

Moore of Feminine Style: A Rhetorical Examination of
“Wednesdays with Beth”

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Abstract

Beth Moore is a best-selling author of books and Bible studies, a speaker to crowds that fill places like the Georgia Super Dome, as well as an international speaker, a radio and television personality, and she is achieving this milestone as a woman, in a world lit with male stars. Through all of these venues it is estimated that Moore speaks to hundreds of thousands of people each year. One of Moore's most recent ventures is speaking on *Life Today* with James and Betty Robison. Each week features an episode of "Wednesdays with Beth." Using Karlyn Kohrs Campbell's theory of feminine rhetoric, five episodes of this show will be studied to see if they contain the five characteristics of feminine rhetoric. The five characteristics of feminine rhetoric are: the speaker relies on personal experience and extended narrative, the speaker speaks to the audience as peers, the speakers invite audience participation, the speaker creates inductive arguments that lead to generalizations, and the speakers create identification with and empower their audience. Through this study, it has been determined that Beth Moore is a feminine rhetorician and each of the characteristics appear in each of the five episodes.

Key Words: Beth Moore, Wednesdays with Beth, Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, Feminine Rhetorical Theory, evangelism, complementarianism, feminist

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Table of Contents

Chapter One

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Introduction | 1 |
| Justification of Study | 2 |
| Defining Terms | 3 |
| Research Questions | 6 |
| Introduction to Beth Moore | 6 |

Chapter Two

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| Literature Review | 9 |
| Karlyn Kohrs Campbell | 15 |
| Feminine Rhetorical Theory | 20 |
| Conclusion | 21 |

Chapter Three

| | |
|---|----|
| Methodology | 22 |
| Feminine Speakers Rely on Personal Experience and Extended Narrative | 24 |
| Feminine Speakers Speak to the Audience as Peers | 24 |
| Feminine Speakers Invite Audience Participation | 24 |
| Feminine Speakers Create Arguments Inductively that lead to Generalizations | 25 |
| Feminine Speakers Create Identification and Empower Their Audiences | 25 |

Chapter Four

| | |
|--|----|
| Results | 27 |
| Episode One: “The Mercy Seat” April 4, 2006 | 28 |
| Episode Two: “Filled to the Measure” September 5, 2007 | 29 |
| Episode Three: “To Know and Be Known” November 11, 2009 | 29 |
| Episode Four: “Wrecked, But Not Ruined” November 2, 2011 | 30 |
| Episode Five: “Our True Selves” September 11, 2013 | 30 |
| Personal Experience and Extended Narrative | 31 |
| Speaks to the Audience as Peers | 36 |
| Invites Audience Participation | 38 |
| Creates Arguments that Inductively lead to Generalizations | 42 |
| Creates Identification and Empowers Their Audiences | 45 |

Chapter Five

| | |
|-----------------------|----|
| Discussion | 53 |
| Research Question One | 61 |
| Research Question Two | 64 |
| Further Study | 68 |

| | |
|--------------|----|
| Bibliography | 74 |
|--------------|----|

Chapter 1: Introduction

“Beth Moore might just be the best-known evangelical the wider world has rarely encountered.”¹ Beth Moore, known as “America’s Bible Teacher,” has filled the Colonial Center in South Carolina. Liz Ruiz, newspaper reporter, reflected on Moore’s impact, “Grammy winner John Mayer didn’t sell out the Colonial Center, but Beth Moore did.”² Moore has sold “more than four million copies (of her Bible study workbook) since the first one.”³ She has written books, Bible studies, launched her own ministry in 1994, “Living Proof Ministries,” speaks at conferences all over the country and world-wide, and teaches weekly on a television broadcast, “Life Today” with James and Betty Robison.

Why? What is it about this woman that is attracting so many--men and women--to listen to her?

Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, the Department Chair of the University of Minnesota Communication Studies Department, and author or editor of eight books,⁴ has developed five criteria for what she calls “feminine rhetorical style” which, I believe, will explain why Beth Moore is being sought out. In her book, *Man Cannot Speak for Her*, Campbell lists these five tenets. First, they [the speakers] rely on personal narrative, experience, and other examples. Second, they address audience members as peers while allowing their experiences to be recognized as authority. Third, they invite audience participation. Next, they create arguments inductively that lead to generalizations. Lastly, they make an effort to create and identify with the experiences of the audience, moving them to the goal of the feminine speaker, to empower

¹ Sarah Bailey, “50 Women You Should Know,” *Christianity Today Online*, (October 2012): 22-36, www.ctlibrary.com/ct/2012/october/50-women-you-should-know.html (accessed July 28, 2013).

² Corrie Cutrer, “Breaking Free,” *Today’s Christian*. (Jan/Feb 2003): 66.

³ *Ibid.*, 66.

⁴ Regents of the University of Minnesota. (2009), <http://www.comm.umn.edu/faculty/profile.php?UID=campb003>.

their listeners.⁵

Justification of Study

Beth Moore is positioned to become a part of the history of Christendom. She is “by far the biggest selling author of Lifeway, the church resources arm of the Southern Baptist Convention. Her new Bible study...was sold out before materials were released to the bookstores.”⁶ Interestingly enough, this is a domain, i.e. Southern Baptists, which has been previously dominated by males.

Moore is not only a renowned public speaker, but is a leader and member of her church board. While she is well-known for her public speaking, she is not, and does not claim to be, a pastor, and that is probably the chief reason she is able to practice as a Southern Baptist. Albert Mohler, President of Southern Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, stated in 2000, “Our churches would fall apart if women were not taking major roles and serving in any number of capacities within our churches. Women are given extraordinary gifts for ministry. And our statement, as a matter of fact, begins that section, by saying that both men and women are gifted for service in the [church].”⁷ As Mohler states, “The Bible from beginning to end does present a pattern of different roles for men and women, and we would refer to this as complementary roles. It’s not a matter of quality or inequality, but of different roles.”⁸ Moore is part of the leadership team at First Baptist, Houston, and a part of the Southern Baptist Convention, where a power struggle dealing with gender and leadership is dominated by

⁵ Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, *Man Cannot Speak For Her*, Volume 1, (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc, 1989), 134.

⁶ Cutrer, 66.

⁷“Biblical Pattern of Male Leadership Limits Pastorate to Men,” Al Mohler.com, accessed October 11, 2013. <http://transcripts.cnn.comTRANSCRIPTS/0006/14/cf.00.html>.

⁸Ibid.

males, usually white males. Of the nine members of the Senior Ministry Staff of the Southern Baptists of Texas, all are males, and seven are white.⁹ An authoritative and reliable website informs us that “In 1998 the Southern Baptist Convention revised their Baptist Faith and Message to state that wives must submit to their husbands. In 2000, they passed rules to prevent women from serving as Pastor.”¹⁰ While these changes were amended ostensibly to conform to Scripture, they could not be considered unbiblical, because scripture, in fact, states in 2 Timothy 2:11, “I permit no woman to teach or have authority over men; she is to keep silent.” However, scripture is not limited to a few Pauline passages, nor are the passages self-interpretive, so controversy continues. Ironically, while debate continues over the role of women in the church, Moore’s ministry is thriving.

This thesis will not focus on the debate over gender roles in the evangelical church, but it is important that the reader understand the debate as an interesting and paradoxical part of the context of Beth Moore’s success story.

Defining Terms

As we begin our journey, we must define the significant terms we will be using in this project. We will begin with the term “rhetoric.” According to Craig Smith of California State University, Long Beach, “rhetorical communication goes beyond both (informative communication and entertaining communication) by attempting to persuade others to change their actions, beliefs, and/or attitudes.”¹¹ Barry Brummett defines rhetoric as “center(ing) around the idea of influence: the way we use verbal and nonverbal signs to affect other people.”¹² Jane

⁹ “Southern Baptist Texas Convention,” SBTC, http://www.sbtexas.com/about_sbtc/ministry_staff.htm, accessed August 29, 2013.

¹⁰ “Southern Baptists and the Role of Women,” About Agnosticism/Atheism, <http://atheism.about.com/od/baptistsouthernbaptists/a/baptistwomen.htm>, accessed September 15, 2013.

¹¹ Craig Smith, *Rhetoric and Human Consciousness: A History*, (Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press, 1998), 2.

¹² Barry Brummett, *Reading Rhetorical Theory*, (Orlando, Florida: Harcourt, Inc., 2000), 2.

Donawerth, Professor of English at University of Maryland, College Park, argues that since expectations are different from women to men due to traditional gender roles, “the rhetoric of women needs a broader definition—art of communication—(which) will allow us to examine women’s writings on communication in conversation and in letter writing, as well as public speaking, and all forms of written discourse.”¹³

In her book, *Man Cannot Speak for Her: Volume 1*, Karlyn Kohrs Campbell further defines the particular rhetoric of women, “In the broadest sense, rhetoric is the study of the means by which symbols can be used to appeal to others, to persuade. The potential for persuasion exists in the shared symbolic and socioeconomic experience of persuaders (rhetors) and audiences; specific rhetorical acts attempt to exploit that shared experience and channel it in certain directions.”¹⁴ Here we see Campbell defining her theory of feminine rhetoric.

Other terms that need defining are “feminine” and “feminist.” The word “feminist” brings many pictures and ideas to mind. Writing in *The Clarion* in 1913, Rebecca West suggests this about feminism: “I myself have never been able to find out precisely what feminism is: I only know people call me a feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a doormat.”¹⁵ Contemporary feminist Joanna Crosby stated, “Feminism...is not one point of view, it is not one set of right practices, nor should feminist theory or philosophy limit itself to what one group may find appropriate.”¹⁶

Craig S. Keener, Associate Professor of New Testament at Hood Seminary in Salisbury,

¹³ Jane Donawerth, *Rhetorical Theory by Women before 1900: An Anthology*, (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002), 15.

¹⁴ Campbell, 2.

¹⁵ Rebecca West, *The Young Rebecca*, (London: MacMillan, 1982).

¹⁶ Molly Wertheimer, ed., *Listening to Their Voices: The Rhetorical Activities of Historical Women*, (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina, 1997), 4.

North Carolina makes some comments worth noting regarding this idea of feminism.

The feminist movement is not new nor is its connection with Biblical principles. The first U.S. women's rights convention, held in 1848 in Seneca Falls, New York, was an outgrowth of both the religious revivalist and abolitionist movements. Many of these women had a desire to study scripture and were quick to see the parallels between slavery and female subordination.¹⁷

Feminism in modern times sometimes leads to negative thinking. As Keener points out, "If our allegiance is to Biblical thinking, we do not need to accept or reject *everything* associated with a particular movement."¹⁸ He goes on to state that all Christians should consider themselves Biblical feminists if feminism is truly regarding men and women as equal and actively opposing women's opposition."¹⁹ In an interesting twist regarding the treatment of women, Keener notes,

Equal treatment of women is not, as some would argue, an agenda borrowed from the secular world. The subordination of women, on the contrary, is an idea practiced by most non-Christian cultures in history. It could thus be easily argued that the subordination of women in Christian history was borrowed from the 'secular world' and that it tell us more about the societies in which those Christian rules were formulated than about God's eternal purposes. Treating women as equals was far closer to the spirit of Paul than making them subordinate. This is significant, since it is to Paul that the alleged repression of women in the New Testament is most often attributed.²⁰

The underlying commitment to this research project will be informed by Keener's definition of treating women as equals. Similarly, I will follow the approach and spirit set out by Tracy Frederick in her study of Joyce Meyer, another very significant public speaker who has skillfully managed to avoid the dangerous reef of evangelical male scorn:

¹⁷ Craig S. Keener, *Paul, Women & Wives: Marriage and Women's Ministry in the Letters of Paul*, (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1992), 9.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 10.

This study will not consider Meyer moving toward a feminist agenda, or opening the door for other female evangelists, as has been the practice of previous scholars who have studied female evangelists or female secular speakers. Rhetorical critics who have used feminine style as a lens to study public discourse have stopped short of considering the feminine style alongside other rhetorical styles as a critical option for public discourse beyond a feminine agenda or movement discourse.²¹

For the purposes of this study we will define feminine rhetoric as any form of communication that allows us to consider women as having equality with men, regardless of their role. Using this definition, Beth Moore is a feminist rhetorician.

Research Questions

Having introduced the topic area of this thesis, addressed the importance of Beth Moore as a feminist rhetorician, and having set out some of the crucial definitions that inform the study, it is now time to raise the research questions this study will pursue.

RQ1. How does Beth Moore use the feminine style to appeal to her audience?

RQ2. How does Beth Moore's appropriation of the feminine style account for her appeal with her traditionally conservative audiences comprised of both men and women?

Chapter 3, the Methodology, will discuss how these questions will be addressed to accomplish the research goals.

Introduction to Beth Moore

Wanda Elizabeth was born on an army base in Green Bay, Wisconsin. According to her biography,²² her father describes her birth during the worst thunderstorm the city had seen in five years. He says, "The Lord brought her in with a drum roll."²³ Moore was raised in Arkadelphia,

²¹ Tracey Frederick, "Feminizing the Pulpit: "Feminine Style and the Religious Rhetoric of Joyce Meyer," (dissertation, Regent University, 2009), 87.

²² Living Proof Ministry. Church Webs.com. <http://www.lproof.org/AboutUs/BethMoore/default.htm> (accessed July 13, 2013).

²³ Ibid.

Arkansas where her father worked at the local movie theatre and she was often able to slip into the theatre.

This began a lifelong love of stories; however, Moore's favorite story was about Jesus, the Savior for whom she developed a passionate love. Moore states that, "I didn't have a fireworks moment for my salvation," Moore tells CT, "I had a falling in love with Jesus in Sunday school when I was a very young child."²⁴ Moore thought she would become a lawyer, but as she led a summer camp for sixth grade girls, she felt God calling her to ministry.²⁵

Moore went on to Southwest Texas State University and earned a degree in political science. She married Keith Moore in 1978 and began a family. Amanda and Melissa were added quickly. As the young family grew Moore began to have depression. In her book "Breaking Free," Moore reveals that she was sexually abused as a child. This caused deep insecurity and trust issues. She states,

I never share the details of my childhood victimization for two reasons: First, I want the Healer glorified, not the hurt; and second, a greater number of people can relate to more general terms. I believe ultimately Satan is the chief abuser. Satan accused me every day of my life from that time on until I said 'Enough!' and agreed to let God bring healing and forgiveness..."²⁶

During this time Moore was asked to teach a Sunday School class at her home church, First Baptist, Houston. Moore realized she was unprepared. She joined a doctrine class at her church, taught by Buddy Walters, a former football player, who taught unashamedly, as tears flowed down his face. After one class, Moore ran to her car and prayed, "Lord, I don't

²⁴ Sarah Bailey. "Why Women want Moore," *Christianity Today Online*, (August 2010), 22. www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2010/august/18.21.html (accessed July 28, 2013).

