Creating community through symbolic discourse: An analysis of Jesse Jackson's rhetoric at the Democratic National Conventions, 1984--2000

Lance Michael Young
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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CREATING COMMUNITY THROUGH SYMBOLIC DISCOURSE: AN ANALYSIS OF JESSE JACKSON'S RHETORIC AT THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTIONS, 1984-2000

by

Lance M. Young

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Thomas R. Buddenhah
Examination Committee Chair

Dean of the Graduate College

David Hay
Examination Committee Member

Giles D. Hunter
Examination Committee Member

Graduate College Faculty Representative
ABSTRACT

Creating Community through Symbolic Discourse: An Analysis of Jesse Jackson’s Rhetoric at the Democratic National Conventions, 1984-2000

by

Lance M. Young

Dr. Thomas Burkholder, Examination Committee Chair
Associate Professor of Communication
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

The Reverend Jesse Louis Jackson has addressed the Democratic National Convention through five consecutive election cycles. Jackson’s political involvement works to challenge the majority value system. Each address aims to create a community consisting of minority voices in America by bringing them into the Democratic Party in hopes of changing national policy. Metaphorical strategy is used to symbolically create a community consisting of minority voices, the Democratic Party, and Jackson himself as the prophetic leader. Symbolically unifying the community against a common enemy strengthens Jackson's community.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .................................................................................................................. iii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .......................................................................................... vi

CHAPTER 1  INTRODUCTION .............................................................................. 1

CHAPTER 2 RHETORICAL PROBLEM .......................................................... 5
  Historical Background ....................................................................................... 6
  Address before the 1984 Democratic Convention: Situation ....................... 10
  Address before the 1988 Democratic Convention: Situation ....................... 19
  Address before the 1992 Democratic Convention: Situation ....................... 23
  Address before the 1996 Democratic Convention: Situation ....................... 28
  Address before the 2000 Democratic Convention: Situation ....................... 33

CHAPTER 3 AFROCENTRISM AND UNIFYING STRATEGIES ......................... 41
  Afrocentrism .................................................................................................... 41
  Strategy: The Power of the Symbol ................................................................... 52

CHAPTER 4 RHETORICAL STRATEGY .............................................................. 56
  Address before the Democratic National Convention: July 18, 1984 .......... 57
  Address before the Democratic National Convention: July 19, 1988 ......... 66
  Address before the Democratic National Convention: July 14, 1992 ......... 73
  Address before the Democratic National Convention: August 27, 1996 ..... 77
  Address before the Democratic National Convention: August 15, 2000 ..... 79

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION ..................................................................... 82

BIBLIOGRAPHY ........................................................................................................ 85

APPENDIX SPEECH TEXTS ................................................................................. 91
  Address before the Democratic National Convention: July 18, 1984 .......... 91
  Address before the Democratic National Convention: July 19, 1988 ......... 103
  Address before the Democratic National Convention: July 14, 1992 ......... 116
  Address before the Democratic National Convention: August 27, 1996 ..... 123
  Address before the Democratic National Convention: August 15, 2000 ..... 127
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

On July 18, 1984 the Reverend Jesse Louis Jackson became the first African American to stand at the podium of a major party convention as a presidential candidate. He lost that primary but ran again in 1988 when he delivered another speech to the convention. In a survey of rhetorical critics, Martin Medhurst and Stephen Lucas listed these two speeches as the 12th and 51st greatest speeches of the 20th century, respectively. A number of rhetorical critics have analyzed one or more of these speeches with varying results.

Leslie Di Mare examined Jackson’s 1984 address. Focusing on the negative press attention, she argued that Jackson’s speech worked as face saving rhetoric in which his strategy was to acknowledge his role in party conflict. Limiting her focus to one audience, Jackson’s campaign opponents, she may have trivialized the greater purpose of the address (218-226).

In their analysis of the 1984 address, William Starosta and Larry Coleman conclude that Jackson’s purpose was to apologize to the Jewish community that Jackson had offended earlier that year. This work is limited because it narrows its scope to one small part of Jackson’s audience and ignores the greater intent of his message (117-135).
James Hallmark attempts to understand Jackson’s rhetoric using Aristotelian methodology. He concludes that the 1984 address works as epideictic rhetoric, which places blame on factors beyond Jackson’s control as a reason for losing the election. He concludes that the 1988 address worked as deliberative rhetoric, “in that it was addressing the future of America” (131). Jackson’s intent is again trivialized without any consideration for what audience he might be addressing. He refers to Jackson’s audience as a “universal audience” (123).

Patricia Sullivan also focuses on the negative press that Jackson endured during the 1984 election. She was particularly interested in so called “tall tales” that Jackson was accused of such as the bloody sweater incident following Martin Luther King Jr.’s death and the fact that Jackson claims to be from the “slum” in this speech. She uses non-traditional methodology that focuses on African customs. She parallels Jackson’s tall tales to an African system of story telling in which it is acceptable to lie for greater impact in the story being told. She concludes that white listeners don’t understand this form of communication and supports Jackson’s credibility (1-15). The foundation of Sullivan’s methodology is credible and interesting but it separates itself from the text. There is no mention of Jackson’s bloody sweater in this address and Jackson’s childhood poverty is not a lie. If indeed Jackson did lie, should critics begin supporting this kind of rhetoric, regardless of cultural differences?

Paula Wilson critiqued Jackson’s 1988 address by combining rhetorical and musical methodology. The text was analyzed brilliantly in terms of rhythm,
tempo, and key, much the same way a music critic would analyze a piece of music. The brilliance of Jackson's rhetoric, according to Wilson, is in its emotional appeal (262). Her conclusion is that Jackson's rhetoric is much too complex to understand unless it is analyzed in this manner (262). Wilson's analysis may be groundbreaking research in terms of understanding emotional appeal but restrictive in its' limitation to emotional appeal.

Despite the usefulness of these earlier studies, no one has yet examined the full range of Jackson's rhetoric at the Democratic National Conventions. This analysis will reflect a unique approach to the rhetoric of Jesse Jackson by not only analyzing these two speeches but also the three latter convention speeches that Jackson delivered in 1992, 1996, and 2000. The consistency of Jackson's rhetoric over a twenty-year period suggests that Jackson's rhetorical purpose is deeper than what other critics have proposed.

Chapter two will explain Jackson's rhetorical problems. First, it will provide a historical background of Jackson and his life. Then, the particular problems that Jackson faced before each individual address will be reviewed chronologically. The problems that Jackson faced seem to be consistent each time. This historical analysis will show that Jackson's greater purpose was not to campaign for the presidency; rather, he hoped to create a community that would challenge the majority value system. Jackson believes that all people should have equal opportunity. A moral system of politics would ensure that everyone had equal economic opportunity.
Chapter three establishes the theoretical base of this analysis. With the belief that meaning is grounded in culture, an Afrocentric approach is employed. Rhetorical critic Ronald Jackson asserts that "freedom," "community," and "relational ethics" are important rhetorical themes for African American orators (36). This chapter will first analyze African American culture historically to justify the validity of Ronald Jackson's claim. A description of the strategies that Jesse Jackson uses in his speeches will follow. It will explain how metaphor can create group identity and how creating a unifying enemy can further strengthen that group.

Finally, chapter four will closely analyze the five speeches within the context of unifying strategies. Jackson hoped to build a strong political base consisting of disadvantaged Americans who would otherwise have no voice. He hoped to bring them into the Democratic Party and ultimately influence national policy. Metaphor is used as a means to create a sense of community between Jackson, disadvantaged Americans, and the Democratic Party. He further strengthens that group identity by rallying them against a common enemy.
CHAPTER 2

RHETORICAL PROBLEM

The enduring rhetorical legacy that Jesse Jackson has established in the history of Democratic National Conventions began with hopes of a Presidential nomination in 1984. The problems he faced as a Presidential candidate in a major party were unique in comparison to anyone in our nation's history. He was an outsider among fellow Democrats and despite all appearances his goal may never have been to become president. Jackson has worked consistently to be the conscience of America. Politics served as the vehicle for his activism and he used the Democratic National Convention as the stage on which he renews his message to America. He has spoken at the convention through five consecutive election cycles. This chapter will explain the unique problems that Jackson faced leading up to each occasion.

The first address was delivered on July 18, 1984, in San Francisco. Jackson's primary opponent, Walter Mondale, had secured the Democratic nomination so Jackson was already looking toward the race of 1988. It was in that year, on July 19, that his second convention speech was given in Atlanta. These speeches compliment each other as colossal moments in this two-term campaign. Jackson remains involved with the Democratic Party despite the fact
that he has never held any position in government. His address on July 14, 1992, in New York City worked to secure that involvement. On August 27, 1996, in Chicago and on August 15, 2000, in Los Angeles, he delivered two additional speeches that would highlight his continued efforts to work as America’s conscience.

The rhetorical problems on each occasion are amazingly similar, although they will be discussed chronologically. His decision to run for President was the result of events spanning twenty years. These will be explained first so that Jackson’s political years can be better placed in context.

**Historical Background**

Prior to Jesse Jackson’s Presidential runs in 1984 and 1988, he was best known for his civil rights activism. Jackson began idolizing and following the example of Martin Luther King Jr., long before the two met. Marshall Frady, Jackson’s biographer, explains that Jackson’s early individual efforts revolved around “moral dynamics” (175). One of the first protests he organized involved African American students praying and singing the Star Spangled Banner outside a school cafeteria (Frady 175).

As a seminary student in Chicago, Jackson was compelled to organize a group of mostly white students and faculty and travel to Selma Alabama where a protest sponsored by King had erupted in violent riots (Frady 189). It was here that Jackson first met King. Jackson showed great leadership in Selma, enough to make an impression on members of King’s Southern Christian Leadership
Conference. While King himself was hesitant to draft Jackson for leadership in his organization, he was persuaded to do so by fellow civil rights leader Ralph Abernathy (Frady 193).

