another implication of this research is that it reveals how race and gender issues are still topics that move Americans to action and are still very much a part of the rhetorical strategies used by newspapers to achieve a specific goal. In the Detroit mayoral campaign, that agenda was the election of their preferred candidate. Even though society frowns on overt acts of racism and sexism, race and gender issues can still be used subtly to create those tensions that still reside deep in the hearts and minds of many people. For Blacks and women, race and gender constantly remind them of their being perceived as "different" by society and, in some cases, inferior. For Whites, race is a constant reminder that they live in two societies and that many of them are the descendants of persons who once enslaved Blacks and discriminated against them. This research attests to the fact that rhetorical strategies involving race and gender can easily resurrect these conflicts and can be used to define the preferred candidate. Case in point: McPhail and Archer started out as similar candidates with similar backgrounds. Yet, at the end of the campaign, they were perceived as two very different individuals. One was now the preferred candidate of Whites, and the other was now the race-baiting candidate. Interestingly, the candidate portrayed as a race-baiter who was unable to get along with the suburbs was the same candidate who. in an interview with the FP, had stated that half her friends *lived* in suburbs. This answer was in response to being asked, "What percentage of your friends live in the suburbs?" McPhail's percent of friends who lived in the suburbs was greater than any of the other candidates, including Archer ("The Suburbs," 9/11/93, p. 6A).

Gender and race continue as wedge issues in our society. That Barbie dolls and Aunt Jemimas were connected with Sharon McPhail in the 1993 mayoral campaign is a cogent example of this. The feminist perspective identified this connection and how gen-

der and race were operating in this campaign. Specifically, it revealed how McPhail was reported on differently because she was a woman and because she was a Black woman. That race and gender issues were used by media to basically destroy one candidate's chance of winning shows the importance of using a feminist perspective, in conjunction with the tenets of critical race theory, to identify the media's efforts in this regard.

Gender, in and of itself, was significant in the mayoral campaign. In a sense, the gender issue even affected Archer because McPhail was seen as having the more traditional masculine qualities, e.g., straightforward, loud, arrogant, combative. Campbell (1989) called this "confrontational" and "assertive rhetoric" (p. 190). Archer, on the other hand, seemed to utilize a more feminine approach as far as his rhetoric was concerned. In fact, Archer's rhetorical style had a similarity to what Campbell (1989) referred to as "feminine style" (p. 190). Some female speakers used this style of speaking in the nineteenth century so that they did not offend anyone in a society that looked down on women who spoke in public. Campbell described feminine style as a style of speaking that "invited audiences to become active participants in defining social wrongs and finding remedies" (p. 190). This was more representative of Archer's style of *inviting* the suburbs to join with him in solving problems. Archer was characterized as "judicious, restrained, and conciliatory" ("Archer triumphs," 1993). Another story described Archer as "the voice of conciliation and healing" ("Deep problems," 1993). Still another article stated he "placed the proper emphasis on inclusiveness and conciliation" ("Dennis Archer stands out," 1993). Consequently, the style of both speakers was reversed from the historical and traditional roles of male and female speakers. An implication of the research, then, is that a feminist perspective helped identify the differences in the rhetorical styles of the candidates.

The connection between conglomerates and local media is another implication of this research. If local media can influence local elections, then local media owned by conglomerates can influence local voters in national elections. They can do this by using similar rhetorical strategies to persuade voters to choose a particular national candidate. As an example, if race and gender issues are hot topics in the Detroit area, then the same rhetorical strategies that use race and gender can be used to sway Detroit area voters in their choice of candidates in national elections. In other words, a national candidate could be portrayed by local media as doing too much for one group of people, or this media could use rhetorical strategies to show the candidate's inability to build bridges. If conglomerates have the power to control the politics in numerous American cities using certain rhetorical strategies unique to a particular area, this power must be identified and voters must be made aware of the media's abilities in this regard. These newspapers' verbal architects must be held accountable for their words and even condemned for their attempts to influence and manipulate news rhetoric as opposed to merely reporting the news or saving the editorializing for the editorial pages.