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 22.

²⁶"Beth Moore," ShoutitforLife, May 31, 2012, accessed October 12, 2013.

know what this man has, but I want it.”²⁷

Moore began to teach and her class continued to grow while her outside ministry, Living Proof Ministries, developed. Her organization was founded in 1994 with the “purpose of teaching women how to love and live on God’s Word.”²⁸ The ministry is fully funded by the sale of her books and workbooks, and it serves as a national base for her public speaking ministry. Moore’s conferences have allowed her to speak in all fifty states, and several countries. They have been attended by more than 658,000 women.²⁹ Moore’s ministry also expanded into radio in 2004, and in 2006 she began teaching Bible studies on television on the program “Life Today with James and Betty Robison.” These initial teaching stints eventually developed into “Wednesdays with Beth” where, after a brief introduction, Moore teaches the remainder of each televised segment. The subject for this study will be pulled from the televised segments.

²⁷ LifeToday. Church Webs.com http://lifetoday.org/site/PageServr?pagename=bth_story.

²⁸ Living Proof Ministry.

²⁹ Ibid.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

“You are the only maiden living who handles a book instead of wool, a reed pen instead of make-up, a metal stylus instead of a needle, and who smears not her skin with white lead, but rather paper with ink. This indeed is extraordinary, as rare, as new, as if violets took root amid ice, roses in snow, or lilies in frost.”³⁰ This quote is from Angelo Poliziano in “Econium to Cassandra Fedele.” Fedele flourished in the fifteenth century, a time when women were mere objects, not seen as equal to men as part of the human race. Fedele was “admired for her wisdom and her eloquence,” so much so that she was denied emigration because she was considered too much to lose. She was such a strong influence on her time. She shares the place with other “roses in the snow,”³¹ women rare in their remembrance for their influence on rhetoric.

How many other women are not included in this line? Perhaps we shall never know. “The underrepresentation of women and women’s issues in public address anthologies has been well documented,³² and the lack of critical analysis of major works by women has been acknowledged.”³³

On the other hand, as Michael Casey explains, “When the first important American female secular speakers emerged, they were stepping into an almost 200 year-old-tradition of female oratory.”³⁴ In her dissertation, “Feminizing the Pulpit: ‘Feminine Style’ and the Religious Rhetoric of Joyce Meyer,” Tracey Frederick points out, “That religious tradition not

³⁰ Wertheimer, 1.

³¹ Wertheimer, 2.

³² Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, “The Communication Classroom: A Chilly Climate for Women?” *ACA Bulletin*, Issue #51 (January 1985), 68-72.

³³ Stephen Lucas, “The Renaissance of American Public Address: Text and Context in Rhetorical Criticism,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 74 (1988), 247.

³⁴ Michael W. Casey, “The First Female Public Speakers in America (1630-1840): Searching for Egalitarian Christian Primitivism,” *The Journal of Communication and Religion* 23 (March 2000) 29.

only paved the way for secular female public speakers, but also questioned church doctrine and the role of women in the religious public pulpit, one that continues to be one of the most controversial doctrinal issues today.”³⁵

From almost the beginning of time women have been involved in life-changing rhetoric. Deborah, Esther, and Abigail have their place in Biblical history, known for their life-changing rhetoric on the battlefield, to her people, and to the king of Israel, respectively. But it has been perpetually challenging to trace other women because “Until recently information about historical women was limited, primarily because women, having no public voices of their own, were known mainly through a veil of misogynist assumptions.”³⁶ Furthermore, as Thomas W. Benson notes, “Whether by explicit prohibition, by circumstance, by definition or by naturalizing assumptions, women have been in various ways excluded from the history of rhetoric.”³⁷

Generally, women were considered to be the spiritual leaders in their home, not in the public square. As Campbell points out, women played the role of “ministering angel” which encouraged them to remain at home and soothe their family, but it was unacceptable for that to occur in the community, whether political or religious.³⁸

According to Diane Helene Miller, to best understand a woman speaking historically you must

examine the context of social expectations and roles within which they have spoken. Close reading alone cannot fully account for either the ways women have been prevented from speaking, or the ways social expectations shaped their words when they did speak, nor can this critical approach attend to the surrounding discursive and non-discursive activities that set the stage for a speech’s reception.³⁹

³⁵ Frederick, 2.

³⁶ Wertheimer, 2.

³⁷ Thomas W. Benson, as qtd in Wertheimer, 2.

³⁸ Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, *Man Cannot Speak for Her: Volume 2*. (Westport: Greenwood, 1989), 10.

³⁹ Diane Helene Miller, “From One Voice A Chorus: Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s 1860 Address to the New York Legislature” *Women’s Studies in Communication* 22 (2Fall99), 152-189.

Benson goes on to note that “It is important to recover the history of the ways in which women’s voices have been stifled. It is in contrast, equally important to recover the history of those exceptional women who were able to be heard in the male public sphere.”⁴⁰ We will now take a brief look at some of the women who were heard in the “male public sphere,” particularly the religious sphere of preaching. This will further help to understand the social order that Beth Moore has encountered and yet has remained steadfast and prevailed.

Sarah Keayne was excommunicated from the Boston Church in 1646 for “prophesying in mixed assemblies.”⁴¹ Anne Hutchinson was banished to Rhode Island for preaching in public. Anne Eaton and Deborah Moody were also banned, while Mary Dyer, a Quaker preacher, was hung in 1661.⁴²

Margaret Fell, wife of Quaker founder George Fox, was imprisoned for refusing to take the oath to the King Charles II. While in prison she penned several pamphlets regarding the role of women in the church. Perhaps the most well-known is *Women’s Speaking Justified*. According to Bill Samuel, “Feminist historians have recognized it as a key document, one of the first by a woman, in the evolution of woman's vision as an equal partner with man.”⁴³

Though it was difficult for women preachers, women evangelists began to rise in popularity. According to Catherine Brekus there were at least 100 women preaching in revivals between 1790-1845. She goes on to say, “For the first time in American history, large

⁴⁰ Thomas W. Benson, as qtd in Wertheimer, 2.

⁴¹ Lyle Koehler, *A Search for Power: The Weaker Sex in Seventeenth Century New England*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press), 1980, 70.

⁴² Catherine A. Brekus, *Strangers and Pilgrims, Female Preaching in America, 1740-1845* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 32.

⁴³ Bill Samuel, “A Sincere and Constant Love: An Introduction to the Work of Margaret Fell,” *Book Review* 1992, http://www2.gol.com/users/quakers/margaret_fell.htm

numbers of evangelical women tried to forge a lasting tradition of female ministry. Ultimately, they failed, but for a few brief years during the 1740s and 1750s, it almost seemed possible to imagine a church where women as well as men would be free to speak in public...”⁴⁴

There were several reasons people came to hear women evangelists. For example, in the twentieth century Aimee Semple McPherson had great success because she taught with “various Biblical and contemporary episodes to create a meaningful story.”⁴⁵ Evangelist Anna B. Locke used her own story and spoke of how she “became a human derelict when 14 years of age and spent 26 years among harlots, dope fiends, murderers and drunkards. I was finally saved...through the power of the blood of Jesus Christ.”⁴⁶ Catherine Brekus states that “instead of speaking on general, abstract themes, they captivated their audiences by describing their own personal doubts and struggles.”⁴⁷ Brekus goes on to describe the difference between how men and women described their relationship with God. Men were factual and authoritative while women tended to present themselves as “weak, unworthy women who had been miraculously ‘sanctified and ordained’ by the grace of God.”⁴⁸ Michael Casey says women opened a place for themselves in many ways.

First, female preachers created their authority to speak by taking the role of prophet who received authority to speak from God, not man. Second, female preachers defended their right to speak from the Bible using Biblical precedents of women leaders and speakers. Third, they attacked the oppressive practices of patriarchy and racism. Fourth, these female preachers (using the prophetic role) helped establish a vernacular preaching emphasizing morality in contrast to literate preaching rooted in classical rhetoric...the male elite domain.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Brekus, 7.

⁴⁵ Janice Shuetz, “Storytelling and Preaching: A Case Study of Aimee Semple McPherson,” *Religious Communication Today*, (September 1986), 34.

⁴⁶ Anna B. Lock, “From the Underworld to the Upperworld: The Former Derelict Woman Who Became a A/G Evangelist,” *A/G Heritage* (Summer 1999), 19.

⁴⁷ Brekus, 200.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 174.

⁴⁹ Casey, 2.

Frederick concluded: “The most difficult challenge faced by these female evangelists was to convince others to give them a chance; to listen. There are a number of ways that a speaker might engage an audience, however, these women chose a rhetorical posture that was uniquely feminine, different from their male contemporaries, and that was the risk.”⁵⁰

Recently, women have begun to make a name for themselves as they draw in crowds by the thousands. In 2005, one of the most popular evangelical leaders was Joyce Meyers.⁵¹ Anne Graham Lotz, Priscilla Shirer, Angela Thomas and Beth Moore are all contemporary women known for their style of rhetoric.

In *Rhetoric, History, and Women’s Oratorical Education: American Women Learn to Speak*, Emily Murphy Cope studies how Beth Moore has become a cornerstone of the evangelical world during the time that Southern Baptists were amending their formal constitution to keep women and men separate.

What should make Moore’s story interesting to scholars of rhetoric is her rise to national prominence coincides with the conservative turn in the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) that began in the 1980s and continues if only slightly abated to this day...The SBC issued a nonbinding resolution that described men and women as “divinely gifted” for different ministry roles and reasserted the exclusion of women from pastoral positions...During this period of increasing restrictions on women’s public roles, Moore’s sphere of influence expanded well beyond one Houston church to the national evangelical stage.⁵²

A separate but related issue is still the question of women speaking from the pulpit in the evangelical church. Tradition allows that women were not allowed to speak publicly in this setting, yet there is currently a surge of women preaching and teaching the Bible. Women’s

⁵⁰ Frederick 62.

⁵¹ Cathryn Booth-Thomas, “Twenty-Five Most Influential Evangelicals in America,” *Time*, (February 7, 2005), 38.

⁵² Emily Murphy Cope, “Rhetoric, History, and Women’s Oratorical Education: American Women learn to speak,” (Florence, Kentucky: Taylor and Francis, May 2013), 241.

success against sometimes strong opposition may be due to a number of factors. One factor affecting success may be the style with which these women approach their hearers. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, a noted scholar and Department Chair of Communication Studies at the University of Minnesota and also an author or editor of eight books, has identified a style –“the feminine style”- which has derived from women speaking in this manner. It is her theory of feminine rhetoric. She believes this style is what has enabled women to overcome these stereotypes and false expectations. Campbell has concluded that women frequently have a different way of relating to their audience from men.⁵³ She calls this approach to speaking “feminine rhetorical style.” In her book, *Man Cannot Speak for Her*, Campbell develops five criteria to determine if a speaker, male or female, is employing the feminine style. First of all, they rely on personal narrative, experience and other examples. Second, they address audience members as peers while allowing their experiences to be recognized as having authority. Third, they invite audience participation. Fourth, they create arguments inductively that lead to generalizations. Lastly, they make an effort to create and identify with the experiences of the audience, moving them to the goal of the feminine speaker, to empower their listeners.⁵⁴ Many speakers use this style, including men; however, the evangelical community has begun to embrace women as principle Bible teachers, as part of the leadership, and as strong public speakers and I believe Campbell’s theory is responsible key is to why women are being recognized now. This study will focus on the use of feminine style by one of the leading women speakers in the evangelical world.

⁵³ Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, “The Discursive Performance of Femininity: Hating Hillary,” *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 1 (1998) 11.

⁵⁴ Campbell, *Discursive Performance*, 11.

Karlyn Kohrs Campbell

Many would argue that it is difficult to evaluate female rhetoric because the criterion is based on masculinity. “Women are faced with a rhetorical dilemma they cannot win.”⁵⁵ Campbell began her study of women’s rhetoric in the political arena. Some of her earliest thoughts are during the time of the women’s second liberation movement in the 1970’s. In one of her earliest pieces Campbell borrows from E. E. Maccoby who stated, “The girl who maintains qualities of independence and active striving (achievement oriented) necessary for intellectual mastery defies the conventions of sex appropriate behaviors and must pay a price, a price in anxiety.”⁵⁶ In a world where women were surrounded by men on a daily basis, or isolated from one another, rhetoric of a feminine nature seemed foreign to many. Campbell has several reasons for this:

Women are divided from one another by almost all the usual sources of identification--age, education, income, ethnic origin, even geography. In addition, counter-persuasive forces are pervasive and potent--nearly all spend their lives in close proximity to--and under the control of males--fathers, husbands, employers, etc. Women also have negative self-concepts, so negative, in fact, that it is difficult to view them as an audience, i.e., persons who see themselves as potential agents of change.⁵⁷

Campbell goes on to suggest that the very rhetoric of the feminist movement is keeping women away from the movement. The discussions of topics that would make women blush, the masculine way in which liberation is approached by women, and the lack of connection to where real women were at in their own thoughts and beliefs all played a part in this movement’s lack of getting off the ground as quickly as many would have liked.

⁵⁵ Frederick, 66.

⁵⁶ Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, “The Rhetoric of Women’s Liberation: An Oxymoron,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 59, no. 1 (February 1973): 74. *Education Research Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed July 28).

⁵⁷ Campbell, *Rhetoric of Women’s Liberation*, 76.

Campbell begins to give critique as to how the movement could be more effective. In these thoughts the beginnings of her feminine rhetorical theory are being developed. “If a persuasive campaign dedicated to this audience is to be effective, it must transcend alienation, to create “sisterhood,” modify self-concepts to create a sense of autonomy, and speak to women in terms of private, concrete, individual experience, because women have little, if any, publicly shared experience.”⁵⁸

A decade later, Campbell began to dissect the rhetoric of a different group of women-- African-Americans. Although this rhetoric was spoken during the time of what is commonly called the first women’s liberation movement, (1830’s-1925), many of the same conclusions were drawn and expanded upon.

In *Style and Content in the Rhetoric of Early African-American Feminists*, Campbell looks at three African-American women and the characteristics of their successful rhetoric even as they climbed from the very bottom of the social “totem pole” during their time in American history. Campbell apologizes that it has taken so long for these women to be included in the line of female rhetoricians.