Jesse Jackson’s role with the SCLC was to head a project called “Operation Breadbasket”. Most of the SCLC’s work revolved around fighting “Jim Crow” laws in the south, laws that segregated blacks unequally from whites (Sawyer 50, Gadzekpo 104). Operation Breadbasket was designed to test the waters of civil rights work in urban areas, such as Chicago, where Jackson was able to work independently. Operation Breadbasket showed significant and immediate results by forcing white establishments to train black employees, sell black manufactured products, and do business with black service companies in predominantly black neighborhoods (Simms 104).

Three years after the beginning of a MLK mentorship, on April 4, 1968, the world either ended or began for Jesse Jackson. This was the day of King’s assassination. It ended because his perception of King was that of a prophet whose purpose was to empower African Americans. His infatuation with King was measurable to many colleagues by the fact that he mimicked his entire persona (Frady 217). The world began because Jackson considered himself the natural successor to King’s life work.

King’s death spawned an event that would foreshadow the rest of Jackson’s life, one filled with media attention and controversy. Allegedly, he smeared King’s blood on his own sweater and then falsely reported that King had died in his arms. (Brookhiser 32, Timmerman 4-10). He became media savvy,
even appearing on television the next morning wearing the same blood stained garment (Frady 235).

People who did not know Jesse Jackson's name before the assassination were suddenly familiar with this young new leader of the SCLC. The media, not other black leaders, assumed Jackson's leadership. His weekly religious service at the Breadbasket headquarters usually had a small following. The week after King's death there were over 4,000 people in attendance. This is just one example that Frady gives to illustrate Jackson's sudden rise to fame (235).

Jackson's claim to be the heir to King's legacy didn't sit well with his colleagues or King's widow, Coretta. Jackson also disagreed with other members of the SCLC on which direction the organization should go. Jackson sought to push forward King's "Poor People's Campaign" that would expand the civil rights movement beyond black issues. This campaign was designed to unite disadvantaged Americans of all ethnicities to fight what he saw as a moral battle against an immoral system. He believed that justice could be achieved through a mass collaboration of minority people (Frady 240). Other SCLC members viewed the "Poor People's Campaign" as impossible, especially without King's leadership (Frady 243).

The friction between Jackson and other SCLC members only fueled Jackson's perception of the role he believed he should play. His heroes included King, Gandhi, and Jesus Christ. All three of these figures were moral leaders of their time who suffered because their own communities misunderstood them. This seemed to be the case for Jackson as well (Gilbreath 49). The
misunderstanding in this case led to Jackson’s resignation from the SCLC. This in turn led to the birth of his own organization called People United to Save Humanity (PUSH), which soon dwarfed the SCLC (Frady 256). The word “Save” has since been replaced with “Serve”. Roger Hatch summarized the accomplishments of PUSH to be the forum for all those without a voice (74). He further describes PUSH as having two primary roles. The first is to speak out for all poor and disadvantaged Americans (74). PUSH also serves as a mediator between human rights organizations that could benefit one another through collaborative efforts (74). As the leader of PUSH, Jackson focused on issues of achieving economic empowerment for everyone, achieving equal and adequate education for everyone, changing the American system of electoral politics, and providing spiritual guidance (Hatch 74-84).

In 1976, a “60 Minutes” special with Dan Rather told about a message of personal responsibility that Jackson was giving to black children (Frady 294). Hubert Humphrey, diagnosed with cancer, was moved by the story and urged President Jimmy Carter’s aide, Joseph Califano, to provide Jackson’s organization government funding (Frady 294). His wish was granted. PUSH received a generous grant and the Carter administration continued to give PUSH generous funding throughout the next four years. Rapid organizational growth allowed Jesse Jackson to become a bigger and more prominent figure in American society. President Carter liked Jackson so much that he often quoted him in his own speeches, giving Jackson a more credible public persona (Frady 297).
In 1981, Jackson faced his nemesis in Ronald Reagan. Shortly after taking office, the administration did an audit of PUSH and cut off funding to the organization for reasons of poor bookkeeping (Frady 298). Any chance of further funding was extinguished by Reagan’s Department of Education that reported Jackson’s efforts as “meaningless” (Frady 298). Coincidentally, the author of this report, Charles Murray, also authored a book titled *The Bell Curve*, that asserted “the intellectual inferiority of black Americans to white Americans, and argued that economic inequality is simply a ratification of genetic justice” (Probert 32).

Despite hardships, Jackson’s organization stayed afloat. Before this moment in time, Jackson had been concerned with political issues such as voting rights (Frady 281, Hatch 80), but had never become directly involved with the political process. The Reagan administration prompted him to look at his movement from a different angle. He began to think that just preaching and protesting against a bad system was not the best way to beat the system. He began to think that it might be a good idea to change things from within the system (Frady 374).

**Address Before the 1984 Democratic Convention: Situation**

Frady credits Jackson’s campaign start to an informal meeting held in 1983. A group of African-American leaders had gathered to determine what issues were important to the black community (308). The intention was that they would discuss which Presidential candidate would benefit them the most, present him with their issues, and then support that candidate’s campaign (308). The
conversation turned to the possibility of putting a black candidate on the ticket and Jackson quickly volunteered (309). The meeting ended with a resolution that a black candidate would be put on the ticket, but not necessarily Jesse Jackson. There was some resistance from former SCLC colleagues like Andrew Young as well as Coretta King (310). Without formal support from other black leaders, with the exception of Richard Hatcher, Jackson decided to enter the Presidential race on his own (310). He had never held public office prior to announcing his candidacy for President.

Jackson and Frank Watson had actually plotted the possibility of this happening a year earlier. A memo written by Watson at the PUSH headquarters stated, "Jackson should not run as a 'realistic' candidate with a chance to win" (Frady 304). His political goals would be to build a stronger political base for blacks in America. The memo further stated that his campaign "must do to the left what George Wallace and Ronald Reagan did to the right, that is, build a potential constituency that must be taken into account" (304).

To some degree, Jackson accomplished his goal of broadening a black political base in this primary campaign. First, he showed the nation that it was possible for a black man to make a serious run for President of the United States. He remained one of the final three candidates campaigning in the Democratic Primaries. Second, he received strong support from the black community as a whole and registered a record number of black voters, showing that as a community, African-Americans could rally behind and financially support a single leader (McTighe 2, Walters 34, Frady 357, Franklin 67).
Before the Democratic Convention in San Francisco, Walter Mondale's nomination was secure. Jackson had the fewest delegates of the final three candidates. Still, Jackson insisted that he have a prime-time spot to speak at the convention (Frady 363). Jackson needed the opportunity to reach a larger audience than had ever been granted him. He knew that he was an outsider and this rhetorical situation would be his best chance to further his prophet/politician career before the insiders of the Democratic Party shut him out for good. Mondale was terrified of what Jackson would say and what it would do for him and the Party. After finding out that Jackson would have this opportunity, one Mondale staffer was quoted as saying "I hope you're fucking happy, you've given this character the biggest audience he's ever had" (Frady 363). The tasks that Jackson needed to accomplish in this address were many.

The first problem that Jackson faced explains Mondale's reluctance to allow him to speak. The campaign between Mondale, Senator Gary Hart, and Jackson was harshly competitive. One commentator concluded during the convention that "Mr. Mondale's victory over Mr. Hart and the Reverend Jesse Jackson at the National Convention concludes the Party's bitter struggle to choose a standard bearer" (Jaroslovsky and Saddler 1).

Jackson was also considered to be very liberal. Mondale and other Democratic leaders felt that they had to put on a more conservative face if they hoped to defeat the popular incumbent Ronald Reagan (Walters 41). This would require them to suppress liberal party members. Jackson's presence also seemed to be an easy scapegoat for declining popularity of the Democratic Party
(Walton 49). One reporter claimed: “Already, some Democrats complain that his lukewarm attitude toward the Mondale-Ferraro ticket might make him a target for blame if Ronald Reagan is reelected” (Saddler and Hume 1).

In addition to the party’s fears that Jackson could hurt them with the stigma of liberal activism, they also felt that his only concern was black empowerment. Even though Jackson considered himself a moral and peaceful leader like his predecessor, King, his Democratic colleagues associated him with militant black nationalists like Malcolm X and Louis Farrakhan. The underlying belief was that Jackson’s loyalty was solely with African-Americans, not Democrats (McTighe 3, Hallmark 119). Even though Mondale, the emerging party leader, had a decent civil rights record of his own (Frady 362), he could not afford the companionship of a radical black nationalist. These fears were further complimented by GOP taunts. Carlyle Gregory, a Republican strategist, commented, “Jesse Jackson is driving white voters into the Republican Party” (Hume 1).

Accusations of Jackson’s anti-white sentiment surfaced throughout the campaign. Most often he was labeled as an anti-Semite. Rumors of anti-Semitism began in 1979. According to Frady, Jackson had traveled to Palestine for a meeting with Yasir Arafat. Other American leaders sent to this region were briefed that it was customary for Arabs to end official meetings with an embrace. In the presence of cameras, American politicians avoided such contact, knowing that the American media wouldn’t understand such a custom. Jackson, who was
also briefed on this custom, chose to ignore the advice of advisors and warmly embraced Arafat in the presence of cameras (348).

Jackson's reason for visiting the region was to challenge what he considered to be an inhumane treatment of Palestinian refugees (Coolidge 158). Many black leaders at this time were challenging the position that the U.S. should have with the Israeli and Palestinian conflict, for the same reasons that Jackson did (Coolidge 158). Jackson, who attracted the most press, believed he was doing the moral thing. The press ignored ideological factors and simply labeled him "anti-Israel" (Coolidge 166).