One unexpected outcome of this research is that it showed what happens in a predominantly Black city when two African Americans are vying for the same position. What happened in Detroit is similar to what happens when the President of the United States is elected, for example, or when a governor is elected in a predominantly White state. In these instances, the candidates are usually White, and the majority of those who vote for them are also White. Only when the White vote is divided is the minority vote significant. Only then can they pool their votes to tilt the scales in favor of the candidate that addresses their needs. I argue that the Detroit election showed how White voters joined together to defeat the candidate they perceived as not being concerned about their

interests. Future research could also address this issue in more depth by using additional tools, e.g., surveys. What African Americans and other minorities do on a regular basis, then, is not so very different from what Whites do when they are in the minority—a situation which, of course, does not happen often in this country. Detroit is one of the few large cities in American that has an active, albeit small, White voting population. This dissertation showed the importance of using local elections to determine if media attempted to influence voters, but it also revealed some interesting information concerning voting patterns when Whites were not in the majority.

This research also showed the implications of using feminist rhetorical criticism and critical race theory as a theory/methodology for understanding the role of media in the Archer/McPhail mayoral campaign. Research into this campaign required both perspectives. Feminist criticism was useful for identifying certain gender issues, e.g., how "rhetorical text becomes gendered and how such gendering blinds audiences to some realities" (Hart, 1997, p. 287). It also helped in understanding how women's voices are often ignored or marginalized, and identified how media in Detroit tried to use gender issues to pursue their agenda. Feminist criticism, however, even when it acknowledges the interconnection of race, still focuses primarily on gender or, more specifically, on issues facing women. Women are, therefore, at the center of this perspective.

Thus, there is a need for critical race theory in this research that acknowledges the importance of also accepting race as a focus. This theory allows us to view the social construction of race, to understand its "reality," and how race issues can be used to accomplish certain agendas. It compels all of us to confront race and its end product, racism. Important for this project, it must be asked whether the media used race merely as a rhetorical tool to influence the outcome of the Archer/McPhail campaign or whether

they were engaging in racist practices. I also question whether the media were also being sexist in their use of gender strategies. Specifically, was it racist or sexist to want Archer elected mayor? While initially "riding the fence" on this issue, I have at this moment concluded that, yes, the media were being both sexist and racist because their effort to influence the election was an effort to maintain the status quo of the predominantly male and predominantly white power structure in Detroit as opposed to relinquishing power to a grass roots community. Maintaining this power in Detroit is also a piece of the puzzle that maintains this power nationally.

Further implication of this theory/methodology is that it has forced me to ask the tough questions about race and the tough questions about gender. It has allowed me to see how media play a significant role in the subordination of people of color and women. This theory/methodology has prevented me from ignoring the issues of race and gender for this campaign and has also made me aware of the importance of not just identifying rhetorical strategies involving race and gender but doing something constructive in this regard. My personal effort to accomplish this starts with this dissertation.

Limitations

This dissertation did not address how national media observed or reported on the Detroit mayoral race, nor did it address what suburban newspapers reported on the campaign. Quite possibly, suburban newspapers could have provided additional insight into the important issues of the campaign and what these newspapers and their readers thought of the candidates. They could have provided information concerning whether they used the same type of rhetorical strategies in reporting on the status of the campaign to their readers. In other words, were suburbanites as interested in building bridges to Detroit?

Did they favor Archer's rhetorical style, or did they like McPhail's "take no prisoners" approach? Also of importance is that most of the suburban newspapers were not owned by national conglomerates so they were free to make their own editorial decisions. Thus, use of these newspapers would have added another dimension to the research.

Another limitation of this dissertation is that it does not prove that the media tried to influence voters based on some agreed-upon pact made in a "smoke-filled backroom." It can only be argued that an analysis of news stories and editorials, both historically and during the campaign, showed that certain rhetorical strategies were used. These strategies, I will suggest, may have been used because of the effects they have had historically on the Detroit community. Since media would probably never acknowledge they purposely set out to influence voters, critical thinkers might very well conclude this was the case based on the historical and contemporary evidence. Moreover, after personally following the Detroit media's reporting methods for many years, I strongly believe the media tried to influence the Detroit mayoral election. I clearly understand and want to convey, however, that my observations and arguments concerning the actions and motives of the DN and the FP are speculative.