Although there are no complete works of Sojourner Truth, the famous African-American slave turned abolitionist, as well as women’s right advocate; Campbell draws some conclusions worth noting from the parts of her speeches that are available. Truth relied heavily on her personal relationship with God. She implied He talked directly with her.⁵⁹ In her speech, *Ain’t I a Woman*, presented in Akron, Ohio, in 1851, Truth stated, “You say that Jesus was a man so that means God favors men over women. Where did your Christ come from? Where did He

⁵⁸ Campbell, *Rhetoric of Women’s Liberation*, 79.

⁵⁹ Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, 1986. “Style and content in the rhetoric of early Afro-American feminists,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 434-44. *OmniFile Full Text Mega* (H.W. Wilson), EBSCOhost (accessed July 28, 2013).

come from? From God and a woman. Man had nothing to do with Him.”⁶⁰ Campbell goes on to state, “What remains of Truth’s rhetoric demonstrates its similarity to other women’s rights speakers, despite her unique history and presence. Like them, she relied on biblical authority, personal experience, vivid metaphors, and the power of herself as enactment.”⁶¹

Another example used in Campbell’s essay is Ida Wells. Wells was an African-American woman who changed the laws concerning lynching, developed and inspired organizations which fought lynching, and was the first African-American woman to own a newspaper in Illinois, a platform which she used to write against social injustices. Campbell acknowledges that although Wells’ rhetoric was successful in persuasion, she used only one of the feminine criteria “her reliance on the example”⁶² and goes on to say “Quite simply, there is nothing in this speech to indicate that it was given by a woman, and as such, is an astonishing rhetorical work, for this period or for any other.”⁶³ In her conclusion Campbell acknowledges that Wells “was remarkable in her skill in the use of argument and evidence.”⁶⁴

The third example Campbell turns to in her quest to include African-American women in the line of female rhetoric is Mary Church Terrell, who was born into a wealthy family in the late 1800’s. She was well educated and even participated on the public school board in Memphis, Tennessee. As Campbell examines her speech, she writes, “What the audience saw was an attractive woman, dressed like any other middle-class woman of her time. What they heard was that her life was vastly different from their own.”⁶⁵ She then continued to expand upon not only her own experiences, but those of other well-educated African-Americans. She shared the

⁶⁰P. McKissack, and F. McKissack, 1994, “Sojourner Truth: Ain’t I a Woman?” *Horn Book Magazine*, 70, 1, p.53, Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost, viewed 28 July 2013.

⁶¹ Campbell, *Style and Content*, 437.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 440.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 445.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 445.

difficulties that were to be had in finding employment, securing housing, and the lack of opportunities to continue on to higher education. The audience was able to relate. Campbell goes on to develop how Church-Terrell used the feminine theory in her speech and how it worked for her cause.

...In this speech Church Terrell used the adaptations to her audience that I have called indicators of “feminine” style. She spoke from her personal experience, which she extended to the personal experiences of other individuals she knew about. The speech developed inductively; it relied on arousing empathy, and through it, appealing to the feelings of the audience. The conclusions were implied rather than bluntly stated. It was a speech by a woman which conformed to traditional notions about women, and it used forms of appeal and support that were highly appropriate for a white, middle class, mostly female audience.⁶⁶

In the 1990’s Campbell expanded on her thoughts about her feminine rhetoric. In her essay titled, “Inventing Women: From Amaterusa to Virginia Woolf,” she explains, “Women had to invent themselves as speakers, as rhetors.”⁶⁷ Campbell shares examples from Gloria Steinem, uses examples of why Anne Boleyn, wife of Henry VIII, was executed due to the rhetoric of the day, and explains the difference between demonic convention and true womanhood. In the 1600’s and 1700’s women were thought to be under the demonic convention, their “inner evil was associated with monstrous appearances.”⁶⁸ Associated with this evil was the idea that women spoke evil to seduce men. During the 1800’s that thought turned to what is called true womanhood, giving women credit for having a stronger moral thread, as opposed to man. Both of these thoughts came together to set the stage for the theory of feminine rhetoric, as opposed to masculine rhetoric.

⁶⁵ Ibid.,434-445.

⁶⁶Ibid., 434.

⁶⁷ Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Celeste M. Condit, 1998, “Inventing women: From Amaterusa to Virginia Woolf,” *Women’s Studies in Communications* 21, no. 2: 111. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed July 28, 2013).

⁶⁸ Campbell and Condit, 111.

Consistent with the demonic tradition, the words of a woman were an intrusion of sexuality, hence irrationality, into deliberations, which was the basis for rejection of women as political actors or citizens. In addition, because a woman had to leave the domestic realm to do so, a woman speaking in public was seen as "unsexed," that is, as stripped of the feminine virtues, i.e., purity, piety, modesty, and the like. Put bluntly, the role of rhetor is gendered masculine. Rhetors act in public and are leaders, expected to present their views aggressively, to debate opponents, to make cases through logical argument. By contrast, woman is a private role, and she is seen as submissive, modest, emotional, and unsuited to competition of any sort or, when unsexed, as introducing the disturbing and dangerous qualities of sexuality and irrationality into public deliberations.⁶⁹

The role of rhetor is still in its infancy in moving from a male to a female. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell has played a tremendous role in giving birth to the awareness of a female rhetor and helping that image to grow. Summing up Campbell's work in *Man Cannot Speak for Her*, the author states, "Herein lies perhaps the foremost contribution of Campbell's work: the prudent connection of early feminist history to the contemporary feminist dialogue."⁷⁰ In part two of *Man Cannot Speak for Her*, Campbell quotes Elizabeth Cady Stanton and pronounces the reasons why it is so important to let the voice of the woman be heard.

The strongest reason for giving women all the opportunities for higher education, for the full development of freedom of thought and action; a complete emancipation from all forms of bondage, of custom, dependence, superstition; from all the crippling influences of fear; is the solitude and personal responsibility of her own individual life. The strongest reason why we ask for woman a voice in [the] government under which she lives . . . is because of her birthright to self-sovereignty; because as an individual, she must rely on herself."⁷¹

Although this quote is referring to the freedoms that women needed, it is pertinent to note that these ideas also align with the feminine rhetorical theory used by evangelical women of today, not necessarily that women have to rely on themselves, but on their individual relationship with God. More of that will be addressed further on.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 111.

⁷⁰ Campbell, *Man Cannot*, 136.

⁷¹ Ibid., 136.

Feminine Rhetorical Theory

Although Karlyn Kohrs Campbell is credited as the originator of the feminine rhetorical theory, many others have contributed to the evolution and use of it.

The theory of feminine rhetoric has been used most often in political discourse, though it has been used in the analysis of television shows, the first and second feminist movement, presidential bids, the study of first ladies, and in the examination of women's sermons from times gone by. More recently, in her study of Joyce Meyers, Tracey Frederick has opened the door for the feminine rhetorical theory to be used in the study of modern evangelical women.

In a study on Ann Richards, the two-time governor of Texas, Bonnie Dow and Mari Boor Tonn explain her success using the feminine rhetorical theory. "While Richards' background clearly is reflected in her rhetoric, we suggest the most useful way to understand the appeal of her discourse is as a manifestation of feminine rhetorical style."⁷² Continuing to explain the development from the feminine rhetorical theory focused on using the theory in other areas of analysis Dow and Tonn conclude, "Given Richards' clear commitment to working within traditional political channels, this analysis also makes clear the value of the feminist counter-public sphere as a model for expanding the possibilities for feminist rhetorical criticism, which thus far has focused primarily on female rhetors within feminist movements."⁷³

Christina Young Guest used Campbell's theory, in addition to that of Foss and Griffin, when she studied the political speeches of Hillary Clinton and Sarah Palin in 2008. She quotes Campbell,

...early female rhetors had no choice but to utilize a form of masculine style because they faced a distinct rhetorical double blind. Early

⁷² Bonnie J. Dow and Mari Boor Tonn, "'Feminine Style' and Political Judgment in the Rhetoric of Ann Richards," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, (1993). 228.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 228.

female speakers not only had to follow masculine style rhetorical requirements, but they also had to justify their right as women to speak publicly. As a result, early speeches given by women had to both fulfill situational conventions and provide a justification for female speech. In other words, not only did women need to prepare the context of their speeches, they also had to pay close attention to the delivery.⁷⁴

Conclusion

There is no question that the rhetorical challenges faced by women are unique. Foss and Griffin state, “women simply have not had the opportunities to speak and write that men have had. In addition, the ideas of women have not been treated with the same degree of seriousness as the ideas of men.”⁷⁵ As Tracey Frederick clarifies, “Cindy L. Griffin explains that using a feminine style as a rhetorical framework takes into account the cultural and social differences that call women to use a feminine rhetorical posture.”⁷⁶ Cindy Griffin goes on to state, “A comprehensive theory of women as communicators suggests that women listen to their bodies, experiences, marginality, histories, and differences and that they build a background of discourse based on these elements.”⁷⁷ Women as orators are difficult enough in the secular sphere, but women who speak in the church have faced even greater struggles throughout the centuries.

⁷⁴ Christina Young Guest, “Political Feminine Style and the Feminist Implications of the Respective Convention Speeches: Hillary Rodham Clinton and Sarah Palin,” (Dissertation, University of Central Missouri, 2010), 20.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁷⁶ Frederick, 17.

⁷⁷ Guest, 17.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Women have struggled for centuries to gain a voice others would respect and count worthy of hearing. There was a “hostility encountered by female speakers, since they were entering a domain typically reserved for men, necessitated alternative rhetorical strategies... Thus analyses of influential women serve two important purposes: a recognition of female influences in public domains and a reevaluation of taken for granted speaking domains and styles.”⁷⁸ Foss and Foss claim that “Women have an eloquence of their own manifest in a variety of contexts and forms that permeates worlds of richness for them and those around them.”⁷⁹ Karlyn Kohrs Campbell introduced the “feminine style” to facilitate the specific study of women rhetors and how they have penetrated the male domain of public discourse. The five characteristics Campbell defines are as follows: personal narrative, addressing audience members as peers, inviting audience participation, creating arguments that inductively lead to generalizations and empowering listeners. Each of these criteria will be discussed based on Moore’s use or lack of use of them in her teaching.

Beth Moore speaks each Wednesday on James and Betty Robison’s television show *Life Today*. She began teaching in November of 2006. The setting is unique in that it is the Robisons’ show, but on Wednesday it almost becomes the “Beth Moore Show.” The promotional clip begins with flashing pictures of Moore teaching and a voiceover introducing Moore. Each week James introduces Moore and talks for a minute or two about how the topic she will teach on that day has impacted him or his wife. James makes the comment “he and Betty are thrilled” to have Moore on and that is the only comment that indicates this is her first

⁷⁸ Carol Spitzack and Katherine Carter, “Women in Communication Studies: A Typology for Revision,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 73 (1987) 405.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 407.

formal teaching on the show. A different promotional clip of Moore plays and she begins to teach. It is important to understand these teachings take place in front of a live audience, with audience members seated around Moore circularly. She has a podium in the middle. April 4, 2006 was the first of the “Wednesdays with Beth” series on James and Betty Robinson’s *Life Today* show. *Life Today* is based out of Fort Worth, Texas, but reaches several other countries, such as Canada and Australia. In her study on Beth Moore, April Pressley notes, “The partnership gives Moore the opportunity to be seen weekly to an audience of 200 million and works to promote DVD volumes that can be purchased once a series is complete. As of late, four series are available: Wednesday’s with Beth Volumes One through Six, Get Out of that Pit, and Fully Alive.”⁸⁰

Five of Moore’s televised teaching sessions have been chosen for this study. The first is from 2006, at the outset of her television venture. The second is from the fall of 2007. The third text is from the beginning of November, 2009. The last two are from November of 2011 and September of 2013. This chronological selection of texts will give the researcher the opportunity to better understand and describe Moore’s use and adaptation of the feminine style over a period of time by focusing on five case studies over the seven-year period. Additionally, the researcher will be able to observe how Moore’s use of any of the five tenets may have changed over time. Each of these episodes is readily available for download online.⁸¹ Each of the five traits will be analyzed in their own chapter. We will take a brief look at the five traits.

⁸⁰ April Pressley, “Discovering the Vision in Beth Moore’s “Breakng Free” Message: Applying Bormann’s Fantasy Theme Analysis to Evaluate the Message,” (Master’s Thesis, Liberty University, 2010), 24.

⁸¹ Life Today. ChurchSWeb design-trinet Internet Solution, Inc.
http://www.lifetoday.org/site/PageServer?pagename=abt_history.

Feminine Speakers Rely on Personal Experiences and Extended Narrative

Narrative includes using stories to make the audience feel as if they are being addressed as friends, or equals. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell explains, “personal tones and personal disclosure are integrated characteristics of the feminine style. The telling of personal experience presupposes a personal attitude toward the subject.”⁸²

Feminine Speakers Speak to the Audience as Peers

Feminine rhetors talk to their audience as equals, in conversational tones. As Sarah Hayden points out,

Campbell claims that women rhetors spoke to their audiences not as experts but as peers, recognizing the experiences of their audience members and inviting their audiences to participate in the creation of arguments. By utilizing this set of strategies, women rhetors were able to avoid appearing aggressive or argumentative, and although they spoke about public issues, they couched their discussions in private terms. Through the tools of the feminine style women were able to empower their female audience members and maintain an appearance of femininity.⁸³

Women speaking in this manner connote feelings of closeness, of sharing intimate secrets while sipping a cup of tea..