Jackson's friendship with the Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan also blemished his credibility. Farrakhan proudly and flamboyantly pronounced unpopular Arab leaders to be his constituents while publicly expressing hatred for Jews (Franklin 69). The reasons that Jackson and Farrakhan confronted the situation in the Middle East differed, but Jackson chose to visit the region again with the Islamic leader. Further, Jackson refused to conceal his acquaintance with Farrakhan, even though it brought him bad publicity. In his crusade to build a large black political base, he felt that it was in his best interest to remain allies since Farrakhan had a large black following of his own (Frady 353). Michael McTighe adds that Jackson never wanted to denounce any single person because of his firm belief that sin should be separated from the sinner and that "all should be welcomed, nurtured, and valued" (3).

The Jewish relations problem came to a climax in 1984 when the Washington Post reported that Jackson had used the terms "Hymie" and
"Hymietown" in a candid conversation with reporter Milton Coleman. The article confirmed people's suspicions, which in turn damaged his political image and put an end to his campaign momentum (Starosta and Coleman 117).

The "Hymietown" incident worsened when Farrakhan publicly threatened Coleman and the Jewish community as a whole for the political ambush they forced upon Jesse Jackson. His radical comments were as extreme as calling Hitler a "great man" (Starosta and Coleman 121). Finally Jackson had no other choice but to publicly denounce Farrakhan's beliefs and actions as "reprehensible and morally indefensible" (Frady 355).

If Jesse Jackson wanted to be taken seriously as a future Democratic Party leader he had to ease tensions between himself and current party leaders. He needed to avoid being held responsible if Walter Mondale lost the general election to Ronald Reagan. He also had to prove that his concern for Americans reached beyond African-Americans, especially to the Jewish community. To some degree, other minority groups included themselves in his constituency including Hispanics, Asians, Native-Americans, (Walters 30) and homosexuals (Mayer and Saddler 1). Still, one other character trait would have to be defended, the paradoxical communion of a spiritual and political leader.

Jesse Jackson's prophetic persona bothered white politicians because they felt his politics would cross the line between church and state, that his background didn't give him the political knowledge he needed to be a strong party leader, and that his perceived relationship with God only added fuel to his already egotistical personality (Frady 361-363).
Religious leaders can have a difficult time crossing over into government leadership. McTighe explains, "Jackson aims to be a preacher and a politician in a society that says one can be a religious prophet or a practicing politician, but not both" (4). A New York Times writer confirmed this sentiment early in Jackson's campaign, "From the Preacher we expect moral guidance, not political positions. From the politician we look for political philosophy in action not spiritual instruction." (Safire 17)

Contrary to others beliefs, Jackson believed that God and politics merged naturally. His theory was that "political strength comes out of moral authority" (Frady 54). His political philosophy has a very simple base; if an issue is morally right it is also politically right. This same simple philosophy is shared by generations of ministers in the black church. Robert Franklin states, "Black churches have always perceived the inevitable relationship between religious belief and political action" (63). Religious affiliation is irrelevant. Morality is universal despite affiliation.

Christianity has held different meanings for blacks and whites since the earliest slaves were taught Christianity. Black slaves related to stories of freedom and prophets who took action, like Moses who delivered his people out of captivity (Edgerton 299). The church then became the foundation for black progress in the United States. After emancipation it was the only organizational foundation that blacks had to work from and thus became the center for all social, political, educational and community activism and development (Lincoln 72). Whereas in white culture it would seem most appropriate to attend law school
prior to public service, the ministry would seem equally logical in African-American culture. This incredible cultural difference pushed Jackson to the outer edges of party politics. Jackson would have to make the political process color blind if he hoped to pave the way for a system that allowed blacks and whites to work together within the system.

The journey to the 1984 Democratic National Convention was long. Up to this point most of the attention that Jackson received was based on his character. Most of that attention was negative. Other Democrats’ suppressed Jackson’s voice on issues, and the media, infatuated with his character, ignored political messages that he hoped to deliver (Dates and Gandy 596). Jesse Jackson felt that his messages were important and they had to be given to the general public for his campaign to be a success and to allow his campaign to continue.

First and foremost, he wanted to change the Runoff Primary system (Frady 363). The Runoff Primary, widely used in southern states, was an election system that forbids any candidate to win a primary election unless they had more than fifty percent of the vote. If there was no clear winner, a second election is held between the top two finishers. In many cases a black candidate who had first received the highest number of votes lost the second time around to a single white candidate (McCormick 193).

Even before Jackson stepped into politics he had fought against “gerrymandering, annexation, at-large elections, inaccessible voting registrars” and any other issue that dampened African Americans participation in American
politics (McCormick 192). Abolishing Runoff Primaries in the south was imperative. It was one step toward broadening the black political base.

Without party support, the Convention Platform Debates might have been the last chance for Jackson to discuss issues within the system. His priority issues were included in the debates including elimination of Runoff Primaries, a reduction in defense spending, changed policy in Middle East affairs, reduction in military weapons and a “no first use” policy of nuclear warfare, opposition to the invasion of Grenada, and affirmative action (Walters 39). The number of delegates that each candidate brought to the convention decided votes on platform issues. Jackson had eight percent of the delegates while most of the votes went to Mondale and Hart (Walters 37).

The debates ended as bitterly as the campaign did and Jackson only won the support of the Democratic Party on the issue of affirmative action, but without the language that he had proposed (Walters 38). Mondale suppressed both Jackson’s and Hart’s concerns, again because he felt they were too liberal in this time of Reagan’s conservative popularity (Walters 41). Jackson’s supporters were livid. They threatened to walk out of the convention and only stayed at Jackson’s request (Frady 364). They booed and heckled Mondale and Andy Young, former SCLC colleague who supported Mondale (Jaroslovsky and Saddler 1).

Jackson’s televised address that would follow these events frightened the Mondale group even more. Jackson recalled the emotions and rumors that circulated just hours before his speech: “Before I gave that speech, people were
saying, ‘When he gets that big of a platform, my God, he’s liable to – We don’t have any influence on him, he’s unrestrained, what’s gonna happen?’” (Frady 364). Many people outside the circle realized that Jackson had visions of running again in 1988 and that his rhetoric would not jeopardize that (Frady 363). Journalist Suzanne Garment said, “He’s looking to the future now; he wants to be president. He’ll behave seriously” (1).

Doubts of Jackson’s seriousness were just one rhetorical obstacle that he would need to address. He would have to ease tensions between himself and party members. The respect that he was building within the black community needed to be accommodated by respect from other black leaders. His visions of a conglomerated political base now needed to expand beyond the black community. Accusations of Jewish prejudice had to be wiped clean if Americans were to take seriously a man who fought to abolish prejudice in America. Americans needed to be comfortable with his role as a reverend and a politician. All of these tasks had to be addressed in his speech that night so that Jackson could continue his mission to put morality into the middle of American political activity.

Address before the 1988 Democratic Convention: Situation

It’s difficult to tell when Jesse Jackson’s 1984 presidential campaign ended and when his 1988 presidential campaign began. On July 29, 1984, the day after his first memorable address, he had already started making plans for
the next campaign. Just days after that he began traveling the country speaking to various groups in campaign fashion (Frady 370).

The previous night’s address had already shown immediate success, at least in the black community. All around the nation, black citizens were now hailing him as the successor to Martin Luther King Jr. (Frady 370). A note from Andy Young was delivered to Jackson’s room in San Francisco, which read “You make me proud and humble when I hear you speak. Martin would be proud too. You have my endorsement for the moral voice of our time.” (Frady 371). Coretta King finally excused old grievances and eventually declared Jackson as “the conscience of America during this difficult decade” (Frady 371).

Jesse Jackson could measure his own success by the support he now enjoyed from African-American leaders and by the respectful treatment white Americans now gave him. Robert Smith stated, “Jackson’s campaign gained the support or at least the acquiescence of virtually the entire black leadership establishment, a majority of big-city mayors, members of congress, and the national civil rights leaders.” (216) After surprisingly winning the Democratic Primary in Minnesota, a Newsweek article exclaimed “let it be recorded that for at least a week in American history, in a middle-sized midwestern state, a broad range of white voters took the Presidential candidacy of a black man with the utmost seriousness.” (Dionne E1).

Jackson had not yet won the support of fellow party members, however. In 1985, when Jackson first started to make statements about running for President again, he threatened to create a third party. This consideration was a
result of a year-long standoff with Democratic leaders who refused to consider Jackson's proposals to change the way in which candidates receive delegates (May 15). Jackson felt that the process for gathering delegates would make it difficult for him to win an election, even with strong public support (Walters 41). If Jackson could not show that he could feasibly win the Presidency in 1988, the doors would be much harder to open for future black leadership.

The new group of Democratic leaders seemed to be even more intimidated by Jackson's presence. Besides the many covert attempts to shut him out, such as not inviting him to Party functions, party leaders often talked about ways of getting him out. One state chairman said, "I think he'd be happier on the outside, in a role that is more consistent with his temperament and background" (Frady 390).

Most of Jackson's political issues in 1988 were the same because they hadn't been resolved in the previous campaign (Smith 221). His philosophy revolved around making a moral decision on issues that in turn were right politically. One issue that he became more passionate about was drug use. Instead of approaching the drug issue with Reagan's popular "just say no" campaign, he fought for stricter border control and punishment of drug smugglers. Teaching children personal responsibility for their actions would act as a supplement to the fight against drugs (Frady 386).