There is also an absence of malice on my part in this research, as I seek only to better understand the role of media in political elections and contribute to the body of knowledge already available on the subject. I believe it is important that more scholars look at the role of media in political campaigns using feminist rhetorical criticism, along with the theoretical foundations of agenda-setting and critical race theory. As more women and persons of color enter the political arena, it is possible that media will use even more rhetorical strategies concerning race and gender, especially if they find they are successful in getting a particular candidate elected. This type research can also serve a

social function in that it can alert voters to media becoming more involved in who gets elected in this country.

Just as the First Amendment of the United State Constitution gives the press freedom to chose certain rhetorical strategies, that same amendment "empowers each of us with the right to communicate with one another using the power of our speech, the ability to petition, and to assemble and distribute our message" (Samuels, 1996, p. 106). As a communication scholar, I do not seek to abuse the power given me by the Constitution but I do seek to use it.

I must also acknowledge that there are also limitations in using a single feminist/race approach for this or any research project because it forces researchers to focus on unique aspects of a campaign while "closing our eyes" to what may be other issues that might also be significant. I believe, however, that identifying the issues of race and gender and how they were used as rhetorical strategies were the first steps in deconstructing the 1993 mayoral campaign. Focusing on race and gender made me also realize, however, that not enough attention was being directed toward the implications of the media's increasing power as they continue to merge and form conglomerates, and their continued big business interests influence of on news reporting. In this regard, Aufderheide et al. (1990, p. 59) wrote:

> We live in the shadow of that corporate monolith extending ever upward into the sky. Corporations have been called private governments and they are becoming the state. The financial power of companies explode around us. The small issue of news quality is probably not even on the corporate radar screen. Conglomerates only grow greedier and fatter for their own purposes.

Future Research

Future research that compares campaigns in other cities would be useful in determining how media attempt to influence voters. This would be especially informative if

the comparisons were made in cities that, like Detroit, have mixed race populations and candidates who come from different racial or ethnic backgrounds. Particularly useful in this regard would be an analysis of campaigns in cities that have newspapers that are owned by conglomerates, as opposed to local or family-owned newspapers, to show the difference or similarity in rhetorical strategies in covering political campaigns. Considerable research has been carried out on national campaigns (Barber, 1978; Hart, 1987; 1984), but more research into local campaigns can provide insight into media that are more closely identified with the community and the candidates. The importance of additional research in this area is emphasized by Hart (1993) who wrote, "I believe that our mass media are a genuine threat to political life in the United States" (p. 23). Blumler (1997) suggests that, "Mass media have also emerged 'as an autonomous power center' in reciprocal interaction and competition with other power centers" (p. 397). As conglomerates take over more newspapers, this power will be increased. Identifying influence on a smaller scale can assist in identifying efforts to influence at a larger, national level. Since a significant number of local media these days are tied into national conglomerates, it is possible for them to conclude that, if certain strategies work in smaller arenas, these same strategies can be expanded to larger environments.

Additional research into the influence of media should focus more on interdisciplinary approaches. A quantitative analysis, as an additional tool, can provide useful statistical insight. Denzin (1970) argues that "when a hypothesis can survive the confrontation of a series of complimentary methods of testing, it contains a degree of validity unattainable by one tested with the more constricted framework of a single method" (pp. 26, 27). Reinharz (1992) argues that a multi-methodological approach can be useful because combining methods can help "illuminate previously unexamined or misunderstood expe-

rience," and that use of multiple methods can "increase the likelihood of obtaining credibility" (p. 197). Brennen (1992) believes that the use of multiple methods forces researchers to "confront the tensions between different theoretical perspectives" (p. 33). Expanding the research methodology can significantly add to the body of research on media influence. Rhetorical criticism, in and of itself, is a powerful tool in this regard, and adding quantitative analysis, for example, could make the analysis even more acceptable, especially for a media and a public that rely so much on polling for much of their own conclusions about campaigns.

Race still matters. There needs to be more research into the race rhetoric found in newspapers. The use of race as a tool or even as propaganda in legitimate media cannot be ignored. This research is especially warranted in a society fixated on race. In reference to this, Rich (1989) wrote about Detroit and its political campaigns. He argue that "making issues of race absent from Detroit politics is impossible, and herein lies the dilemma of the city's politics" (p. 22). He also states that "the most regrettable characteristic of Detroit politics has been the persistence of racism" (p. 177). Rich wrote this in 1989; the Archer/McPhail campaign occurred in 1993. Thus, if indeed McPhail injected race into the 1993 mayoral campaign as the media claimed, she was merely following the political status quo, and, as a result, she became another victim of Detroit's racial politics.