Feminine Speakers Invite Audience Participation

Rhetorical questions are one way women can invite audience participation. As Hayden suggests, “A rhetor using feminine style neither demands nor insists, but instead she suggests, invites and requests.”⁸⁴ Particularly in the religious context, rhetorical questions serve a purpose. As Michael P. Graves explains in his study on Quakers, rhetorical questions were emphasized in

⁸² Campbell (quoted in Dow feminine 292)

⁸³ Sara Hayden, “Negotiating Femininity and Power in the Early Twentieth-Century West: Domestic ideology and feminine style in Jeannette Rankin’s suffrage rhetoric, *Communication Studies*, 50(1999) 52.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 89.

the “Quaker view of communication because it had the real potential to stir responses in the minds of listeners, thus placing the focus of the communication situation on the listener rather than the preacher.”⁸⁵ Campbell states that it is rhetoric or “persuasion, which makes us human and thereby helps us create community.”⁸⁶

Feminine Speakers Create Arguments Inductively that Lead to Generalizations

Deduction, which is considered to be the more masculine style, is the rhetorical style that typically appeals to the general population. However, Aristotle felt differently. William Benoit quotes Aristotle. “Apparently induction is advantageous because it is easily understood, though deduction is more impressive.”⁸⁷ As Tracey Frederick points out in her dissertation on Joyce Meyers, “Feminine speakers, especially women, must create an alternative viewpoint without overstepping social boundaries of femininity.”⁸⁸

Feminine Speakers Create Identification and Empower their Audience

In “Man Cannot Speak for Her” Campbell explains: “Whether in a small group, from a podium, or on the page, consciousness-raising (or feminine style) invite audience members to participate in the persuasive process--it empowers them. It is a highly appealing form of discourse, particularly if identification between advocate and audience is facilitated by common values and shared experiences.”⁸⁹ This has come about because historically women were in the home and had more traditional roles--their connection with one another was shared experiences.

⁸⁵ Michael P. Graves, “Thou art but a youth’: Thomas Chalkey Enacts and Defends the Early Quaker Impromptu Sermon.” James R. Andrews, ed., *Rhetoric, Religion and the Roots of Identity in British Colonial America*. Volume. 1, *A Rhetorical History of the United States*. Martin J. Medhurst, general ed., East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2007, 260-263.

⁸⁶ Campbell, *Man Cannot*.

⁸⁷ Quoted in William Benoit, “Aristotle’s Example: The Rhetorical Induction,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 66 (1980) 190.

⁸⁸ Frederick, 115.

⁸⁹ Campbell, *Man Cannot*.

This study was completed in a series of steps. First, each of the sermons was read and listened to several times so that the researcher would become familiar with the concepts being taught and the style of communication used. Next, the teachings were listened to while looking for the five characteristics of feminine rhetorical theory. Thirdly, as characteristics were identified the transcripts were highlighted according to characteristic. Finally, a tally was made by cross referencing each of the teaching segments with each of the characteristics to see how and when Moore used each. This research was then put together to determine whether Moore uses feminine rhetorical theory.

The remaining chapters of this thesis will focus on each of the five episodes taught by Moore on the *LIFE Today* show. Each of the five tenets will be dissected as they pertain to each of the five episodes.

Chapter 4: Results

Beth Moore has been teaching on *Life Today* with James and Betty Robison since April 4, 2006. Her first segment was on a Tuesday, but moved to Wednesday the following week, where it has remained since, hence the term “Wednesdays with Beth.” Each Wednesday, Moore is introduced by a narrator and a short clip of her teaching from that day is played. James and Betty chat for a minute or two and the screen shifts to Moore teaching. Moore is in front of a live audience in each segment, and there are permanent audience chairs, but there are also folding chairs added which create a circular environment for Moore to teach from. Interestingly enough, the segments observed span over seven years, and the folding chairs remain. Although there is a podium with a Bible and notes on it, Moore so rarely uses it, it becomes obsolete. As a point of interest, there is a padded wing chair on the “stage” area, which remains empty, except for two minutes when Moore herself sits down to face the audience at eye level. One other observation worth noting is that only women are on camera in the five episodes I analyzed, even as Moore clearly refers to her “guyfriends”⁹⁰ in one of her segments. Emily Cope points out that, “...Moore’s many invited speaking appearances to audiences of both genders prove that Moore does have a male audience; importantly, though, when Moore tapes her Bible study videos, she records in front of a live audience of women.”⁹¹ Although the research was not found that recording in front of a live television audience includes women only, also, it can be assumed from the fact that women only were on camera and it pertains to her Bible study videos.

Each segment was observed on the *LIFE Today* website.⁹² The transcripts are offered through *LIFE Today* also. Five episodes were randomly chosen to span the seven years of

⁹⁰ Moore, *Our True Selves*.

⁹¹ Cope, 228.

⁹² Life Today, Church Webs.com, http://lifetoday.org/site/PageServr?pagename=bth_story7.

Moore's teaching on the show. The first episode chosen was April 4, 2006, which is the first time Moore taught on the show. The second is from September 5, 2007. The last three are from November 11, 2009, November 2, 2011, and September 11, 2013. This chronological selection will give the researcher opportunity to better understand and describe Moore's use and adaptation of feminine style over a period of seven years. Additionally, it will also be noted how Moore's use may have changed over time. There will be a brief description of each episode, followed by a study of how each characteristic appears or does not appear in each. The researcher will examine each episode for the five characteristics of feminine rhetorical theory.

Episode One: The Mercy Seat (Part 1)

April 4, 2006

This is the first episode of Beth Moore on *LIFE Today*, yet one would never know it by her introduction. James and Betty chuckle about the things that go on around the set. As the show begins, James says, "You wouldn't believe what doesn't get on the air! It's good stuff!"⁹³ James goes on to add, "My wife, Betty, and I are absolutely thrilled to present Beth Moore every Wednesday, "Wednesdays with Beth."⁹⁴ He asks the audience to welcome Moore and the camera turns to Moore teaching.

This first message centers on John and Peter running to the empty tomb of Christ, and moves on to Mary Magdalene and her experience at the tomb. As this is part one of a series, the teaching leaves off before the titled "Mercy Seat" is brought up. The overriding theme is that there are always absolutes and that Christ will do everything He or the scriptures have said He will do.

⁹³ Life Today. Church Webs.com http://lifetoday.org/site/PageServr?pagename=bth_story7.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

Episode Two: Filled to the Measure

September 5, 2007

Of the five messages I analyzed, Robison gives the longest introduction to this one. There was a famous story about Moore brushing the hair of a complete stranger in an airport and Robison alludes to that story as he encourages believers to pay attention to this particular message. “You’re going to hear her tell a story that the whole world ought to hear that should register with every one of us as Christians.”⁹⁵ As he continues on, he says, “But here’s Beth Moore, and I’m telling you, you can get ready to get blessed. You’re going to want to pass this on.”⁹⁶

Moore begins to speak about a heart that has been deceived. She continues to discuss hearts that are not full of Christ and how they will be filled with anything, because our hearts were made to be full. She then goes on to tell the story to which Robison referred. “It’s probably the thing I’ve been asked about as much as anything regarding stories and Bible studies along the years.”⁹⁷

Episode Three: To Know and Be Known (Part 3)

November 11, 2009

James Robison opens the show with an acknowledgement to all of the Veterans and sharing his gratitude for their service. He then introduces Moore.

This message centers on trust and how one can overcome any betrayal by trusting in the authority and love of Christ. Moore’s focus is on closing out the series by encouraging women that they can completely rest, with all their secrets, in the arms of Christ.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Moore “Filled to the Measure.”

Episode Four: Wrecked, But Not Ruined (Part 1)

November 2, 2011

Robison opens the show by introducing Moore as "...a regular feature on *LIFE Today*."⁹⁸ He goes on to discuss the love he has seen from Beth and her husband, Keith. "And they don't just teach the Word, they demonstrate the Word."⁹⁹

This message is centered on how the storms of life attack you, and how to deal with them, even when several come at the same time.

Episode Five: Our True Selves

September 11, 2013

Robison briefly introduces Moore, while spending his time speaking of the children he will raise money for at the end of the broadcast. As a point of interest, even as the air date is a tragic date in the history of our country, no mention is made of 9/11 by Robison or Moore.

Moore immediately asks the audience to open their Bibles and she begins by reading scripture. Moore continues on with the relationship of Jacob and Esau near the end of their father's life. She goes on to make the point that we all must become more honest with ourselves and others, in addition to understanding the reality that Christ loves each just as they are.

⁹⁸ Life Today. Church Webs.com http://lifetoday.org/site/PageServr?pagename=bth_story7.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

Characteristic One: Feminine Speakers Rely on Personal Experiences and Extended Narrative

Mari Boor Torr states that, “Narratives and stories illustrate vividly the premises for the speaker. Narratives that use everyday situations validate the private experiences as important and worthy. Speakers who use a feminine style draw conclusions based on a series of examples, fictional or real-life stories, and comparisons, which encourage the audience to reason independently.”¹⁰⁰ Sharing personal stories is a way to connect with the audience, help the audience know they are not alone, and share with them ways they can overcome whatever struggle is at hand.

Beth Moore is a master at sharing personal experiences to bring about a point, or at the very least, to let the audience know she understands and she has walked the road on which they journey.

In the very first episode evaluated, Moore is not two minutes into her message, when she begins to share her thoughts about sitting on her back porch in the early morning hours and how she feels spiritual during that time. Moore uses this to draw the comparison with how Mary Magdalene must have felt early on Easter Sunday morning as she waited by the tomb of Christ. She wants the audience to feel as if they were there. Moore not only uses her personal narrative, but she presupposes how Mary Magdalene must have felt, and uses Mary’s personal narrative. As the message continues, Moore discusses how she loves each of her daughters as her very favorite.

Further on in the message Moore discusses in great detail how competitive men are with one another. She compares Peter and John racing to the tomb to the competitiveness of her

¹⁰⁰ Dow, 228.

husband, Keith, to Betty's husband, James Robison, her host. She says, "You have no idea what Betty and I put up with out of Keith and James! No idea! You talk about two competitive men, whether it's with a golf club in the hand, or a fishing pole in the hand, we are talking some kind of competitive men."¹⁰¹

The second episode analyzed was aired a year and a half after Moore began her television teaching on *Life Today*. Moore is teaching about being filled by Christ, and not allowing other idols to consume one's heart. Moore states, "All right, Lord, I mean, I am a need waiting to be filled. See, that's fair. That's fair! I know I've got cavernous places in my soul."¹⁰² She continues discussing how she has asked the Lord to "just overtake me."¹⁰³ This statement opens a door for Moore to share a story she has shared many times. She states that this story is what she has been asked about more than any other stories through the years. Moore spends the rest of the broadcast retelling the story.

Moore shares some background information: she was flying and in an airport, and had been spending her time memorizing scripture. She describes the layout of the airport and where she was seated in comparison to the man who will become the focus of her story.

She then begins.

The only reason I am telling you this is I was filled to the measure. I had had a wonderful morning with Him and I was filled to the measure. So I was sitting Indian style in my jeans and sweater, and I had my Bible open in my lap, and I was going back over it and back over it. Boy, I was getting it...I was having a great time. Suddenly, I see that the eyes of all the people against the wall are watching something behind me.

Moore goes into great detail describing the environment, the man, who is in a wheelchair, and the reaction of others. She then spends a few minutes describing his "odd" appearance,

¹⁰¹ Moore, "The Mercy Seat."

¹⁰² Moore, "Filled to the Measure."

¹⁰³ Ibid.

using careful detail when describing his hair. Moore continues to describe her memory work, and how God begins to speak to her heart.

I just thought, “Oh please, God, no! Oh, please! Please, God, no!” because I’m already knowing He wants me to witness to this man...Now, I’m going to tell you, as clear as I’m talking to you now, the Lord spoke to my heart...
“I’m not asking you to witness to him; I’m asking you to brush his hair.”¹⁰⁴

Moore continues to describe the internal battle she has with the Lord about the task He has asked her to do. She relents to His prodding, and then realizes she does not have a brush, even as she is walking toward the seated man in the wheelchair, who is not looking up. She tries quietly to ask him if she can brush his hair, but to Moore’s dismay, he is hard of hearing, and she must repeat herself loudly. When he finally responds to her question, he offers the use of his hair brush, which is in his bag. They begin to chat and Moore discovers he has been in the hospital and was going home to his wife. He laments, “I was just sitting here thinking what a mess I must be for my bride.”¹⁰⁵ Moore brings this message to a climax by proclaiming, “When we are filled to the measure with the fullness of Christ, you sweet thing, you cannot believe the needs we can meet. We can do what we know we can’t. And while you’re doing it, you’re just thinking, ““That ain’t me! That really ain’t me!”” No—it’s God.”¹⁰⁶ Moore fades off screen.

Tracey Frederick has this to say about how stories affect us. “Stories can make a speaker more real to the audience, releasing them from their private experiences to public consideration and examples so listeners learn how to overcome the same kind of hurdles in their own personal lives.”¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Frederick, 109.

November 11, 2009, has Moore speaking the third message on “To Know and Be Known.” Moore immediately jumps into her fear of others really knowing the real her. At the end of the message she shares intimate details about herself. “I was a little girl devastated and violated by someone I should have been able to trust. It undermined every relationship I would have for the next thirty years.”¹⁰⁸

Moore teaches on “Wrecked, But Not Ruined,” on November 2, 2011. As the video begins Moore asks the audience to turn in their Bibles with her which launches her into a mantra about getting a new Bible.

I’ve got to tell you something. I’ve got a brand-new Bible this time around. I get a new one about every four or five years. By the time I’ve marked it up good where I start to anticipate what the word is going to be on that page I know it’s time for a new one. If I’ve written all over it and I’ve marked it up then it’s time to get a new one. But I never can find anything in the new one. You can understand...But it’s so much fun because the word just leaps off the page at you again.¹⁰⁹

Moore briefly moves back to her focus about teaching her audience to keep their lives focused on the Rock, Jesus. As she talks about storms in life coming piled on top of one another, she shares a personal story.

My daughter’s identity got stolen here recently with her bank account. Four hundred dollars out of her account before she knew what happened. Turn around and then you have a plumbing repair that costs you five hundred -even more than what you lost before.

Moore speaks for a moment before launching into a story about her role as a grandmother. She speaks in detail about her four and a half year old grandson and his strong personality. His parents have been teaching him to have control and he has understood it to be,

¹⁰⁸ Moore, “To Know and Be Known”

¹⁰⁹ Moore, “Wrecked, but Not Ruined”

“I have a troll.”¹¹⁰ Moore links this to those who feel as if they have a troll by not having control over the storms that ride in and out of their lives.

In the fifth episode analyzed which aired on September 11, 2013, Moore continues to rely on personal experience by sharing that the Word of God “just thrills me. Not every day does it stand the hair on the back of my neck straight up, but a lot of days it does.”¹¹¹

Moore moves on to an extended narrative to illustrate the point that when Christians arrive in Heaven, their goal should be to see the person—Christ--they love more than even getting any reward.