More than ever, he campaigned against Reagan's policies. Jackson held the Reagan administration fully responsible for a failing U.S. economy and declining standard of living for African Americans and other minority groups. He
referred to Reagan's economic policy as the "misery index", a phrase that

Midway through the primaries, Jackson seemed to have a real chance at
the Democratic nomination. As a campaign tactic, Jackson's opponents went
back to the issues that hurt him four years earlier, his character. Al Gore began
to campaign strongly against Jackson's lack of experience and religious
affiliation, "We're not choosing a preacher, we're choosing a president" (Frady
398). Momentum of the Jackson campaign ended in the state of New York.
Mayor Dinkins of New York City made strong accusations about Jackson's past
alleged anti-Semite affiliations, raising questions again about the character of this
man so close to a nomination (Frady 399).

Michael Dukakis entered the 1988 Democratic Convention with the
highest number of delegates. Jackson's numbers were much closer than before,
in fact he gathered more delegates than Walter Mondale did in 1984 (Frady
410). Jackson knew that Dukakis would win the nomination but refused to concede.
He offered concessions with the promise of a vice-presidency but Dukakis's
opinion of him was much the same as Mondale's had been before. He feared
him, was intimidated by him, and completely misunderstood him (Frady 402-
407).

The problems that Jesse Jackson faced going into both conventions can
be summarized as one. First, he had a mission to change the face of American
politics into a system based on moral decision-making. Second, he had to
overcome both self-inflicted and cultural misinterpretations of his character to be given the chance to send America in the right direction.

The nation was expecting a convention speech that could compete with the memorable address in 1984. Jackson had been campaigning for the Presidency for five years. This speaking situation would give him the power to establish his place in the hearts of Americans long after this campaign was finished. Martin Luther King Jr.'s “poor people's campaign” would have required a social movement far beyond the efforts of African-American civil protest. Jesse Jackson's mission required that same amount of support. Whether he was President or Prophet didn't matter. His mission would remain unchanged.

Address before the 1992 Democratic Convention: Situation

In November of 1988, the Democrats found themselves in the same place they had been four years before. Michael Dukakis suffered a great defeat to George Bush and on the day of his defeat Jesse Jackson proclaimed, “The new political season starts tomorrow, and I will continue to serve. The full scope of my leadership has yet to blossom and flourish” (Frady 415).

Throughout the 1980's Jackson had developed “The Rainbow Coalition”, a political human rights organization that transformed from a rhetorical metaphor into tangible activism. Later he would merge his two organizations into “The Rainbow-PUSH Coalition”. Aside from these personal endeavors, Jackson continued to be active in the Democratic Party. This activity continued despite his lack of experience in public office.
Jackson's previous two election campaigns in 1984 and 1988 were not futile. A record number of black politicians had emerged at the national, state, and local levels, a feat that was largely credited to Jackson's campaign to register black voters (Frady 417). After the 1988 election, Jackson's immediate venture was to expand moral activism beyond the borders of the United States. He spent most of 1989 traveling abroad to southern Africa, the Middle East, and the Soviet Union encouraging world leaders to exercise conscience and to improve human conditions in those regions (Frady 418-456).

That year he also re-located from Chicago to Washington D.C. where he was pressured by many to run for mayor. This didn't appeal to him (Frady 470). His time was spent with a television talk show until 1991. The show was canceled about the same time that many of his supporters began pressuring him to continue his campaign for the presidency. Public polls indicated that the Democratic favorites were Jesse Jackson and another great orator, Mario Cuomo (Frady 476). Black media vocalized their desire for him to run. *Essence* magazine expressed the following sentiments; “the Reverend Jesse L. Jackson brought a sense of urgency, importance and empowerment to those of us who have traditionally felt alienated from the political process” (Ifill 58). The article continues, “effective use of our power will require a display of maturity and political discipline that only Rev. Jackson has been able to muster” (58).

Within the Democratic Party, emphasis was still being placed on suppressing the liberal voice as a means to draw more public support in the General Election. An African-American Democrat, Ron Brown, was named
Democratic Chairman in an attempt to show black representation within party leadership and thus give the liberal Jesse Jackson less reason to run (Frady 479).

Jackson chose not to run. He felt that his large constituency gave him enough leverage to influence party policy. However, the eventual Democratic nominee, Bill Clinton, didn't want to be involved with Jackson and cleverly established that early in his campaign. Jackson had invited Clinton to speak at a luncheon that was hosted by his Rainbow Coalition. The agenda of this luncheon also included a rap singer who had previously made the comment "If there are any good white people, I haven't met them." Clinton responded by denouncing her presence and finally proclaimed "Where are the good white people? Right here in this room." (Klein 37). The audience responded warmly to Clinton's address but Jackson considered his actions to be a personal attack (Klein 37).

Jackson's first reaction was to lend his support to Clinton's opponent in the primaries, Jerry Brown. His support gave Brown some advantage with black voters, especially in the state of New York (Klein 37). Clinton became the obvious nominee as the convention drew closer and Jackson had to make a decision of whether he would encourage his constituents to support the leading candidate. Jackson reacted to Clinton's popularity with mixed emotions. Clinton had successfully epitomized the more conservative Democratic façade that both Mondale and Dukakis had strived for. With some resentment, Jackson still supported him toward the end of the Primaries. He justified his decision on
perceived grounds that this façade was a whiter version of his own leftist ideals. Jackson’s advisor, Mark Steitz, recalls him saying “it’s like Little Richard and Pat Boone. Little Richard wrote all those songs that Pat Boone then took, whitened’ em up, and made millions. But that’s all right. Give me anybody to train for a while, I’ll be his Little Richard, and he can take off.” (Frady 416)

Despite Jackson’s illusions that he would have a hand in Clinton’s candidacy, Clinton didn’t need his support. Much of his popularity had already come from his own rapport with the black population. His charismatic character made black audiences comfortable, while the other candidates were perceived as “snooty” (Klein 37). Unlike Mondale and Dukakis who were intimidated by Jackson, Clinton was comfortable enough with his own black support. Unlike his predecessors who might have been targeted as a racist for ignoring Jackson, Clinton was able to completely brush Jackson off. Jackson tried to influence a draft of the upcoming Democratic Party platform but Clinton simply shut him out (Katz 19). The distance did frustrate Jackson but he remained civil, telling reporters that he would “respect the distance” that Clinton had imposed on him (Elving 2075).

Bill Clinton had suppressed the voice of Jesse Jackson. Jackson felt that he had built up enough credibility before this election cycle to accomplish great things as a non-candidate. Quoting one of Jackson’s associates, Joe Klein of Newsweek stated, “He craves respect: ‘All he wants is to be a part of the team’. ‘To be consulted.’ ‘Constantly.’” (37). In an attempt to revive his disappearing presence, Jackson once again approached the Democratic National Convention
committee to ask for a chance to address them and the nation (Katz 17). Ronald D. Elving summarized his role, "Along the way, the party's powerhouse personalities, such as Jackson and New York Gov. Mario M. Cuomo, assumed their roles in the process of unifying the party and supporting the ticket" (2076).

The label that had been pinned on Jackson was that of a great orator whose responsibility was to inspire support for the Democratic Presidential nominee. This transformation from great activist to great orator was mostly the fault of Jackson himself. His mission to preach the moral dynamics of political activity had been successful before and during his own presidential runs because of his tireless activism. He showed leadership by being actively involved. Since his address in 1988, most of his activism had taken place over seas, away from the cameras of American media.

As an outsider in his two presidential campaigns, Jackson built an enormous amount of support from the African-American community. This strong support in 1988 made it appear that Jackson would be a force in the party that would have to be taken into consideration. Jackson would have had the power to direct candidate's policies by offering them the support of the large black political base he had secured, as well as the support of his growing Rainbow Coalition, which included other minority groups. Bill Clinton, a non-progressive Governor from the south was able to gather the African-American support that was necessary for candidates to have and keep Jackson silenced at the same time. The progressive direction of leadership and polices that Jackson prophetically deemed necessary were now heading the other direction. Clinton's
political philosophy as described by Jeffrey Katz was one that "rejects Republican conservatism and traditional Democratic liberalism in favor of a 'third way'" (19).

If Jackson were to continue using the Democratic Party as the vehicle for his lifelong mission he would have to address the following problems in this convention speech. First he would have to impress on his audience that his worth extended beyond inspirational rhetoric. He would also have to show his support in a way that further portrayed himself as a force in the party that must be taken into consideration.

In 1984, Jackson was limited in his success because the media covered his character rather than his issues. He was defined as a radical liberal and his message of morality was ignored (Glastris and Thornton 39). By the end of the 1988 campaign his passion about moral issues became a legitimate part of his political credibility. The second issue he had to address in this speech, then, was his continuing concern for moral issues. He needed to show that his activism had not disappeared along with his presidential aspirations.

Address to the 1996 Democratic National Convention: Situation

Jesse Jackson's activism, which had become dissolute in America from 1989 through 1992, became his priority again in 1993. Jackson involved himself in just about any situation possible that involved perceived unfairness to minorities. Many fights were considered worthy causes while others had his
critics feeling that Jackson was looking too hard to pick a fight. Regardless of public opinion, he showed once again that protest is a powerful political tool.

One example of his controversial activism was an attack on professional sports when an old issue of affirmative action resurfaced in a different light. In the summer of 1993, Jackson organized protests and picketing of Major League Baseball. The sport of baseball had an extremely large percentage of black players but few of them were ever promoted to coaching and management positions (Starr and Barrett 56). The league was eventually forced to negotiate with the demands of the Rainbow Coalition.

This series of protests showed signs once again of a renewed Civil Rights movement. In 1995, Crisis magazine honored Jackson's efforts. Upon accepting the award, he told the audience, "People who complain today that marching doesn't work, probably never marched. I don't remember a march that we lost or a boycott that failed" (Wahisi 30). He proposed a renewed grass roots movement to elect African Americans into public office, to protest and file law suits when necessary, and to register voters (Wahisi 31).

