

Rhetorical Analysis Drill #1 (2008)

The following is an excerpt from the opening of Michelle Obama's address to the Democratic National Convention on Monday night, August 25, 2008, in Denver, Colorado, as released by the Obama campaign. Mrs. Obama is the wife of Democratic candidate Barack Obama.

I come here tonight as a sister, blessed with a brother who is my mentor, my protector and my lifelong friend.

I come here as a wife who loves my husband and believes he will be an extraordinary president.

I come here as a Mom whose girls are the heart of my heart and the center of my world—they're the first thing I think about when I wake up in the morning, and the last thing I think about when I go to bed at night. Their future—and all our children's future—is my stake in this election.

And I come here as a daughter—raised on the South Side of Chicago by a father who was a blue collar city worker, and a mother who stayed at home with my brother and me. My mother's love has always been a sustaining force for our family, and one of my greatest joys is seeing her integrity, her compassions, and her intelligence reflected in my own daughters.

According to an article in *The Wall Street Journal* (August 26, 2008), Michelle Obama "sought to humanize a couple that supporters fear may seem distant to many Americans" and "tried to find a connection with working-class families that Sen. Obama has struggled to reach" ("With Monday Speech" A4).

Rhetorical Analysis Drill: Ann Romney RNC Speech Excerpt (2012)

The following is an excerpt from Ann Romney's address to the Republican National Convention on August 28, 2012, as released by Fox News. Mrs. ~~Obama~~ **Romney** is the wife of Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney.

When Mitt and I met and fell in love, we were determined not to let anything stand in the way of our life together. I was an Episcopalian. He was a Mormon.

We were very young. Both still in college. There were many reasons to delay marriage, and you know? We just didn't care. We got married and moved into a basement apartment. We walked to class together, shared the housekeeping, and ate a lot of pasta and tuna fish. Our desk was a door propped up on sawhorses. Our dining room table was a fold down ironing board in the kitchen. Those were very special days.

Then our first son came along. All at once I'm 22 years old, with a baby and a husband who's going to business school and law school at the same time, and I can tell you, probably like every other girl who finds herself in a new life far from family and friends, with a new baby and a new husband, that it dawned on me that I had absolutely no idea what I was getting into.

That was 42 years ago. Now we have five sons and 18 grandchildren and I'm still in love with that boy I met at a high school dance.

I read somewhere that Mitt and I have a "storybook marriage." Well, in the storybooks I read, there were never long, long, rainy winter afternoons in a house with five boys screaming at once. And those storybooks never seemed to have chapters called MS or Breast Cancer.

A storybook marriage? No, not at all. What Mitt Romney and I have is a real marriage.