Moore’s husband is an active, competitive hunter. Moore brags on him being an expert shot. One afternoon he calls Moore to let her know he shot a hundred pigeons made of clay in a row, which is a major feat, but he tied with another man. They had a tiebreaker, but Keith Moore did not win. Moore shares several details about how she feels about her husband, how she encourages him, and how she disparages any of his competition. She brings her story to a close by bragging on how much she loves the trophies that he brings home, so she asks him about the trophy. Keith Moore states, “You know what? I didn’t wait for it.” When Moore asks him why he left early, he replies, “Because I couldn’t wait to get home and show you my score card.”¹¹²

Moore links her husband’s desire to show her his score card and see her reaction with the desire Christians need to have to hear their “Beloved” say, “Well done!”¹¹³

Beth Moore shares her personal stories and her lengthy narratives in order to give women the courage they need to continue reaching for their spiritual goals.

¹¹⁰ Moore “Wrecked, but not Ruined.”

¹¹¹ Moore, “Our True Selves.”

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

Characteristic Two: Feminine Speakers Speak to the Audience as Peers

Speaking to other women as equals is another way in which a speaker relates to the audience. The goal is to make the audience feel as if they are sharing coffee or chatting on a park bench, as they would with a friend.

As Moore speaks in “The Mercy Seat,” she refers to Peter and John racing to the tomb after Mary excitedly tells them Jesus is gone. She describes the scene in detail as she calls out, “Both were running...This is priceless! ...but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. May I just say that men are going to be men? And it is very important to John that we know, in holy writ, inspired on the pages of scripture, it is important for us to know, incidentally, I (John) outran him!”¹¹⁴ She goes on to laughingly repeat the fact that John beat Peter to the tomb two more times. The audience chuckles along with her.

Later in the message, Moore gets fired up as she talks about banking on absolutes. She emphatically declares that Christ cannot change. She adds, “I don’t know what that does to you, but I’ve got to know that. I’ve got to take heart in that.”¹¹⁵

Speaking in “Filled to the Measure” Moore non-verbally speaks to her audience as her peers as she walks out into the crowd and makes focused eye contact with a few audience members. She also touches a lady’s knee as she intently speaks to her as if she is the only person in the room. As Moore tells the hair brushing story, she uses an audience member’s hair as a prop. Moore smooths the ends of her hair as she talks about how matted the man’s hair was and she recreates the brushing using her hands as the tool. Touching someone’s hair is a sign of intimacy and the whole audience seems to be entranced by Moore’s actions. This draws the audience in as if they were a group of close friends.

¹¹⁴ Moore, “The Mercy Seat.”

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

Of the five episodes analyzed, this is the only one where Moore uses third person pronouns as she speaks to the audience—"your heart," "you're," "how you feel" before she switches back to "we're" and continues speaking in those terms.

Moore opens "To Know and Be Known" with a montage which includes inviting the audience to feel connected to her. She begins.

I'm fully known and I need to be known, but the truth is, I'm scared to be that kind of known. Such an intimate knowledge, I'm scared of that. I wonder who is running now? I wonder, who has got that terrible fear besides me that if somebody really knew us, they would never love us. We can be so convinced that if they knew the real us they wouldn't love us that we can make up an entire history—anybody ever do that? ...What's that all about? What's at the heart of that? Is it just that we're idiots or that we're scared for somebody to know the real us? Because if you knew the real me, you would not love me. Let me ask you a question today, who have you bared your soul to that betrayed you? ...I know what it is like to finally decide you have met the person who can take it And then they tell it and you think, that took me 30 years to tell somebody. I finally told someone who my abuser was and then I heard it from someone else. I thought, how could you tell that? How could you tell that? It was hard for me; it was private to me.¹¹⁶

Moore has a way of sharing her struggles while giving women permission to admit that they have the same struggles. Moore shares personal details that create a sense of equality with her audience. Webster defines peers as "a person who belongs to the same age group or social group as someone else. One that is of equal standing with another."¹¹⁷ The audience--whether the in-studio or the television--become Moore's peers as she continues to declare her inner struggles.

"Wrecked, but not Ruined" brings Moore sharing a hypothetical story about what life looks like when more than one storm strikes at the same time.

I'm just talking now, relatively speaking, for anybody that might be tuning in. Then maybe your mother-in-law moves in and maybe she moves in with her cat and maybe you are allergic to her cat and maybe you find something

¹¹⁶ Moore "To Know and Be Known"

¹¹⁷ "Peer," Merriam Webster, www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/peer, Accessed October 18, 2014.

dreadful on the laptop and maybe you get to work that particular day and somebody says, “You know, you look tired today.” Like what are you supposed to say to that? And then they go, “Well, I don’t mean you don’t look good. I mean you just look tired.” And it’s too late! It’s too late! Because you know that this storm you’re going through is showing all over your face and probably all over your hair. Would somebody say amen to that? Storms colliding all in one place.¹¹⁸

The audience is nodding and chuckling even as the story continues on with the exaggerated details.

Moore continues to bring the audience to her inner circle as she turns to more serious thoughts in “Our True Selves.” Moore is speaking on how God blesses people so that they may give their blessings away. Moore encourages the audience to have that deliverance from Jesus. She begs them to have what she has enjoyed. “But I want you to have Him...A lot of times I’ll be up early with Him in the morning and it will be like I can almost sense His presence right around me. Often enough where I live for it, I’ll tell you that.”¹¹⁹

Characteristic Three: Feminine Speakers Invite Audience Participation

There are many ways Moore invites her audience to participate. One way is through the use of rhetorical questions. In the 110 minutes of episode time that was analyzed, 99 rhetorical questions were asked. That is almost a question per minute of teaching. Moore draws her audience in and as the camera pans, heads are seen nodding, lips move in agreement, and audible murmurs of agreement are heard. In reference to rhetoric, Campbell says that it is “persuasion, which makes us human and thereby helps us create community.”¹²⁰ The audience responds as if they feel connected to Moore.

¹¹⁸ Moore, “Wrecked, but not Ruined.”

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Campbell, *Man Cannot*, 2.

As Moore begins teaching in the first episode aired, she begins with, “I want us to see this scene, to smell this scene, to feel it, to feel the wind blowing in our faces! I want you to start with me.”¹²¹ She shares one sentence of scripture and begins to question. “I wonder how many of us are morning people? How many of us just wake up, raring to go, while it is still dark?”¹²² She continues to describe Mary Magdalene’s visit to the tomb. She explains how Mary would hold the cloak around her. “If you were in her place wearing sandals while it was dark, you would have had your cloak tightly held around you...”¹²³ She goes on to describe the frame of mind Mary would have been in and asks the audience to picture it. As she continues with the lesson she talks about how John is referred to as the “disciple that Jesus loves”¹²⁴ while noting John is the only one who refers himself in that way. “Do you not find that just a little bit humorous?”¹²⁵ As she shares “Everything must be...” she asks the audience to repeat after her. She asks them to say “must.” Which transfers to a one-sided conversation of how Moore appreciates absolutes. She asks the listeners if they like absolutes, too.

Further on in the message Moore has gone back to Mary Magdalene and is discussing her crying at the tomb. She explains Mary is crying and having a fit. She turns to the audience, “When was the last time you just had a fit? If it’s been too long, it might be time.”¹²⁶

As the message closes Moore wonders through the mind of Mary Magdalene. “What do you do now? Where is life now? Who will keep me from going back now? What will I do now?”¹²⁷ While these thoughts are suggested to be what Mary is thinking, she looks in the tomb and sees two angels where Christ had been placed the day before. Moore asks the audience,

¹²¹ Moore, “The Mercy Seat.”

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

“How many angels?”¹²⁸ They respond in unison, “Two!”¹²⁹ Moore ends her message describing where the angels were sitting in the tomb and asks, “What in Heaven’s name is that about?”¹³⁰

As Moore teaches in “Filled to the Measure,” she is asking the audience to look at their hearts to be sure they are pure and not filled with idolatry. She moves to ask, “How many bad relational decisions have we made because of a deluded heart?”¹³¹ Later in the message she wants the audience to be sure their hearts are full of the love of Christ and she begs, “Oh, please go there with me.”¹³²

The third episode centers on being fully known by God and being able to trust His heart. Moore moves on to ask, “Who has betrayed you?”¹³³ After further explanation of betrayal, and declaring that God would never commit that action to anyone, Moore makes it personal. “I wonder if anybody can go here with me, has anybody but me ever stayed in a relationship long after you knew you should have because of all they knew. Am I the only one? Anybody know what I’m talking about?”¹³⁴

Moore continues by asking, “Anybody know what I’m talking about?” two more times, and adding, “Are you listening to me?” and “Anybody going with me there?”¹³⁵

In “Wrecked, but not Ruined,” Moore begins by speaking directly to the studio audience and then turning her attention to the television audience. She is asking everyone to open their Bibles with her. She then states that she wants both audiences to plug in. To the television audience she says, “...When I ask a question and I ask them to answer it out loud I want you to

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Moore, “To Know and Be Known”

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

do that, too. The more you get into it the more fun you will have and the more personal this Word will become to you.”¹³⁶

After the scripture is read and further explanation is given, Moore asks the audience to write down a quote and take notes. While they are writing, Moore asks them to “peruse their own personal life right now”¹³⁷ and she asks the audience to

tell me, just on one little hand, how many storms you have going on right now. I mean, just like can't we just go through one thing at a time. Does anybody ever think that besides me? I mean, why does everything have to come crashing down at once. And it seems like, it would be like, does everybody hate me today? Anybody know what I'm talking about? Like, what? What? Do I have something on me that asks you to pick on me today?¹³⁸

Moore asks several more rhetorical questions as the message concludes. The camera pans the audience smiling and nodding in agreement.

The most recent message which aired on September 11, 2013 is titled, “Our True Selves.” Moore begins by asking the audience to “Please stare into your scriptures.”¹³⁹ She reads one verse of scripture and begins inviting the audience to join her in the concept of restoration.

Have you ever had such a restoration with someone that you knew you were practically staring in the face of God? Have you ever been restored to someone in an impossible situation—I mean absolutely impossible? When you're just going like, 'Listen, when I see you, I see God because there is no way under Heaven you and I could ever be speaking.' Anybody? It's the wildest moment.

Moore finishes this message with several more rhetorical questions. Don't you find it interesting that the two men themselves had peace? But their descendants fought? Anybody

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Moore, “Our True Selves.”

fighting somebody else's battle where they have gotten peace and you're still fighting it?

Anybody know what I'm talking about?¹⁴⁰

Characteristic Four: Feminine Speakers Create Arguments Inductively that Lead to Generalizations

"Feminine speakers, especially women, must create an alternative viewpoint without overstepping social boundaries of femininity," says Tracey Frederick.¹⁴¹ Moore teaches as if she is having a conversation with the audience, weaving from one thought to the next.

Moore begins part one of "The Mercy Seat" sharing details of the scene of the tomb. She moves on to an explanation of how the week was organized during the ancient Hebrew days.

In "Filled to the Measure," Moore begins by discussing how our souls need to be filled with Christ, not idols. Souls that are not filled with Christ will turn to addictions. She moves on to talking about how people try to fill their own hearts. "When we dig our own cisterns it's not going to work. It is not going to work. It has cracks in it every time and everything we pour in it just pours out of it."¹⁴²

Moore tells the audience they have to be careful of what they are full of, that it needs to be love that comes from a particular source.

Every single one of us has an innate, overwhelming, not just desire to be loved, but a need to be loved. You are never at greater risk, nor am I, than when we are not feeling properly loved. We will look for that. You want to talk about an empty vessel? If we do not go to God to get that cup filled, let me tell you we are going to get ourselves into a tremendous amount of trouble, because there is something very real inside of each one of us that not only needs to be full, I've got to know somebody totally loved me. I cannot change that, no matter what I do.¹⁴³

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Frederick, 12.

¹⁴² Moore, "Filled to the Measure."

¹⁴³ Ibid.

Moore moves on to several narratives before she comes to the conclusion. “You cannot believe the needs we can meet. We can do what we know we can’t. And while you’re doing it, you’re just thinking, ‘That ain’t me! That really ain’t me!’ No—it’s God.”¹⁴⁴

In “To Know and be Known” Moore’s focus is on allowing others to see the real person inside. She declares “God searches us out. He loves revelation. That’s true intimacy. Be aware of instant intimacy with anybody!”¹⁴⁵ She explains that taking the time to get to know others is the basis for relationships, slowly allowing others to see inside. She brings this point out as she turns to a brief discussion on marriage.

Let me tell you one thing that shuts down marriages and why so many marriages get bored and stale is because we’ve quit searching one another out. We just decided somehow with the physical or with just having the family together, now we know everything there is to be known. No, we do not! We quit trying! As long as we’re alive and we have new experiences and new encounters and go through new seasons, we are constantly changing. There is constantly a new depth and a new texture being put into our lives but we cease seeking them and learning them.¹⁴⁶

Moore teaches on “Wrecked, but Not Ruined,” and starts off with the story of Paul and Luke being stranded after a storm at sea. As she is talking about the storm in the Bible, she begins to talk about the 1991 movie, “The Perfect Storm.” She moves on to discuss the pressure storms which came together to form the massive storm and moves on to an analysis of the word, “perfect.” Moore goes on, “And what I want to present to you as we start this series together is that sometimes God allows some storms to come together in such a way that they fulfill something ultimately that would never have happened otherwise; that there is a plan. As hard as it is to see in the wind, as hard as it is to see in the waves, there really is a plan going on and

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Moore, “To Know and be Known.”

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

somehow in it that whatever we're going through we really do get to be a part of whether or not it will be a destructive storm or a perfect storm."¹⁴⁷

The last episode reviewed was "Our True Selves." Moore begins by talking about personal relationships being restored. She continues proclaiming to the audience God has blessed them so that they may "give it away."¹⁴⁸ Moore moves on to tell the story of Jacob and Esau and compares their restoration to each other and their father to the story of the prodigal son and the restoration of father to son. "While we're making all of our excuses why we don't deserve it, why we don't deserve it. He just keeps putting the son ship and daughter ship all over us as people; that we would know we are the product of the grace of God and not our own works and not our own doing. Oh, praise you, God! Oh, praise you, God!"¹⁴⁹

Moore takes the argument to the next step. She tells the audience that you sometimes have to "wrestle"¹⁵⁰ with Jesus to get to His hold. Still on her way to discussing "Our True Selves," Moore goes back to the story of Jacob and Esau and how, even after they stopped fighting, their families still fought. She then detours to talk about how people fight other people's battles, even to the point of hating a twelve-year old.

After telling a long story about her and her husband, Keith, Moore brings the message to a close.