Jackson's activism didn't always reveal itself in a negative, media hyped manner. In 1995 he also moderated a conference of the National Education Association to promote educational change (Bradley 10). Additionally, he renewed his message of personal responsibility within the black community. He was saddened by what he saw as an increasing amount of self-destructive behavior among African-Americans. His traveling sermons now focused on this destruction. He once explained: "There is nothing more painful for me at this
stage in my life than to walk down the street and hear footsteps and start to think about robbery and then look around and see it's somebody white and feel relieved. How humiliating." (Glastris and Thornton 38). This type of soft activism revealed a caring and less threatening Jesse Jackson to the American mainstream.

Amid Jackson's revived national efforts, there was once again division inside the Democratic Party. President Clinton, whose public approval was high, had angered many Democrats for the same reasons that Jackson disapproved of him in 1992. Many party leaders felt that he had abandoned the party's ideals by playing politics too conservatively (Lexington 32). Jackson himself became critical of Clinton again, once stating, "on the budget, Mr. Clinton is 'Republican Lite' on affirmative action, he is acting like a referee, not a leader. When the President comes to a fork in the road, he chooses the fork" (Lexington 32).

Some schemers within the party proposed that Jackson run for president again in order to spoil Clinton's chances for a second nomination. Even though Clinton had enjoyed one-fifth of his support from African-Americans in 1992 without Jackson's help, Jackson would probably take those votes back if he decided to run again (Church 2740). Jackson would work as a spoiler in the primary and a more liberal candidate would have a chance of winning the nomination.

Jackson also knew that if he were to run independently in the General election he could spoil re-election by taking some liberal votes away from the Democratic Party. George Bush may have lost to Clinton because the
Independent candidate, Ross Perot, took away many of his votes. Jackson hinted that if he chose to run independently it could greatly affect the outcome of Clinton's votes in the General election (Barrett 91). Jackson's threat of running independently now had the Clinton administration fearing his presence for the first time (Church 2740). Jackson, on the other hand, calmly stated that he would remain out of the contest if "Clinton would just improve" (Lexington 32).

Jackson quickly built on to this newfound power by appealing to other minority groups. Affirmative action policies were being challenged in California and Jackson worked hard to convince Hispanics, women, and labor organizations that their future would be threatened if Clinton remained President and remained impartial to these threats (Barrett 92, Washington Report 29).

In the spring of 1995, Vice-President Al Gore invited Jackson to the White House to discuss some of his complaints against the administration (Barrett 92). In the following months Clinton heavily endorsed affirmative action policies. Clinton's stance on welfare and federal programs that aid the poor also changed, moving much closer to Jackson's (Church 2740). Jackson decided not to run for president as a Democrat or an Independent because the Clinton administration had listened to him, he was able to work within the system again without the burden of a presidential campaign.

Now more than ever, Jackson was at the place he wanted to be. He felt that he had situated himself at his rightful place in American politics. Jackson metaphorically explained his role to Crisis writer Tsi Tsi Wahisi. He described himself as the "tree shaker" whose role was to shake the apples from the tree.
After Jackson shook the apples down, the Jelly makers (politicians) then took the apples, turned them into jelly, marketed the jelly, and eventually the American people would benefit from the jelly. Jackson claimed, "The apples did not just fall just because the wind blew. Somebody picketed. Somebody went to jail. Somebody protested loudly. Somebody filed a lawsuit" (10).

Shortly before the convention in 1996, Jackson attracted media attention once again. The elimination of affirmative action was now on the ballot in California. The result would likely set a precedent for other states to follow (Washington Report 29). His demonstration at the University of California at Santa Barbara drew over 6,000 students and turned out to be the loudest political rally in the nation that year (Nichols 27).

His demonstration in Santa Barbara was just one stop on an exhausting journey before the convention. He visited dozens of cities conducting voter registration drives, speaking out for affirmative action, gay rights, and immigration. He also won a battle with the Republican Party that planned to use footage of Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I have a Dream" speech in their propaganda against affirmative action. The Republicans were planning to use the King footage on television ads that would be airing in California. The underlying premise of the ads was to say that affirmative action stood in the way of King's dream that one day his children would be "judged by the content of their character" not "the color of their skin" (Nichols 27-8). Jackson's campaign fully supported the Clinton administration as he turned his aggression against Republican candidates like David Duke and Newt Gingrich (Wahisi 11).

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Jackson was addressing the Democratic National Convention now for the fourth consecutive time. The biggest difference between this address and the previous three is that Jackson had full momentum at the time of the speech. He proved that he could influence even the strongest politicians. Jackson had successfully become a party insider without ever having held public office. This address would be an opportunity to further boost the Rainbow Coalition into the inner circles of government activity. His goals were made clear to one audience, "After November, the Rainbow/PUSH Action Network must hold on to the moral center, build its ranks all across the country, and lead a tenacious fight for expansive, inclusive, humane politics in America" (Nichols 29). When asked in an interview how he wanted the world to remember him, Jackson replied, "He never stopped trying to do God's will" (Wahisi 11).

Address to the 2000 Democratic National Convention: Situation

With Bill Clinton leaving office in 2000, the Democratic nomination would be up for grabs once again. Many of Jackson's supporters who didn't understand his decision to stay out of the race in the last two elections still had faith that he would make a run in 2000.

These supporters missed the point of Jackson's mission. An interviewer probing Jackson about this issue asked, "During the presidential campaign of 1988, you said you were 'enhancing black and progressive politics'. Why did you decide not to continue your efforts to enhance those politics through a candidacy?" Jackson replied, "I remain active. I didn't sit idly by, rolling my
thumbs. We kept registering voters, we kept winning campaigns. There were coattails. In many ways Clinton inherited much of what we had done” (Foster 27). After all these years Jackson was still misunderstood as someone who wanted political prowess for personal power. He still contended that his mission was one of integrating morality into politics. This election cycle would show continued achievement, and as in years past, Jackson would find himself defending his character.

A once tattered relationship between Jackson and Clinton had grown into a mutual respect. Clinton, in his second term with nothing to lose, appointed Jackson to be his “special envoy to Africa and secretary of state for the democracy on that continent” (Jones 28). This was a position that Clinton created. The appointment made sense because they both shared a common interest in human rights on that continent and Jackson had unofficially but successfully negotiated the release of American captives in Syria, Cuba, Kuwait, and Iraq (Rosenberg et al 62).

Most of Jackson’s work in Africa involved attempts to stop fighting between the Sierra Leone government and a group of revolutionaries whose tactics included kidnapping children and forcing them to murder their own parents (Lizza 22). His international exploits expanded beyond Africa. In 1999 he was sent to Belgrade attempting to appeal to the humanity of leaders in that region where bombings were killing many innocent civilians (Chua-Eoan et al 63). Both his work in Sierra Leone and in Belgrade left little if any results. It was important...
to Jackson, however, that the U.S. government supported his humanitarian efforts on a global level.

Jackson, whose credibility was thin as eggshells, probably should have learned to avoid scandalous media attention. In 1998, he put himself right in the middle of Clinton's sex scandal. When accusations were first made about Clinton's alleged affair with Monica Lewinsky, Jackson was invited to the White House to watch the Super Bowl with Bill and Hillary Clinton. Suddenly he was their spokesman to the media, commenting on a number of television programs on the condition of the family amidst these troubling allegations (Zengerle 16).

After allegations turned into truths, Jackson remained Clinton's personal spiritual advisor (Zengerle 17). This relationship soon became a problem for Jackson when critics argued that it was immoral for a man who preached morality to defend Clinton (Thomas 9). Because once again Jackson separated the sin from the sinner, his actions were misunderstood.

Jackson was also attacked for the manner in which he used money won from lawsuits against large corporations. Millions of dollars were won from Texaco in a settlement for alleged racism. He used that money to open a Wall Street office, which has continued making large sums of money that he uses to support minority causes (Avila 39). Jackson's own wealth was improved as well. Critics attacked Jackson on grounds that God and wealth are contradictory. Just as religion and politics could coexist in Jackson's mind, so could religion and wealth. He said "Dr. King would say we can be materialistic minded without being mindlessly materialistic. God did not send the children of Israel into the
desert without supplies. There's nothing holy and righteous about being without resources to survive. Frederick Douglass raised the question saying, 'We are free, but free to starve, free to be ignorant.'" (Foster 30)

Jackson's morality was also questioned regarding his involvement in the two-year expulsion of high school students in Decatur, Illinois. The expulsion was a result of a violent fight during a football game. Jackson claimed that the school administration was racially profiling the teenagers as "gangsters" and that the incident was "something silly, like children do" (Leo 15). This stance seemed to contradict his lifelong message of personal responsibility. He was harshly criticized for trying to make this a moral issue (Leo 15). One author suggested that Jackson's actions had crossed the lines of civil activism into actions that were promoting self-destruction and cultural suicide (Sowell 4).

Even with considerable criticism, candidates for the Democratic ticket in 2000 sought Jackson's support, believing it was key to winning the African-American vote. The nominee who had the African-American vote would have an outstanding advantage over other candidates. This was especially true in the south where African-Americans make up to 60% of the Democratic vote (Marks 2C). Jackson's on-going voter registrations were largely responsible for this number of African-American voters.

Although Vice-President Gore, the favorite to win the Democratic nomination, was "openly begging" for Jackson's support in this campaign (Fineman 33), Jackson preferred Gore's opponent Bill Bradley. Bradley was from his home in Chicago, had more money than Gore, and as a former NBA
basketball player had a “strong hoop-based appeal in the black community” (Fineman 34). Jackson never pledged his support for either candidate. Instead, he forced two white presidential candidates to concentrate on African-American issues. Al Gore and Bill Bradley both knew that if they didn’t cater to Jackson’s issues he could fully endorse the other candidate, giving that candidate the black vote, and consequently taking themselves out of the race (Marks 2C).