The similarities between race rhetoric found in newspapers and that found in hate literature should also be researched and analyzed. Further research should investigate how print media have played a pivotal role in perpetuating negative images of marginalized groups and how they have carefully disguised oppressive language that basically sends similar messages to readers as do those of hate groups, e.g., Black women being welfare queens with numerous children. Jewell (1993) wrote that mass media are the

"instruments of those who control private capital" and who have "systematically proliferated cultural images of African American women that attribute their depressed socio-economic status to individual and cultural deficiencies" (p. 17). Jewell wrote that hate groups often use many of the stereotypes perpetuated by media to embellish their hate rhetoric, rhetoric that has even been used to incite violence (p. 20). Therefore, research that identifies the "thin line" between stereotyping by media and racist rhetoric of hate groups must be pursued.

Although race is usually discussed in conjunction with racism, Afshar and Maynard (1994) demonstrate the importance of expanding the conversation beyond the limited confines of racism. One can be explored without necessarily having to refer to the other. They also argue that we should "question the assumption that 'race' is necessarily and always experienced in a negative way" (p. 2). Moreover, they wrote, "It can also provide a positive context for celebration" (p. 2). To use race as a rhetorical strategy does not automatically assume the intention is to be racist or that there are racist underpinnings. This study has suggested, however, that media are not afraid to commandeer race as a rhetorical strategy in whatever form; therefore, research is demanded in this area for the benefit, if not betterment, of society.

Gender still matters. We talk of a color-blind or a gender-neutral society but the possibility of either seems far into the future. For now, research should continue to involve the role of gender in campaigns, especially since the number of women running for political office is increasing. These campaigns should be analyzed to discover how rhetorical strategies are constructed to focus on gender issues. Research in this area can show how gender issues can be used against female candidates, and, quite possibly, how they can be used to help a female candidate get elected. Mistakenly, in the early days of

the campaign, many believed that McPhail's sex would help attract the female vote.

Feminine style was briefly discussed in this dissertation because of the way the male and female candidates in a sense reversed traditional male/female speaking and language styles. Archer, for example, was identified as using "feminine style" as opposed to McPhail's confrontational, aggressive style. Further research into Archer's use of feminine style can help provide an understanding of what Campbell (1989) had in mind when she wrote that feminine style "is not today, a style exclusive to women" (p. 12). Also, why was McPhail's style totally different from that of Lucretia Coffin Mott, a nineteenth century women's rights activist, who "avoided egregious violations of taboos against female rhetorical aggressiveness"? (p. 45). Additional research in this area will help to determine if indeed political candidates develop certain rhetorical strategies to appeal to certain audiences.

The above shows there are numerous opportunities for future research involving local and national media, political campaigns, and race and gender issues. Research into these issues can benefit not only the Communication discipline but society itself.

Dissertation Summary

The 1993 Detroit mayoral campaign was an excellent example of how race and gender can be used by media to influence elections. The campaign also revealed that race and gender issues are still two of the most important issues facing Americans today. I conclude this project, however, by stating that the most important thing I have learned in this research (aside from the belief that news media are powerful enough to determine outcomes of political campaigns) is the knowledge that White voters are not so unlike Black voters when they are in the minority. This is a significant revelation for this proj-

ect. Blacks, who are members of a numerical minority group in this country, are often criticized for voting as a bloc in national elections, but, interestingly, White voters, who were and still are the minorities in the City of Detroit, decided to vote for the candidate they believed represented their best interests as a group. For all minority groups, including Blacks, their votes often appear to sink into irrelevance because the majority population has the numbers to basically decide the outcome of elections. Minorities can demonstrate their power, however, when they act as swing voters, especially when the majority is divided. This occurred in the 1993 Detroit mayoral election. The minority White population in Detroit believed that their best interests as a group were served by Dennis Archer, the candidate who would build bridges to their White brothers and sisters in the suburbs, and so they voted for him in overwhelming numbers. It should not go unstated that approximately half of Detroit's Black voters apparently agreed.