See, when we see Jesus...it's why we're just going to take all the rewards and just throw it at Him, because we're going, 'I've got enough. I've been blessed by you. I bear your name.' And all that is going to matter to us is that our beloved says, 'Well done! Beth, in all of your flaws, in all your weakness, I present before my Father a perfect score card You shot 100, girlfriend, out of 100!' Because of Jesus Christ! Because he shot for me. Because He did it for me. Perfect score card! The Word of God says He will present

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Moore, "Our True Selves."

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

us holy and blameless before our God and Father. It doesn't get better than that. Perfect score card! So forget the crowns, take the crowns, crown Him with many crowns--all I want is to hear my Beloved say, 'Whoo! Well done!'"

Characteristic Five: Feminist Speakers Create Identification and Empower Their Audience

T.J. Goodrich explains that the term "empowerment," usually demonstrates a benevolent but unilateral transaction in which one person enhances another's ability to feel competent and take action.¹⁵¹ In Moore's teachings, this shows up in several ways. One way, which has already been discussed, is through her use of rhetorical questions. Another way is through her use of personal stories, which allow the audience to know they are not alone and they can identify with Moore as a person, as a woman, as a mother, as a grandmother, as a victim, and as a child of God. Moore also shares personal opinions and empowers the audience through her use of encouragement and identification with them.

In her first message on *LIFE Today* Moore shares, "I like a little "must!" I like sometimes "always!" I like sometimes some "never!" I like some things that I can absolutely depend on no matter what."¹⁵² Moore is referring to the fact that God can never change His mind. She empowers the audience to continue to believe because "He is as surely coming back as He came the first time, because everything written about Him in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled."¹⁵³

She connects this to Mary Magdalene discovering the tomb of Christ is empty and weeping. She was "Crying like only a woman can!" Moore goes on to give the audience permission to cry, or release emotions, in that way. "If it's been too long, it might be time.

¹⁵¹ As qtd in Frederickson, Thelma J. Goodrich, Ed. *Women and Power: Perspectives for Family Therapy* (New York: Norton 1991) 3-35.

¹⁵² Moore, "The Mercy Seat."

¹⁵³ Ibid.

Sometimes you just need to shut the door--you just need to get everybody out of the house and you just need to have a fit! Sometimes there's just so much pent up inside of you, sometimes you are just so frustrated you don't know what to do, and something needs out of there, and it just may be that this is a good day to have a fit and it was a great day for Mary."¹⁵⁴ Moore gives the audience permission, not only through their identification with Moore, but through their identification with Mary Magdalene, recognized as "a woman who accompanied Christ and ministered to Him (Luke 8:2-3)...She is next named as standing at the foot of the cross (Mark 15:40, Matthew 27:56, John 19:25, Luke 23:49). She saw Christ laid in the tomb and she was the first recorded witness of the Resurrection."¹⁵⁵ For women who are striving to achieve a life closely allied with that of Christ, identifying with Mary Magdalene is as close of an example of a female friend of Christ on earth as can ever be seen.

In "Filled to the Measure" Moore opens with "Everything we switch out for what Christ came to minister to our souls, every bit of that is an idol--every bit of that! So, we have struggles thinking of the Old Testament concepts, of their culture, when really we understand this one. We are a culture that certainly understands idolatry. We'll turn to substitution."¹⁵⁶ Moore goes on to explain the heart is deceitful and cannot be trusted. If it is not filled by Christ, "...we're just an accident waiting to happen--that heart will lie like a dog to us. Anybody know what I'm talking about?"¹⁵⁷ As Moore continues to discuss how to empty the heart to be filled with Christ, she challenges and excites the audience with a statement about being full. "Full! And with that fullness comes power, and you never know what you're going to do with that kind of power.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Hugh Pope, "St. Mary Magdalen," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Volume 9,(New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910) (September 27, 2013) www.newadvent.org/cathen/09761a.htm.

¹⁵⁶ Moore, "Filled to the Measure."

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

Something beyond you.”¹⁵⁸ Moore goes on to tell a story of something she would have never done apart from the power of Christ in her.

The very title of the third message analyzed “To Know and Be Known” is designed to identify with women before the message begins. Moore opens with “I’m fully known and I need to be known, but the truth is, I’m scared to be that kind of known.”¹⁵⁹ Moore discusses how she has learned to be completely confidential when secrets are shared with her, because she has been on the other side, where her deepest secrets have been shared. She identifies with her audience as someone who has secrets to share, as well as secrets to keep. She empowers her audience to share their secrets, as well as keep the secrets shared with them. She explains the devastation of betrayal.

There is nothing like being betrayed by somebody you’ve let in that kind of close. You see it is always, always, the telltale sign of betrayal. Nobody that is distant from you ever has the ability to betray you; it’s only somebody that’s gotten close to us, only somebody that we’ve let into some of the intimate places of our heart and mind. Other people can wrong us, but only somebody that’s been close to us can betray us.¹⁶⁰

Moore explains how betrayal can get worse than it seems on the surface. She talks about “people who will use what they know against you to get what they want...Am I the only one that has had this experience? Like why in the world did I bring them into this? That terrible feeling of I am not safe with them.”¹⁶¹ She encourages her audience by allowing them to know that no matter how unsafe one may feel with another person, only God knows every detail and He would never betray anyone. “I wonder if anybody can go here with me, has anybody but me ever stayed in a relationship long after you knew you should have because of all they knew? Am I the only one?

¹⁵⁸ Moore, “Filled to the Measure.”

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

Lord, have mercy! I mean, we're together to the death, but one of us is going to have to kill the other. Anybody know what I'm talking about?"¹⁶² Moore again refers to a relationship with Christ and the fact that only He really knows a person, and He has total acceptance of each one. Moore is passionate as she gives the audience an option concerning betrayal. "...either we shut down and we stop sharing or we begin to do what I'd like to call the bare share." Moore closes her eyes as she continues, "And by that I'm spelling it B-A-R-E, bare share."¹⁶³ She opens her eyes, "In other words, in thirty minutes we just tell everything to get it over with. Anybody know what I'm talking about? Just tell it all."¹⁶⁴ The audience is smiling and lightly chuckling, as if they know, but they understand all too well what Moore is referring to. Moore explains further about the 'bare share.' She then states,

But this is what God revealed to my heart. I'm asking God to help me to be able to explain it well because this is one of these concepts that is so big and so deep it is hard to put into words. God began to show me that we can look to Him for the nature of healthy intimacy and relationship because--are you listening to me? (Moore gets on her knees and looks directly in an audience member's face as she continues.) Because I just thought this was profound, it is always based on revelation—progressive revelation. That's the way God is...He brings us into a place where little by little He continues to pull veils back and shows us who He really is...The mystery is we get to know Him layer by layer...That is also the nature of healthy relationships. Is anybody going here with me? (Moore gets up off of her knees.) Because we were not meant to know everything there was to know the first five seconds. It is why--I want somebody to go with me here because so many of you, somebody listening has been like me that they felt like that the only thing that they really have to give of value is their self, their body. And the thing about it is, we feel like we've just given away a treasure that was meant to be saved and progressively revealed in intimacy to the person that God has chosen for us. But we feel like we have been emotionally raped and we have nothing left. (The lady behind Moore closes her eyes and sadly nods her head.) Anybody know what I'm talking about?¹⁶⁵

¹⁶² Moore, "To Know and Be Known."

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

Moore is now sitting eye level with the audience as she gives her audience the courage to go on with her. “Because we didn’t realize that we were treasures, that we’re valued, that we’re (Moore grits her teeth as she finishes) worth (pause) getting (pause) to (pause) know (pause). Listen to me; you’re worth getting to know.”¹⁶⁶

As Moore brings this message to a close, she identifies with her audience. “I was telling somebody earlier that was telling me they had come from a similar background of mine. I said, ‘You know, I’ve often wondered if people understood that their fifteen minutes cost us fifteen years if it would make any difference?’ Anybody know what I’m talking about?”¹⁶⁷ Moore doesn’t leave her audience there. She empowers them as she says, “One of the most freeing things I have ever learned about God, girlfriend and guyfriend, is that He has no dark side at all. No perverse side, no distorted side, no co-dependent side. He is not going to get messed up with us. And glory to His name, He is not going to get messed up by us!”¹⁶⁸

“Wrecked, but not Ruined” has Moore explaining how overwhelming it can be to go through the storms of life. She talks about how devastating these storms can be and how they can come upon someone in multiple numbers. “I get letters I can’t even fathom that I’m reading, where someone will be diagnosed with cancer and going through very drastic chemotherapy and the spouse can’t take it and leaves. And you’re just thinking, ‘You gotta be kidding!’ I mean, you really honestly gotta be kidding.”¹⁶⁹ Moore compares these storms attacking someone to “...exactly what was happening with Luke and Paul and the crew aboard this ship, they were just

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Moore, “Wrecked but not Ruined.”

surrounded by chaos. I wonder if anybody in this audience, anybody on the other side of that screen just feels like there is nothing but chaos in your personal world.”¹⁷⁰

Moore then identifies with her audience by speaking of popular technology. She uses the terms “tweeted” and “twitter,” so she identifies with the technologically savvy audience, yet she acknowledges she has not seen what could have been on “twitter” a thousand times which allows her to identify with the technologically challenged audience. She identifies with a church member in her reference to “the pastor” and she identifies with parents of teenagers in her hypothetical story with a sixteen-year old. She also identifies with anyone feeling as if they are in the middle of one or more life storms.

Somebody told me the other day an acrostic for chaos. I’ve never seen it before. You’ve probably seen it a thousand--you probably tweeted it this morning on twitter. But it says this: chaos--can’t have anyone over syndrome. Isn’t that the best? When you can’t have anyone over syndrome. When there’s that kind of craziness in your household that you know right now is not the best time for your sixteen-year old to have company. There are a lot of people that really would not--this is not the week to have the pastor over. Anybody understand what I’m saying to them? Just chaos! A northeaster, two storms coming together.¹⁷¹

Moore moves from the lighter issues of having company over to conclude her message with an encouragement to defy the storms that come into a life.

I just want to present to you that sometimes we really do think we have obtained what we wanted and God still has something for us we have yet to discover. Yes, He will let some winds blow and collide right where we’re standing to bring us to a place where we are no longer satisfied with what we had in Him. But we know that there is a whole world of relationship to be had in Christ Jesus, far beyond anything this human realm could give us. We’ll think we just obtained what we wanted...And a storm comes along to blow everything that can be blown. As the book of Hebrews says, to shake everything that can be shaken so that which cannot be shaken will stand. It will stand!

¹⁷⁰ Moore, “To Know and Be Known.”

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

Moore extends this encouragement to let the audience know there is a reason behind the storms and to give them tenacity to hold on tight.

Moore identifies with her audience in “Our True Selves” by empowering her audience to give their blessings away. She gives them a tangible measuring stick, a finish line. She says, “We know we have grasped the blessing when we keep trying to give it away.”¹⁷² Giving her audience total freedom to accept the blessing that comes from God, she declares, “...that we would know we are the product of the grace of God and not our own works and not our own doing.”¹⁷³ In the world of Christianity, total empowerment comes from God. There is no higher power. To allow the audience to accept that giving their blessing away comes only from God’s power is the definitive form of empowerment. Ultimately, the audience is striving to be like Christ, not Beth Moore, though she is the audible representative to this audience.

Moore reverts back to the character focus of her message, the relationship of Jacob and Esau. She discusses how the men came to be at peace with one another, yet they still went their separate ways. “They parted. Sometimes in a situation where God will bring some peace, He doesn’t mean for you to go marry them.”¹⁷⁴ This is one of the few times Moore empowers by directly stating a truth.

As Moore brings this message to a close, she states, “This...has been all about becoming a more honest version of ourselves--not trying quite so hard to hide our limp; to lay down our working people for working with people.”¹⁷⁵ She goes on to share a quote from C.S. Lewis from *Screwtape Letters*. “When God talks of their losing their selves, He means only abandoning the

¹⁷² Moore, “Our True Selves.”

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

clamor of self will. Once they have done that, He really gives them back all their personality and boasts when they are wholly His—(and I mean W-H-O-L-L-Y,) they will be more themselves than ever.”¹⁷⁶ Moore continues to encourage the audience to give themselves completely to Christ and insists, “...We will never be more ourselves, with the fullness of our personality and the uniqueness of our gifting than when we just wholly give ourselves over to our very faithful, faithful God.”¹⁷⁷ As the final words in the message, Moore leaves the audience with an indelible statement. “...All I want to hear my Beloved (Christ) say, “Whoo! Well, done!”¹⁷⁸ For those who would hear Moore speak, this statement resonates with their soul. Reminding the audience the end goal is to hear Christ speak those words to them is empowering the audience to keep on.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

Chapter 5: Discussion

As Moore displays the five characteristics of feminine rhetoric in her teachings, there are three main themes that dominate the five messages analyzed. The themes will be listed here and discussed in greater detail following. The first theme observed, beginning with the early messages and moving forward is about losing oneself for a greater Cause, which includes dealing with feelings of unworthiness. A second theme that overrides Moore's messages is that she gives substantial warnings in each of her messages. Whether it is about what one may miss, the pain one may live with unnecessarily, or about the enemy of the Christian, Moore cautions her listeners about a life lived without Christ. The final theme of the five messages is about what drives Moore to continue her teaching ministry. Moore is passionate about the future, not just on earth, but her eternal future, as well as that of her listeners. In addition, she uses descriptive verbs to encourage her listeners to desire the Word of God, the source of her teachings. It is as if she is searching for words which are strong enough to penetrate the hearts of her listeners to describe an inner yearning that is too strong for semantics.

As Moore taught each of the five messages, she became more personal. This is to suggest that as Moore became more comfortable in her teaching, she also used more personal experience and extended narrative. In the latter four messages, Moore insists that the listeners must lose themselves, and in doing so, she shares her unworthiness. This is not found in the first message analyzed, which is also the first session taught on *Life Today*. It becomes a major theme in each of the other messages taught. This theme is directly tied to the first characteristic of feminine rhetoric, which feminine speakers rely on personal experiences and extended narrative.