After decades of work Jackson had finally built and secured an enormous amount of support from African-Americans and brought them into the Democratic Party. The Democratic Party that once tried to push him out was now completely dependent on him to be their liaison to the African-American community, “a constituency that must be taken into account” (Frady 304).

Jackson was not the most popular man in America but certainly one of the most powerful. He had many critics but retained a strong following. The 2000 Democratic National Convention would be his fifth consecutive address. No political figure in America, Democrat or Republican, has retained significant influence in their party for that long a time.

The rhetorical problems that Jackson faced in 1984 and 1988 could easily be misunderstood if the critic assumes that Jackson’s primary purpose in those campaigns was to win the presidency. During the campaign of 1988 when a nomination looked highly plausible, Robert Borosage told Jackson’s biographer, Marshall Frady, that winning the election “privately frightened Jesse” (394). If one assumes that Jackson’s primary purpose in the latter three convention
speeches was to show support for the Democratic nominee, they would also misunderstand the personal problems that Jackson faced as a non-candidate.

Frady's records show a consistency in Jackson's purpose at various points in his life. As a young man in Greensboro, South Carolina he says he felt he was meant to be "working as an agent to transform the outer structures of society, and the inner structures of people" (177). Shortly after King's death, in his Breadbasket meetings, he revealed that his life's ministry derived from a passage in Luke (261) that says, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." (Luke 4:18) In his 1984 campaign he claimed his mission was "to transcend society, to make America better, in a way that is still the movement, more spiritual and less concrete than usual politics" (313). Finally, during his 1988 campaign he said that he was "a moral agent who represents the moral center" (329).

At no point in his political career did Jackson suggest that becoming president was necessary for him to effectively represent the "moral center". He certainly had enough support to run again in 1992, 1996, and 2000 but chose not to because he felt his position enabled him to play his role without the title of candidate. Although his speeches were inspirational to Democratic delegates, the primary reason he chose to speak in those final three conventions was to continue promoting his value system. One common problem in the first four speeches, however, was that he needed party support. As a political voice he
had two options. He could either join a major party or act as an Independent. He chose the Democratic Party because of their common objection to the conservative politics of the Republican Party. Jackson more than anyone understands the need for widespread cooperation as a means to accomplishing common goals. In each of his speeches to the Democrats it would be strategically imperative to strive for a common bond between him and his less progressive colleagues.

The media and fellow politicians may have unfairly judged Jackson. He also may have been responsible for much of his own negative press. Whoever is to blame, Jackson had to constantly defend his character. Over the years he was labeled as an inexperienced politician, an un-loyal party member, an anti-Semite, one who defended Farrakhan, one who defended Clinton's immorality, one who took civil rights too far, and more. As a skilled orator, it was absolutely necessary to use these five convention speeches to alter people's negative perceptions of him. Jackson could not be the conscience of America if America considered him a poor character. Conversely, he was also chastised for acting religiously within a secular political system. Since Jackson's purpose was to bring more spirituality into politics he had to find a way to mainstream his evangelistic style of speaking.

Finally and most importantly, each convention provided Jackson with a larger audience then he usually had to work with. Most of the time his audiences included church congregations or special interest groups. The Democratic National Convention gave him the entire nation. Since the media didn't usually
deliver his message favorably, he thrived on chances to deliver his message without media interference. These speeches were sermons. They taught moral dynamics. The central dimension to Jackson's sense of moral dynamics is that the equality and well being of humans is moral. Political action that promotes equality and well-being will always be good politics. Government policies that threatened equality, such as the elimination of affirmative action, were immoral. Policies that threatened the well being of humans, such as increased nuclear defense, were immoral. His rhetorical problem was to preach moral dynamics effectively in a limited period of time. The next chance for a national audience would be four years away if he could maintain his strong position within the Democratic Party and if his credibility was strong enough for people to listen.
AFROCENTRISM AND UNIFYING STRATEGIES

Jesse Jackson once lost a college public speaking contest due to his "Negro dialect" (Frady 140). Two decades later, dialect was just one stylistic difference that separated Jackson from his political colleagues and opponents. Yet his voice will be remembered much longer than future generations will remember Walter Mondale, Gary Hart, or Michael Dukakis. Jackson never abandoned his African American style of rhetoric nor did he suppress his prophetic image. What sets Jackson apart from other African Americans who have actively sought to change American politics within the system?

This chapter seeks to secure a theoretical base for understanding rhetorical strategies of Jesse Jackson with the belief that meaning is grounded in culture.

Afrocentrism

Jackson's rhetoric is influenced by his sense of culture and community that grew from his experiences in the African American or "black church", which in turn was influenced by African culture.
Aristotle described rhetoric as "the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion" (1356). Aristotle believed that truths or facts would ultimately prevail as persuasive discourse (1355). Afrocentric methodology insists that truth is dependent on perspective. Meaning is inherently grounded in culture. Molefi Kete Asante is the leading proponent of Afrocentric perspective. His book titled *Afrocentricity* explains that, "truth resides in our own experiences if we only look there" (48). The Afrocentric worldview, according to Asante, has been built upon the cumulative experiences of African Americans throughout history (22). Further, these experiences have lead to a collective consciousness, which precedes unity (24-25).

Asante asserts that individuals receive an Afrocentric worldview through a transformative process. The first step of this process is recognition of skin color (49). The second stage is environmental recognition. A person identifies their blackness with discrimination and abuse. The third level is personal awareness, in which that person defines their African American identity through music, dance, food, and other cultural influences. Asante warns that an Afrocentric view still hasn't formed at this point (49). The fourth level is "interest-concern". In this level a person has accepted the first three levels of their transformation and tries to deal intelligently with the problems of African Americans. Jesse Jackson chose to expand his interest-concern toward a broader base of minority issues in the United States. The fifth level of an individual who has adapted an Afrocentric worldview is that of "Afrocentric Awareness" (49). This final state represents a
conscious involvement in the liberation of African Americans. Afrocentric rhetoric is a conscious struggle against powerlessness in a racist society (49-50)

Drawing from Asante’s Afrocentric philosophy, rhetorical critic Ronald Jackson believes that African American language is still rooted in traditional African foundation and philosophy (33). This philosophy is that all things in the universe are interconnected, that everything is sacred in nature, that there are no definitive truths, and that “even the word has life in it” (33). History supports the claim that there is a strong prevalence of African philosophy in modern African American language and culture. African American culture is inherently shaped by religion. Ronald Jackson, like Asante, suggests that a study of African and African American religious systems is imperative to understanding the nature of that culture (33).

African Americans were introduced to western religion prior to the American Revolution. Slave owners resisted at first because Christians were humans and humans deserve human rights. The “white masters” feared that the teachings of the Bible would influence slaves to believe that they had political rights equal to white Christians (Egerton 299).

Missionaries still insisted on converting the slaves but they had to persuade the slave owners rather than the slaves themselves. They argued that Christianity, if taught properly, would help to teach values of docility and obedience (Egerton 300). Within the time period of importation, baptizing of slaves began only after laws were established that made it clear they were not free (Frazier 6). Religious instruction began on estates with clear warning that
their baptism “did not result in liberation” (Egerton 299). Slaves were taught that they were descendents of the cursed Ham of Canaan. As descendents of Ham, it was their duty to serve as slaves on this Earth. This was all a part of God’s plan and prophecy (Egerton 303).

Christianity was not attractive to slaves as it was presented to them. They were told that there would be a less appealing “nigger heaven” (Lincoln 31). Black slaves were forced to attend congregational meetings, but on black pews in black sections of the church, and without participation (Lincoln 32).

Slaves did not accept Christianity without resistance (Sawyer 46). Religion can’t be fully forced from one culture onto another. Eric Lincoln explains, “religion must be rooted in the needs and expectations of the society it molds and reflects” (60). He further explains that a non-western culture cannot make sense of western religion unless it becomes somewhat westernized. Religion must be consistent with the values and norms of the people that believe it (Lincoln 61). African Africans had two choices: they could accept Christianity at face value, or they could redefine it and themselves within the contexts of their unique western experience (Lincoln 63). They did the latter.

Slaves held secret church meetings outside of their scheduled Sunday services as a means of preserving African customs. This became the system for “Africanizing European religion” (Simms 101). Although the church was physically invisible at this point, its existence was widespread. Ideologies of obedience and docility were rejected. Instead, slaves embraced biblical stories
that defined their own experiences. God is free, man is created in God's image, and God is the foremost endorser of man's liberation (Lincoln 63).

Church members with superior personal qualities attained preacher status (Frazier 77). Their own people chose preachers or prophets; however, it was considered a "calling" from God. Historically, according to James Darsey, these kinds of callings occur when groups fall victim to slavery and seek freedom (89). Prophetic leaders inspire hope when freedom seems unattainable.

The majority of slaves were illiterate; hence, their "silent" teachings surfaced through songs and sermons that reinforced the vision of their religious experience (Frazier 12). White slave owners heard these songs and were frightened because they didn't understand their origins or meanings (Frazier 13). The slave songs were inconsistent with the white teachings. The activities of the black community were changing. A new culture was emerging for "culture is the sum of the options for creative survival" (Gadzekpo 97). While the European slave owners made every attempt to suppress African customs and traditions, the slaves essentially combined Christianity with African based religion where spiritual forces played a more dominant role (Lincoln & Mamiya 3).