In this critical analysis of the rhetoric used by the Detroit news media, I have made a sincere effort to fulfill the goals of the rhetorical critic that Campbell (1989) identifies. She argues that the "aim of the rhetorical critic is enlightenment" (p. 2), and I hope I have enlightened others and provided a foundation for further research into the use of rhetorical strategies by Detroit's news media.

Campbell also argues that it is the job of the critic to show how a rhetorical act "has the potential to teach, to delight, to move, to flatter, to alienate" (p. 2). To this I will also add the critic has the potential to influence and to persuade, and possibly to harm—as this analysis of *The Detroit News* and *The Detroit Free Press* has shown.

As of this writing, Dennis Archer is still mayor of Detroit after being re-elected in a landslide victory in 1997 by a majority of White *and* Black voters. Of course, some will argue that the landslide victory was more a result of a less than formidable opponent

rather than a populace enamored of Archer. Many of the local issues of 1993 remain: there are still problems with keeping the street lights on at night, the roadways are still not cleaned on a regular basis, and many neighborhoods contain numerous abandoned houses. Complaints continue to be filed about garbage pickup, and recently, Archer was severely criticized for not adequately clearing the streets of snow after a major snow-storm. There have been changes, however. For example, three casinos are now being built in the heart of Detroit, although many in the grass roots community oppose them, especially since Archer did not chose a Black-owned casino. General Motors Corporation bought the Renaissance Center, Detroit's premier office structure on the Detroit River, and made it its world headquarters. New businesses are popping up here and there. The historical Hudson's building was imploded, leaving Detroit's only rapid transit system, the People Mover, damaged in its wake. Personal observation is that Detroit really has not changed significantly for the average Detroiter, and the polarization that existed in 1993 continues, although Archer personally is more warmly received in suburban communities than the previous mayor. The recent approval by Republican Governor John Engler and a Republican-controlled legislature in Lansing, Michigan, to give control of Detroit's school to Dennis Archer has met with opposition and renewed charges of racism. Many of the residents of Detroit see it as an attempt by Whites to control the voting rights of Detroiters. These developments and Archer's choice of majority White ownership for all three casinos have resulted in a grass-roots effort to recall him. Additionally, the mayor is again charged with being the mayor for big business and the suburbs, and a Governor Engler confidant.

The saga continues.

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ABSTRACT

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE RHETORICAL STRATEGIES USED BY THE DETROIT NEWS AND THE DETROIT FREE PRESS IN THEIR COVERAGE OF THE 1993 DETROIT MAYORAL CAMPAIGN

by

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December, 1999

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This dissertation identifies and critically examines the rhetorical strategies used by Detroit's two major daily newspapers, the *Detroit Free Press* and *The Detroit News*, in their coverage of the 1993 Detroit mayoral campaign. This project specifically addresses how gender and race issues were incorporated into the rhetorical strategies used by the newspapers in their respective attempts to influence Detroit voters' choice for mayor of the City of Detroit.

This study uses feminist rhetorical criticism as a methodology along with the theoretical foundations of critical race theory and agenda-setting to analyze the rhetorical strategies used by the daily newspapers in their comprehensive campaign coverage and as a tool to assist in understanding why gender and race issues figured prominently in the campaign and also to identify biases where they exist. Additionally, this method was employed to isolate those instances where gender and race were used in tandem, e.g., one of the candidates, Sharon McPHail, suffered from the historical dualism of gender and race discrimination.

This research contributes toward a clearer understanding of how print media can and have utilized certain rhetorical strategies in an effort to persuade voters to choose the individual the newspapers believe is the preferred political candidate. My fervent hope is that this study will lead to a better understanding of the role of gender and race in communication and will encourage communication scholars to continue research into the rhetorical role of media in political campaigns.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

Sonja Stokes Gildon grew up in Illinois and attended Chicago public schools. She is married, the mother of one son, and is currently a Michigan resident. She is a full time employee of Ford Motor Company and has pursued all of her education by attending night school. Sonja briefly attended Marygrove College before transferring to Wayne State University. She first received an interdisciplinary degree, graduating Summa Cum Laude, and went on to obtain a Master of Arts degree in Labor History before pursuing her current field of study in Communication. Sonja is a member of the Golden Key National Honor Society and also the Phi Alpha Theta International Honor Society.