In “Filled to the Measure” Moore shares the narrative about how God told her to brush the man’s hair. Moore begins by explaining she had been memorizing scripture and desiring to be used by God--in a way she thought fitting--never guessing brushing hair could be a part of His plan. She describes how uncomfortable she felt approaching the man in a crowded airport, with so many onlookers. Moore states, “I always have something to confess. I’m going to bring Him my concerns. I’m going to tell on people that have hurt my feelings. Do you understand what I’m saying...Then after I just empty myself before Him, I want to ask Him, ‘Lord, You come, You just overtake me.’”¹⁷⁹

This theme is continued in “To Know and Be Known” as Moore declares, “Is it just that we’re idiots or that we’re scared for somebody to know the real us? Because if you knew the real me, you would not love me.”¹⁸⁰ Moore goes on to share the fact that she had been betrayed, not only by being abused as a child, but by sharing her abuser’s name with someone who told someone else--after it took Moore thirty years to build the courage to tell the name to another. Moore convinces her listeners she understands the feelings of betrayal, but that the solution to the deep pain of betrayal is to lose oneself to Jesus. She concludes this message by sharing, “...Something in me knew to distrust authority figures until Jesus, who has never one time betrayed me in any piece of information he has ever known.”¹⁸¹

In her message, “Wrecked, but not Ruined,” Moore states, “I just want to present to you that sometimes we really do think we have obtained what we wanted and God still has something for us we have yet to discover.”¹⁸² Moore leaves it open for the listener to wonder if there is more. Moore uses examples such as finding out one has cancer, and a husband deciding to leave

¹⁷⁹ Moore, “Filled to the Measure.”

¹⁸⁰ Moore, “To Know and Be Known.”

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Moore, “Wrecked, but not Ruined.”

during that time. Her focus is on encouraging the audience to keep their eyes on Jesus even when the road is rough. She desperately wants her audience to look toward eternity and understand there is something or Someone out there much greater than present circumstances.

In the last message analyzed, Moore comes full circle by declaring, “I don’t have one valuable thing in me apart from Him.”¹⁸³ Moore is describing the restoring of Jacob and Esau’s relationship. She shares if we have the blessing of knowing Christ and live for Him, how there is a desire to give it (the blessing) away to another. By losing oneself, one will realize, as did Jacob, “He had something that could never be taken from him.”¹⁸⁴ This is the ultimate goal of Moore’s teachings--that this life is not about “us” and there is nothing more desirous than a relationship with Christ.

In each of these messages Moore is sharing something deeply personal. She uses the events that have shaped her life to bring the audience to a place where they are willing to change their lives. She wants them to find the same freedom she has found by losing themselves for a great cause, which Moore believes is following Jesus Christ.

A second theme that occupies Moore’s teachings is that each of her five messages has a warning to her listeners. Moore considers the consequences of a life not lived for Christ or with Christ. She shares that the cost can be paid here on earth, or in Heaven. Moore uses the feminine characteristic of creating inductive arguments that lead to generalizations. She is a master of designing subtle reasons why it would be beneficial for one to follow Christ without sounding harsh or extreme. The consequences laid out are a natural progression of one’s choices. For example, In “The Mercy Seat,” Moore looks at the relationship between Jesus and Mary Magdalene. Moore recognizes the fear that may have overtaken Mary’s heart. It is

¹⁸³ Moore, “Our True Selves.”

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

historically accepted that she was a prostitute and her relationship with Christ changed her life--right down to her profession and livelihood. When it seemed as if all was lost, Moore questions with Mary, “What do you do now? Where is life now? Who will keep me from going back now? What will I do now?”¹⁸⁵ The use of the word now in each of the questions is to suggest that when life suddenly changes, now, Mary, as well as each listener, has a decision to make. Since this message is part one of six, Moore leaves the questions open ended for listeners to conclude the consequences of Mary’s decision, as well as those of their own.

Moore’s warnings get stronger as the messages continue chronologically. In Moore’s message, “Filled to the Measure,” the warnings become more personal. Moore begins by teaching on idolatry and substitution. She warns listeners that “the heart is deceitful.”¹⁸⁶ She goes on to describe toxic relationships and how they can destroy the intimacy that was meant for Christ--when love, particularly confused with a sexual relationship, can rob one of the unconditional love that comes from Christ.

Moore not only teaches about being known, but warns about how being desperate to be known can be destructive in her message, “To Know and Be Known.” She tells about sharing a deeply personal secret and how she was betrayed. She not only warns her listeners to be careful who they trust, but emphatically encourages her listeners not to be betrayers of what is entrusted to them. She also warns about how the desire to be known too quickly can quench a relationship before it has a chance to even begin. This leads Moore to warn about how the desperation to be known can be so deep, that sometimes that desperation leads one to give away her body. Moore

¹⁸⁵Moore, “The Mercy Seat.”

¹⁸⁶Moore, “Filled to the Measure.”

begs her listeners to heed these warnings and find their intimacy with Christ as she declares, "...He has no dark side at all...He is not going to get messed up by us!"¹⁸⁷

Moore warns of a spiritual dark side in the message, "Wrecked, but not Ruined." As she describes the storms one may go through in life, she discusses the movie "The Perfect Storm." This movie depicts the fatal struggle of a ship's crew who get caught in the storm of the century. As she explains the destructiveness of Mother Nature, Moore compares this to the destructiveness of the spiritual nature. "We really do have an unseen enemy and powerful foes in invisible places and this is a war. It's a war! And somehow we think that surely the enemy would have scruple enough not to hit us when we're down. But that's exactly where he looks. Exactly the spot where he goes to kick as hard as he can."¹⁸⁸

The warnings continue in the message "Our True Selves" as Moore warns about how the fears of giving oneself over to Christ may feel as if one is losing who they really are. Moore strongly encourages listeners that they will never be the complete person they were meant to be, and they will miss out on the good things Christ has to offer, if they do not allow Christ control of their lives. Speaking of those who choose to give Him control, Moore says, "Once they have done that, He really gives them back all their personality and boasts that when they are wholly His...they will be more themselves than ever."¹⁸⁹

The third major theme of the five teachings analyzed of Moore was that of her focus on the future, whether here on earth or in Heaven. To convey her passion for encouraging others to seek to center their lives on God, Moore uses descriptive action verbs as she begs her audience to

¹⁸⁷ Moore, "To Know and Be Known."

¹⁸⁸ Moore, "Wrecked, but not Ruined."

¹⁸⁹ Moore, "Our True Selves."

seek God. Moore uses the characteristic of creating identification and empowering her audiences as she spurs them on to keep their eyes on the future.

Moore begins her very first message on *Life Today* by asking the audience to use their five senses. “I want us to see this scene, to smell this scene, to feel it, to feel the wind blowing in our faces!”¹⁹⁰ As she introduces the scripture for the day, she passionately states, “Let it (The Word of God) jump off the page and into your sweet little heart.”¹⁹¹ In the same message, “The Mercy Seat,” Moore reminds her audience that God cannot lie and His second coming will happen, because He said it will. She is gently reminding the audience there is an unseen future worth living for.

Moore begins her message “Filled to the Measure” by asking the audience to “jot down”¹⁹² a scripture reference. She goes on to plead with the audience to “...Please go there with me.”¹⁹³ In this message Moore shares the hair brushing narrative. As she concludes the message, after speaking of how one must empty oneself and allow Christ to fill one, Moore whispers, “You sweet thing—you cannot believe the needs we can meet. We can do what we know we can’t. And while you’re doing it, you’re just thinking, ‘That ain’t me! That really ain’t me!’”¹⁹⁴ She concludes with, “No, it’s God.”¹⁹⁵ Moore is continuing to help the audience define their future, not by their past, but by the decisions they make concerning day-to-day living for Christ.

Moore begins “To Know and Be Known” by asking, “Who has betrayed you?”¹⁹⁶ Although she does not use a specific scripture passage in this teaching, she explains the truth of

¹⁹⁰ Moore, “The Mercy Seat.”

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Moore, “Filled to the Measure.”

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Moore, “To Know and Be Known.”

using strong words to explain concepts about God. “God will never perform emotional extortion on you. Never—Never!”¹⁹⁷ and “I’m asking God to please help me to be able to explain to well...God began to show me...Are you listening to me?”¹⁹⁸ Moore goes on to remind listeners the reason one would allow them to be known by God is because it is the foundation for healthy earthly relationships. She implies the future can be full of healthy relationships if the decision to begin to choose a healthy relationship starts with Him. She concludes the message by admonishing the audience, “Lean your sweet little head back today and say, ‘...Go right ahead because the inmost places of my heart and mind are safe with you.’”¹⁹⁹

Moore begins “Wrecked, but not Ruined,” by asking the audience to turn to the scripture passage, wherever they are and whatever they are doing. “...I want you to turn with me...if you’re able to grab a Bible, get it and sit down for a few minutes if you can...if you can grab some scriptures do it, but if not I’m going to read it anyway.”²⁰⁰ Moore continues, “So we want you to completely plug in and when I ask a question...answer out loud.”²⁰¹ She continues discussing the Word of God by saying, “...it’s so much fun because the Word just leaps off the page at you...”²⁰² As she turns the focus toward the reason for studying God’s Word she reminds the audience, “We know there is a whole world of relationship to be had in Christ Jesus, far beyond anything this human realm could give us...And it occurred to me that so much in our material society we’ll talk about having a desire for too much when spiritually and scripturally speaking sometimes we are satisfied with way too little...As the book of Hebrews says, to shake

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Moore “Wrecked, but not Ruined.”

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² Ibid.

everything that can be shaken so that which cannot be shaken will stand. It will stand!”²⁰³

Moore concludes this message by once again reminding the audience that there is an ultimate reason for making the choice to study God’s Word.

“Please stare into your scriptures,”²⁰⁴ is how Moore begins the final message analyzed, “Our True Selves.” Using her strongest verbiage yet, Moore implores the audience, “I want you to have Him. His Word just thrills me...But it’s not enough to me to have that. I want you to have it. I want you to have it. I want you who have been in bondage to know the freedom of Christ Jesus. I want you who have lived a fraudulent past to live in the truth and honesty of the dignity of Christ.”²⁰⁵ Moore concludes the last of these messages with words that capture her ultimate desire.

See, when we see Jesus...it’s why we’re just going to take all the rewards and just throw it at Him...All that is going to matter to us is that our Beloved says, ‘Well Done!’ The Word of God says He will present us holy and blameless before our God and Father. It doesn’t get better than that...all I want to hear my Beloved say, ‘Whoo! Well done!’”²⁰⁶

Moore uses her language, particularly strong verbs, to beseech her listeners to develop a stronger relationship with God, His Word, all the while reminding them that this life is not all there is. There is a critical reason for them to make these choices--their future here on earth and their eternal future will be affected by those choices.

Another way that Moore creates identification with her audience is that in four of the five messages analyzed Moore speaks--always positively--of her family. The audience hears details of her relationship with her husband, Keith, and her two daughters, Amanda and Melissa. In

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Moore, “Our True Selves.”

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

relationship to parenting, she mentions a son-in-law as well as a story of her grandchildren. In “Man Cannot Speak for Her,” Campbell states, “It is a highly appealing form of discourse, particularly if identification between advocate and audience is facilitated by common values and shared experiences.”²⁰⁷

There is one other issue worth noting. Moore speaks to her audience as peers, as equals, not only as women, but as believers in Christ. It must be assumed that Moore is teaching to those who have already been exposed to Jesus Christ, or those who have a relationship with Him. Of the five messages analyzed, Moore does not share “The Gospel”--the story of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ one time. Yet, she alludes to Him and His power to transform a life in each of her teachings. She presents Christ as if one would want to know Him because of the day-to-day relationship one would have with Him or because of the strength He gives one to be who they desire to be. She presents Him as the ultimate change agent in each of the five messages, but not through salvation as one may expect in a typical evangelistic message.

Research Questions

RQ1. How does Beth Moore use the feminine style to appeal to her audience?

Of the five episodes analyzed, Moore used all of the five characteristics in all five episodes. As of October 2013, Moore taught over three hundred episodes on *LIFE Today*. Of those, five were analyzed and they spanned all seven years of her teaching to achieve the best overview possible.

Of Campbell’s five characteristics, feminine speakers rely on personal experience and extended narrative, feminine speakers speak to the audience as peers, feminine speakers invite audience participation, feminine speakers create arguments inductively that lead to

²⁰⁷ Campbell, Man Cannot, 2.

generalizations, and feminine speakers create identification and empower their audiences, Moore was the overall strongest in “creating identification with and empowering her audience.” This characteristic shows up the most during Moore’s messages for a few reasons. One is that she works through her own struggles as her messages progress and the audience can identify with someone who struggles. She personally succeeds in dealing with her struggles and that leads to empowering women to believe they can overcome their struggles. Another reason is because the driving force of Moore’s teaching is to empower her audience to live life for Christ and not let the difficulties of life overshadow that. Moore is passionate about that. A final reason that Moore creates identification and empowers her audience is because she relates to them by discussing her husband, her daughters, her role as a wife and mother, and her role as a follower of Christ.

Of the five messages, Moore used the most time achieving this characteristic in “To Know and Be Known.” This is the most personal of the messages analyzed, in which Moore shares about her past abuse at the beginning of the message and also at the end. Moore talks about the concept of betrayal and the revelation of God to her personally being “so deep it is hard to put it into words.”²⁰⁸ From her message, “Wrecked, but not Ruined,” Moore teaches something she has personally achieved--“...sometimes God allows some storms to come together in such a way that they fulfill something ultimately that would never have happened otherwise; that there is a plan. As hard as it is to see in the wind, as hard as it is to see in the waves, there really is a plan going on and somehow in it that whatever we’re going through we really do get to be a part of whether or not it will be a destructive storm or a perfect storm.”²⁰⁹ Interestingly enough, “Wrecked” was taught exactly one week less than two years after “To

²⁰⁸ Moore, “To Know and Be Known.”

²⁰⁹ Moore, “Wrecked but not Ruined.”

Know and Be Known.” Moore seems to have made peace with her childhood abuse and part of the reason is because there is a bigger plan. She passionately asks women to believe in that plan, because she has personal experience that it heals.

Moore speaks to her audience by relying on personal experience and extended narrative, the second most often used of the five characteristics. In Moore’s message, “Filled to the Measure” Moore tells a story that takes up almost the whole message time. She relays the story of her brushing the man’s hair in the airport after spending some deep time in the Word of God and in prayer that morning. She shares how God used her to fill a need, even though she felt other needs were more important. While speaking on “Our True Selves” Moore uses a third of the message to tell a story about her husband, Keith. Keith is an avid hunter and after a long day of hunting competition he calls Moore to tell her that the competition was fierce and after a tie breaker, he went on to take second place. Moore asks if he is bringing home a big trophy for her and Keith lets Moore know he just couldn’t wait for the trophy, he just wanted to see his wife.