It is important to note that Africa is a vast continent with many cultures and religions. Some could argue that it is too diverse to make generalizations; (Hudson 157) however, Aylward Shorter (562), Laurenti Magesa (6), and John Mbiti all describe African worship universally. Mbiti, who has written extensively on both African religion and philosophy explains, "African knowledge of God is expressed in proverbs, short statements, songs, prayers, names, myths, stories,
and religious ceremonies, throughout the continent of Africa there are no sacred writings." (29) Christians, for example, study the Bible. Islam has the Koran and Sikhs have the Adi Granth. The theology of African religion has no such base. Rituals are passed from one generation to the next. One example of religious ceremony is the Gelede Festival of the Yorubans. This festival honors the "Great Mother" which is a cosmic principle of what brings good harvest and health to the community (Ray 49). The festival includes dancing, prayers, and songs. This prayer spoken at the Gelede Festival illustrates how ritualistic proverbs metaphorically interconnect their own human existence with nature and the supernatural: "Let us speak the truth. To make this world a better place, to give this world a pleasant face, to make this world more peaceful. Deceit is spoiling the world. Evil behavior is pulling families apart. Reckless behavior breeds trouble. Let us cultivate good behavior." (Ray 50)

God is a mystery to Africans. They don't try to explain God or make attempts to understand why or what God is (Mbiti 33). African people have no physical representations of God (Mbiti 34) and anything that cannot be described tangibly is attributed to God's doing, for it is mysterious (Mbiti 35). African religion believes that one must actively be a part of the community to be a moral human (Magesa 77). The word morality (Mtu in Kiswahili) means to not live in isolation (Magesa 77).

Unlike the Christian God who often is portrayed as vengeful, the African God is everything that is good and peaceful. Rain is attributed to God because it provides nourishment to crops and is therefore good (Mbiti 36). Much like the
worship practices of the slaves in America, Africans worship through spoken or uttered expression rather than reverent meditative western versions of worship (Mbiti 65). Other attributes of African religion involve a mystical power that can't be explained scientifically; therefore, magic and religion become one. Sorcery and witchcraft are practiced through those given divine powers from God (Mbiti 192). “The universe is not static or dead: it is dynamic, living, and powerful” (Mbiti 194).

Because slaves were kept illiterate, the presentation of the Bible that was given to them became a great supernatural, sacred, and mysterious force (Frazier 11). The stories of the bible are filled with magic. Historian Douglas Egerton explains: “the Hebrew Bible was filled not merely with miracles but with magic - and therefore power: blazing bushes that did not burn, walking staffs that turned into serpents that terrified the master class, and holy men who could part the great water while Jehovah's chosen people escaped their captivity” (312).

The slaves identified directly with the ancient people of Egypt who suffered similar fate under an oppressive pharaoh. Egerton credits the prophet Moses as the foremost biblical hero of African American slaves for he obtained mystical power from the divine with the ability “to transform inanimate objects into living creatures” and magically led his people out of captivity (309). Religion for the African American was created as a means of survival. From its inception to the present, African American religion has endured through the principle of freedom (Sawyer 45). The teachings of obligation and duty, which came
primarily from the New Testament, were ignored and the stories of freedom in the Old Testament were embraced (Egerton 312).

The black perspective of Christianity took on the form of a color blind God. Man, as they were taught, was created in God's image. According to religious scholar Leonard Gadzekpo, not all men are white, "which affirmed the reality of African Americans and gave them their people hood and personhood, or humanity, in a racist society" (100). Freedom for the African American was different from the white conception of the word. European Americans conjure meanings of individualism. Freedom for slaves meant being collectively released from their bondage (Gadzekpo 98; Lincoln & Mamiya 4), hence a strong community identity began.

Around the period of the revolutionary war, a mass evangelism took place. Often at danger of being persecuted by other whites, Baptists and Methodists heavily recruited black membership (Hudson 161). This period, now described by historians as the "Great Awakening", began in the North East and then spread to the West and South (Frazier 8). After America's independence was won, revivals in the south attracted more rural blacks with their high spirited and emotional appeal (Frazier 8). The African/Christian theology of the silent churches fit nicely into the flexibility and relaxed nature of these denominations (Egerton 301).

The cultural qualities that existed in African American Baptist and Methodist communities during the Great Awakening exist today (Baer 18). Religion played an essential role in the formation of African American culture.
The survival of that culture depended on strong community and freedom, terms that have been defined through a combination of African heritage and Christian beliefs.

Jesse Jackson, who was raised in an African American Baptist community, is part of this culture. According to Ronald Jackson, the major principle of Afrocentric criticism can be applied to all rhetorical acts. It assumes that rhetoric is meaning centered and that meaning is unavoidably grounded in culture (36). Afrocentric criticism can be directly applied to the speeches of Jesse Jackson.

African American rhetoric, according to Ronald Jackson, "enlists themes of community, liberation (freedom), and relational ethics" (36). He adds that, "relational ethics reinforce what is meant by community. Each cultural community creates and maintains its ethical standards, and the value placed upon the standards emphasizes relationships with others" (36).

The historical description that has led to this point strongly supports Ronald Jackson's claim by explaining how these themes came into existence. While this framework might be useful in exploring African American rhetoric as a whole, it is especially appropriate for an analysis of Jesse Jackson whose worldview is shaped so strongly by his religious background and convictions.

Chapter two explained that Jackson's rhetorical problems grew from his need to improve relationships with Democratic colleagues and create a larger sense of community that would support his moral centered political ideologies. Afrocentric theory posits that an effective rhetorical strategy would elicit a strong
sense of community and strong relationships while establishing a set of ethical standards for that community. Building a network of relationships would be a difficult task since the speeches were directed at more than one audience with more than one message. The community that Jackson wanted to create involved three different participants. He had two audiences that he hoped to bring together. The first was Americans who sought economic liberation and the second was the Democratic Party. The third participant was himself. He was the mediating ingredient in this network of relationships.

The diversity of Jackson's audiences was troublesome because they did not all share his Afrocentric worldview. *The Afrocentric Idea*, by Molefi Asante, states: "What rhetorical materials he chooses as a rhetor – in fact, the available materials – are limited, and making-do or creating with the strategies and alternatives prescribed by the social conditions is the real challenge to the African American rhetor. Choosing materials, then, is fundamentally a question of rhetorical invention because it deals with the coming to be of the novel (111).

Chapter four will argue that Jesse Jackson's primary message, called the moral center, insists upon an African American sense of freedom. The bondage from which people fought release was an unequal economic condition. A strong community effort was needed to achieve freedom. Jackson's rhetorical strategy was to create a larger community by symbolically inviting all who needed liberation into the group. Further, support from a major political party was imperative to the success of this community. The rhetorical method for
accomplishing this feat relied on the use of metaphor and other symbolic unifying strategies.

Jackson's role in the community that he was creating is important. Each rhetorical situation was haunted by allegations of poor credibility and questions regarding his prophetic persona. As the following chapter will illustrate through his speeches, he did not attempt to dilute his prophetic persona. He has attained preacher status in the African American community, a role that is distinguished by those with superior qualities. His speeches promise hope to those who may believe that hope is unattainable. James Darsey, a rhetorical critic who has extensively studied prophetic rhetoric in America, defines the nature of prophetic persona. The proof of the message for a prophet isn't important because the speaker does not speak for himself. The speaker is a messenger (17). Darsey calls this the messenger formula and the speaker's success depends on the presence of a public tradition (20). The public has a shared sense of values and therefore when those values are challenged the prophet comes forward (through the word of God) to reiterate that societies values. Because the message is from God, it can't be compromised and requires the faith of the community (21). Darsey argues that the pathos of a prophet depends on an evident crisis within the society (28). The credibility of a prophet is not important for the prophet is only a servant of God whose role is a burden, not sought (28). In Jackson's case, he is trying to establish a new public tradition. The following section will describe the function of strategies that he has used to re-create a community in
America and establish his role in it. The following section will also explain how metaphor and other unifying strategies function.

**Strategy: The power of the symbol**

Stephen Lucas describes metaphor and simile respectively as “implicit” and “explicit” comparisons of “unlike things that are essentially different yet have something in common” (267-8). Poet Roger Mitchell explains that metaphor and simile produce a coherence and clarity between writer and audience through inventive imagery (37). Jesse Jackson’s speeches are filled with both metaphor and simile.

Kenneth Burke challenged the traditional notion that metaphors, one of four master tropes, had a purely figurative function (503). He believed that “metaphor” was synonymous with “perspective” and could be used rhetorically “in the discovery and description of ‘the truth’” (503).

Under the Burkean assumption that topics and tropes can operate similarly, Michael Leff has explained how metaphor can function strategically in rhetoric. He believes that metaphor can have an argumentative function as well as a figurative function (215). Since simile works correspondingly to metaphor, they will be discussed jointly.

Leff uses interaction theory, first introduced by I.A. Richards, to demonstrate the process of metaphor (216). He describes the process.

Interaction theory posits that metaphor consists of a juxtaposition of two terms normally regarded as belonging to different classes of
experience. On this view, metaphor involves an act of prediction joining together two distinct subjects—a principal subject (or tenor, or focus) and a secondary subject (or vehicle, or frame). Metaphorical meaning emerges as these two subjects interact with one another, and various aspects of these subjects are selected, emphasized, suppressed, and ordered as they come into contact. (216-217)

An extended metaphor from one of Jackson's campaign speeches illustrates this process. He begins his metaphor with a narrative of the David and Goliath story from the Bible: "Little David, little David, little David. Took off his unnecessary garments, Little David. Didn't want to get weighted down with a lot of foolishness, little David took what God gave him, a sling shot and a God biscuit, a rock." His narrative focuses on the rock that David used as a weapon given by God to defeat Goliath. The audience also had rocks according to Jackson: "Reagan won eight southern states by 182,000 votes when there were three million unregistered blacks in those same eight states. Rocks just laying around!" (Jackson, January 16, 1984).

The terms juxtaposed here are David's rock and African American votes. The principal subject is the votes needed to defeat the incumbent Ronald Reagan in the upcoming election. The tenor or vehicle in this metaphor is David's rock. New meaning emerges for the principal subject (votes) when these two terms merge together. The rock used by David to defeat Goliath was given by God to defeat a stronger, even evil, opponent. The rock was a simple weapon that was easily accessible to David. Votes were an accessible weapon for
Jackson's supporters in Philadelphia. Jackson portrayed the Republican Party as a strong, even evil opponent.