Almost as much as Moore uses extended narrative, she invites audience participation. Moore asks almost a hundred rhetorical questions during the course of the five messages that were analyzed. She asks women to raise their hands, she asks them to “stare into the scriptures,”²¹⁰ and she asks them to repeat after her.

The last two characteristics used are creating arguments inductively and speaking to the audience as peers, respectively. In her message “Our True Selves” Moore shares about how she is driven to teach men and women to love Jesus. She compares how she cannot get over giving it her all with Jacob. “This is what finally happened to Jacob. He finally had it. He knew the moment that he was trying to give it away he had it.”²¹¹ Moore “argues” with the audience as she

²¹⁰ Moore, “Our True Selves.”

²¹¹ Ibid.

begs them to believe that they will never gain more than the freedom that God has already given to them. Moore talks to her audience as if they are sitting at her kitchen table drinking tea together. She talks about issues like making excuses, arguing with her husband, loving on her grandchildren, and finding God's peace in the midst of tragedy.

RQ2: How does Beth Moore's appropriation of the feminine style account for her appeal with her traditionally conservative audiences comprised of both men and women?

Moore has unassumingly crossed over the traditional boundaries of the evangelical world. Her first Sunday school class in Houston, Texas, included both men and women. Although Moore does not openly or willingly invite men to her conferences, broadcasts, or events, it is known men are present, and Moore herself refers to them as "guyfriends."²¹² In reference to her reaching men, there are several components of that question. Moore has been included in the Passion conferences for several years "as the featured woman among many prominent evangelical men, including John Piper and Andy Stanley."²¹³

Although Moore is known among evangelical women, Murphy points out,

Moore's core audience is the thousands of women who participate in her Bible studies, buy her books, and attend her conferences. But Moore's continued participation in national events for young Evangelicals of both sexes alongside men like Piper, a leader of the complementarianism²¹⁴ movement, indicates that Moore is unique in her ability to successfully navigate within a religious culture structured by a conservative gender discourse.²¹⁵

This research concurs with Murphy's conclusion: "Moore's over-the-top success, I believe, results from a gap in standard evangelical preaching: she connects evangelical women (and men who do not fully resonate with evangelical construction of masculinity) with

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ Murphy, 229.

²¹⁴ "Complementarianism vs. Egalitarianism," Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, accessed September 8, 2013, cbmw.org/uncategorized/summaries-of-the-egalitarian-and-complementarian-positions/.

²¹⁵ Murphy, 229.

preaching--the organizing event of evangelical culture.”²¹⁶ She adds, “By feminizing the evangelical sermon, Moore reinvigorates it and the evangelical message...Moore appeals to audiences because she preaches for people, men and women, in the middle of daily lives, something privileged male preachers have sometimes neglected.”²¹⁷

This conclusion parallels the research using feminine rhetorical style. Moore creates identification with her audience, women and men. She speaks highly of her husband, her son-in-law, James Robison (host of *LIFE today*), and the men she speaks of in her sermons, whether Biblical or modern day. This research has also shown that Moore empowers her audience by finding freedom and strength in day-to-day life through Christ. This is not limited to either gender.

As Moore teaches, she does not give gender-specific examples, nor resort to gender clichés. Of the messages analyzed, Moore relies on personal experience and extended narrative the second most of the five characteristics. Moore makes these personal anecdotes of such detail that she connects with the ordinary person. There are two lengthy narratives that Moore shares. One takes up almost the whole message in “Filled to the Measure” and the other takes up a third of the message in “Our True Selves.” Interestingly, both of these lengthy narratives depict men as the central character. In “Our True Selves” Moore relays the story of the gentlemen with long, scraggly hair in the airport. Moore brushes his hair and as she does, she gets to know him. She finds out the man has been sick and is going home to see his bride. He felt so bad about the way he looked and he needed someone to brush his hair. Moore focuses on how God can use people who are filled by Him, but there was also an underlying message that showed how much

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

this man loved his wife and how important she was to him, even after a long illness and an extended time apart.

The second lengthy narrative told by Moore in “Our True Selves” involves a story about Moore’s husband, Keith. She tells about Keith winning second place in a huntsman sporting event of shooting clay pigeons. Moore builds Keith up, even to the point of letting the audience know she calls his opponents names and even refers to them as “fat!” Moore shows respect to her husband, but also admires him for what he has accomplished. This is very different perspective from how men are portrayed through modern day media. Men are encouraged by hearing Moore’s outlook toward them.

Analysis

There is no doubt that Beth Moore has pioneered a new path in the jungle of evangelicalism. One of the most unique aspects about Moore’s path is that it is centered on salvation and the Bible as the authority overall, so one would have to reject the foundations of the faith, so to speak, in order to argue with Moore without seemingly appearing to argue over what has become a “minor” issue--whether men are seated in a room when scripture is taught. That is not to say some have their doubts about her, but because of her sheer popularity, it would be akin to fighting an uphill battle.

She speaks with great passion, using the feminine style, which makes her acceptable, and speaking the doctrines of the evangelical faith, which makes her viable. It would be quite a scandal if the powers that be in the world of evangelicalism tried to quench Moore just because of her gender. It is a scandal that evangelicals cannot afford, and, judging by Moore’s economic value alone, could wreak seismic waves for many years to come.

She herself says, “The more you get into it the more fun you will have and the more personal this Word will become to you.”²¹⁸ This is just one of the many examples of Moore asking, begging, her audience to grasp a hold of her message. She fully believes it will change their lives. She claims to be just like her listeners, so she is letting them know if she can change, be healed, be restored, do something radical for Christ, etc., then anyone can. This is what makes Moore so palatable to listeners. They do not feel as if they are being preached at as they stumble on their journey; they feel as if someone they esteem (as a preacher) is walking along side of them on their journey.

In her dissertation on Joyce Meyers, Tracey Frederick gives substantive reasoning, not only for the acceptance of females in evangelicalism, but for their popularity.

I have argued that by assuming a feminine position and using a feminine style, Meyer remains in a traditional feminine role by giving motherly advice, nurturing her listeners, and encouraging them to forgive themselves and press on. Moreover, Meyer’s religious perspective as presented in a feminine style depicts the Evangelical believer’s ultimate goal: a personal relationship with God...By employing a feminine style she frequently makes herself vulnerable, intentionally confessing her sins and personal failings in her sermons, which then stand as advice from a person who has lived through trials and tribulations and come out the other side stronger for it...Arguably this feminine approach is in keeping with the fundamental goals of the Evangelical movement and the vast majority of Evangelical believers...Through her feminine style, Meyer reinforces the religious needs and central objective of evangelicals: to bring individuals to a personal relationship with God.²¹⁹

The name of Joyce Meyers could easily be substituted with that of Beth Moore, and the results would be the same. Feminine style is the bridge which makes the central belief system of Evangelicalism appetizing to those who may not have listened previously, and renewed to those who have been listeners, or even followers for any length of time.

²¹⁸ Moore, “Wrecked.”

²¹⁹ Frederick, 142.

Perhaps, as with Meyers, the greatest gift Moore gives her listeners is hope. She is so raw in her reality, others feel as if they are looking in the mirror, and they see they too can make it past whatever their hurdle is. Moore assumes the greatest desire of her audience is to walk closely with Christ and she launches her messages from that perspective.

In four of the five messages, Moore opens with scripture within the first two minutes. In the fifth message analyzed, Moore does not use scripture at all, yet it is perhaps the most powerful message if judging by Moore's passion and the audience response. It is scripturally based--the concepts are based on traditional scriptural beliefs--yet, are atypical for someone known as a Bible teacher. Perhaps this brings this research to a conclusive point. Although evangelicalism can be perceived as the platform of males, it has been shown through this research that there have always been women preaching the beliefs of evangelicalism. It is a movement of change and of need. In this present time, Beth Moore, through no intentional effort of her own, is pushing evangelicalism through the next generational door. The five characteristics of feminine rhetorical theory are appealing to the listeners of today and Moore is a master at using each of them.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

There are several limitations to this study. The first limitation to a study of this nature is that only five of Moore's teachings were analyzed. She has taught hundreds of messages, written several books, holds conferences year round, and has a daily blog. To choose five of these teachings is a limited view of all that Moore encompasses.

Another limitation that this study may have is that the researcher shares the same, or a very similar worldview as Moore. The researcher holds to the belief that a relationship with

Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation, and that a life lived without His strength and power is limited. In addition the researcher is committed to believing the scriptures are the Word of God, as Moore believes.

This study is just a tip of the proverbial iceberg. The first recommendation to continue a study in Evangelicalism would be to apply Campbell's theory to popular male speakers of today, such as Andy Stanley, John Piper, or Mark Battenberg to see if their popularity corresponds with feminine theory. Christian speakers, male or female, are worthy of study and contribute to the sociological changes and attitudes found in society. One could broaden the study of males to motivational speakers such as Joel Osteen and Zig Zigler. As Frederick supposes, "Campbell encourages and stresses using the feminine style as a critical lens to better understand speakers who do not adhere to traditional masculine styles of speaking and asks rhetorical scholars to consider the reasons for its use and the potential success of such styles used to overcome certain obstacles."²²⁰ As previously explained, feminine rhetorical style is not limited to females, but a style of speaking in which men can also find listeners.

A second recommendation would be to expand the study to other female speakers, such as Priscilla Shirer, Angela Thomas, or Kay Arthur using the feminine rhetorical theory. One could compare popularity—through revenue sales or number of conference attendees—to the way in which feminine rhetorical theory is used by each speaker.

Moore herself could easily be the subject of multiple studies, using a variety of different theories. Her numerous books, live speaking engagements, continued television ministry, blog, weekly radio address, and Bible studies could be compared, contrasted, and studied through a variety of theories.

²²⁰ Frederick, 149.

Moore could be studied using the Narrative Paradigm Theory founded by Walt Fisher. She includes many narratives in her teachings. Listeners could be studied as to whether they found her stories well-constructed which would mean they give her credibility as an orator.

Perhaps using framing theory would be another fascinating way to study Moore. This could be done from many perspectives, but two will be mentioned. First, a study could be done on the media package used to promote Moore, her books, her Bible studies, and her conferences. This could be done in comparison with other female Evangelical speakers, or as a chronological study of how Moore has been promoted since the time of her first publication. Another way framing theory could be used to study Moore would be to study a particular issue, possibly a specific evangelical issue or a world issue, and study Moore's response and how her stance has allowed her popularity to remain steady, or even increase.

Stuart Hall's Reception Theory would be an interesting lens to study Moore's text or her video teachings and/or conferences. Although this theory is generally applied to an audience of television or film it could easily be translated to studying the audience of Moore. What socioeconomic backgrounds do they bring when they listen to Moore? What is their receptivity to her message based on their education or spiritual journey? How do each of these factors affect how Moore's message is interpreted and what occurs when they hear it?

Conclusion

Chapter one of this thesis began with a justification of this study. Moore is the best-selling author of Lifeway and an integral part of the Evangelical movement, yet there has been only one other study done about her. This brings a new perspective to studying Moore while using Karlyn Kohrs Campbell's Feminine Rhetorical Theory, only the second

Evangelical woman to be studied using this theory. The value of this study is that Campbell's theory has generally been used to examine female political figures and how they relate to their audience. Studying Moore through this lens opens the door to use Campbell's theory outside of the female gender, and also outside of the political arena. Another concept that was clarified in chapter one was that a female rhetorician did not have to be connected with the feminist movement. A rhetoric, which happened to be feminine, could be studied as to how she communicates, not dependent on what she communicated. Beth Moore, the subject of this study, was introduced and her life journey was portrayed.

In chapter two a brief history of female rhetoricians was displayed. The chapter went on to introduce Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, the author of the feminine rhetorical theory. A definition of feminine rhetorical theory was offered as well.

Chapter three discussed the methodology of how this study was constructed. Each of the messages analyzed came from Moore's teachings on *LIFE today* with James and Betty Robison. The five messages were randomly selected based only on covering a chronological time span of Moore's teaching.

The results of the study were shared in chapter four. Each episode was outlined with pertinent information that applied to that individual episode. The study was then broken down by each of the five feminine characteristics: Feminine speakers rely on personal experiences and extended narrative, feminine speakers speak to the audience as peers, feminine speakers invite audience participation, feminine speakers create arguments inductively that lead to generalization, and feminine speakers create identification and empower their audiences. It was discovered that Moore used each of the five characteristics in each of the five episodes.

The study was discussed in chapter five. Three themes seem to have overshadowed each of the five episodes even as the five characteristics were displayed. Moore spurs listeners to live a life for a greater cause than themselves, for Jesus Christ. Moore also gives warnings of a life not lived for Christ in her messages. Lastly, Moore begs her audience to be passionate about their eternal future, knowing this life is not all there is. A brief analysis of the study is presented and the two research questions were shown to have been answered in the study. The first question was in reference to how Moore uses feminine style to appeal to her audience. Although Moore was the strongest in creating identification with and empowering her audience, each of the other four characteristics were also displayed in each of her messages. Evidence from each message was shared to show how strongly and how often Moore used the five characteristics in her five messages. The second research question was in reference to how Moore uses the feminine style to appeal to her audience which is made up of women and men. Examples of how Moore interacts with the men in her world, albeit strangers or family were shared, and those interactions were in a positive light. Moore also shares the spotlight with other well-known and well respected Evangelical men. Further research ideas were shared.

In conclusion, the contribution this study makes legitimizes the new definition of feminine rhetoric as it applies to Beth Moore and concurs with the premise of this thesis, which is that Moore is a feminine rhetorician. Craig Keener defines the feminine part of the definition. “All Christians should consider themselves Biblical feminists if feminism is truly regarding men and women as equal and actively opposing women’s opposition.”²²¹ To define the rhetor,

²²¹ Keener, 9.

Campbell states in *Man Cannot Speak for Her*, "...specific rhetorical acts attempt to exploit that shared experience and channel it in certain directions."²²² Thus, Moore is a feminine rhetorician.

Beth Moore is an intriguing subject in the sense that she is becoming a historical figure in modern-day Christendom. Only time will tell, but she could possibly be the most influential woman to ever be a part of evangelicalism, particularly regarding the number of lives her messages, books, and Bible studies have spoken to, and the economic impact she has had on the Christian publishing industry. As reported by Frederickson, Bonnie Dow states, "The study of women's public address has the fairly radical potential to redefine rhetorical excellence and to recast our understanding of what is worthy of study and why."²²³ Beth Moore has pushed opened the door to why evangelical women are worthy of studying.

²²² Campbell, *Man Cannot*, 2.

²²³ Dow, as qtd. By Frederick, 152.

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