Metaphor in this case was a participatory process between Jackson and his audience. The meaning that emerged from the juxtaposition of terms was a truth actively created at the moment of delivery. According to Leff, this happens because metaphor “draws its materials from communal knowledge” (219). Jackson's audience had to have a shared understanding of both the principal subject (needed votes for the Democratic Party) and a similar understanding of the biblical story of David and Goliath. If the speaker does not share or exhibit images that are consistent with the audience's values or understanding then identification has failed.

The metaphor itself is not an argument but a newly created meaning. Leff states that, “this meaning emerges in the middle of a structure” (223). So while the metaphor does not necessarily operate linearly, it “frames rhetorical situations” (223).

Jackson's speeches employ additional symbolic means, beyond metaphor, to draw closer association with his targeted audience and create a sense of community. This kind of symbolism was explained by Kenneth Burke in *The Philosophy of Literary Form* as a means to explain the effectiveness of Adolph Hitler's rhetoric. Hitler created an “international devil” and rallied the Germans against that devil (Jews). They became a unifying enemy. Burke also credited the main ingredient of unity in the Middle Ages to the creation of a unified symbol of a common enemy or “prince of evil” (240). Identifying a
common enemy outside of the primary and extended audience that the group as a whole can rally against creates common ground between the speaker and audience.

In summary, this chapter has reviewed literature that clarifies Jackson’s rhetorical perspective under the assumption that meaning is grounded in culture. Religion plays an important role in African American culture. Early American slaves combined African culture with western Christianity. Freedom and strong community have emerged as dominant themes in African American culture throughout history. Ronald Jackson’s description of Afrocentric rhetoric is consistent with these conclusions. Strategically, metaphorical symbolism and Burke’s analysis of an “international devil” can both be used as means to strengthen community and in turn liberate Jesse Jackson’s audience. The following chapter will involve an in-depth analysis of Jackson’s five consecutive convention speeches to illustrate these concepts.
CHAPTER 4

RHETORICAL STRATEGY

Jesse Jackson's discourse can be described as both profound and eloquent. Each sentence and phrase seems to be carefully crafted and delivered flawlessly without the use of notes or a teleprompter. His voice quivers at times in order to break from the fiery tone and intense volume that increase with each stanza. His fist often reaches upward and sweat rolls from his face. His audiences react emotionally. Jackson is a master of repetition, alliteration and antithesis, for example.

The focus of this analysis is Jackson's ability to unify audiences through metaphor and then rally them against a common enemy. They work together to support Jackson's rhetorical vision. He hoped to restructure the Democratic Party by creating a new group identity. Jackson's first target audience is alienated America. His objective is to bring those who perceive themselves to be isolated voices into the Democratic Party, under his leadership, and influence national policy. Some amount of support from Democratic Party leadership is necessary to reach these isolated voices. The Democratic Party provides Jackson with the means of reaching his constituents. His secondary objective
then is to create a sense of association between himself and party leaders. The analysis will begin with his first address as a presidential candidate.

Address before the Democratic National Convention: July 18, 1984

Jackson identified his community shortly after taking the podium at his first Democratic Convention as a Presidential nominee: "My constituency is the desperate, the damned, the disinherited, the disrespected, and the despised" (4). Then he directly addresses Democratic leadership with which Jackson had bitter relations. Extended metaphors were used to dissolve their differences while maintaining that his direction was the best choice for the Democrats.

Many of Jackson's metaphors involve biblical imagery. He begins with this comparison to Moses:

"Only leadership – that intangible combination of gifts, the discipline, information, circumstance, courage, timing, will and divine inspiration – can lead us out of the crisis in which we find ourselves. The leadership can mitigate the misery of our nation. Leadership can part the waters and lead our nation in the direction of the Promised Land. Leadership can lift the boats stuck at the bottom." (7)

This paragraph establishes a sense of "crisis" that can only be resolved by great leadership. Historically in the United States, prophetic rhetoricians have invented crises to strengthen group identity (Darsey 63). This is especially true of rhetoric that challenged slavery, guided by themes of "freedom" and

1Parenthetical citations are paragraph numbers. See Appendix.
"redemption" (Darsey 64). Jackson's persona begins to develop at this moment. As explained in the previous chapter, the prophetic figure in African American history was the person whose personal qualities were superior to others. The church head was able to inspire hope to the rest of the community.

The principal subject in this metaphor is leadership. The silent secondary subject is Moses, a well-known biblical hero. Moses parted the waters of the Red Sea as a route for his people to escape from Egypt (Exodus 14: 1-31). The leadership of Moses was not voluntary; rather, he accepted a calling from God. At this point in the speech, Jackson doesn't designate himself as that chosen leader. The purpose here is to set up a sense of moral crisis and express the need for moral leadership. The audience's knowledge of this particular biblical story was necessary to stage that ambience and establish a rhetorical theme of "freedom".

The next paragraph, in fact, includes the other Democratic nominees as participants in Jackson's moral mission: "I've had the rare opportunity to watch seven men, and then two, pour out their souls, offer their service and heal — and heed the call of duty to direct the course of our Nation" (8).

Next, he acknowledges their differences and admits that while there was fighting, now is the time to come together to cooperate. Again, a biblical metaphor is used: "There is a time to sow, a time to reap. There is a time to compete, and a time to cooperate (8)." This phrase extends from the book of Ecclesiastes: "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven (3:1). Jackson invites Democratic leaders to perceive this
campaign as ultimately divine in purpose. There was a time for competition and now at this stage of the campaign it is time to come together for the greater moral good. He acknowledges that the final two nominees are fighting for that same greater moral good: "My respect for Mr. Mondale and Mr. Hart is great. I have watched them struggle with the crosswinds and crossfires of being public servants" (11). Though Jackson acknowledges their good intent, he discretely discredits their ability to serve in the direction he has proposed: "I ask for your vote on the first ballot as a vote for a new direction for this Party and this Nation. But I will be proud to support the nominee of this convention for the Presidency of the United States of America." (9-10) “I believe they will both continue to try to serve us faithfully (11)”. Gary Hart had not won the Democratic nomination but his involvement in the party was not the direction Jackson was looking toward.

Jackson finally turns the focus to himself. First, he acknowledges his own role in the Party’s disputes:

If, in my low moments, in word, deed or attitude, through some error of temper, taste or tone, I have caused anyone discomfort, created pain or revived someone’s fears, that was not my truest self. If there were occasions when my grape turned into a raisin and my joy bell lost its resonance, please forgive me. Charge it to my head and not to my heart. My head – so limited in its finitude; my heart, which is boundless in its love for the human family. I am not a perfect servant. I am a public servant doing my best against the odds. As I develop and serve, be patient. God is not finished with me yet. (15)
The two consecutive metaphors here are shaped to create a more favorable rapport between him and other party leaders he had run against. The principal subject in both metaphors is Jackson's actions leading up to this particular event. The secondary subject in the first metaphor is a joy bell and a raisin in the second. The meaning then comes in the space between these two ideas. Both detach from their original meaning and structure into a new meaning. This particular metaphor was successful because it detached some of the negative elements of the tenor and structured Jackson's persona back in to what we might view as positive. The grape is a pleasant, succulent fruit. Only under prolonged, extreme conditions does it dry out to become a raisin. The joy bell is still a charming ornament beyond its being broken. If Jackson had chosen another food to fulfill the image of turning sour such as “If my milk turned sour” the result would be much different. Sour milk evokes images of putrid odors that need to be thrown out. A raisin is no longer a grape but still has useful, edible qualities. His role as a servant (prophet) with a calling is established: “God is not finished with me yet” (15). Prophets are mortal beings that make mistakes. The proof of the message in prophecy is not important because the speaker does not speak for himself. The speaker is a messenger (Darsey 17).

One role of a prophet is that of a healer. Jackson introduces a healing metaphor to further his image and smooth over confrontations between himself, other Party leaders, and anyone else who he had confrontation with during the campaign. “We must use the insight, wisdom, and experience of the late Hubert
Humphrey as a balm for the wounds in our Party, this Nation and the world. We must forgive each other, redeem each other, regroup and move on." (20)

This metaphor is set up by a story about Hubert Humphrey who called a lifetime nemesis, Richard Nixon, from his deathbed. Jackson asked why Humphrey would want to speak with Nixon. Humphrey replied: "At a time like this you are forced to deal with your irreducible essence, forced to grapple with that which is really important to you. And what I have concluded about life, when all is said and done, we must forgive each other, and redeem each other, and move on." (18)

The principal subject here is Jackson’s conflict with others during the campaign. The secondary subject is a balm used to quickly heal cuts and scrapes. New meaning emerges between Jackson and his colleagues. The balm is forgiveness and redemption. Humphrey, a popular Democrat, was able to forgive a man far removed from the values of the Party; therefore, the Party should easily be able to apply that forgiveness upon Jackson.

In his appeal to Party leaders Jackson has used metaphor to create a common moral mission, establish his prophetic image, and advise them to forgive and accept him. The speech now quickly turns to Jackson’s efforts toward building group identity.

Two particular metaphors dominate the larger portion of the text. The first makes a comparison between America and a rainbow. The second makes a comparison between America and a quilt. Each serves the same purpose, weaving and interconnecting at times, against any sort of linear construction.
“Our flag is red, white, and blue, but our nation is a rainbow – red, yellow, brown, black and white – and we’re all precious in God’s sight.” (21)

“America is not like a blanket – one piece of unbroken cloth, the same color, the same texture, the same size. America is more like a quilt – many patches, many pieces, many colors, many sizes, all woven and held together by a common thread.” (22)

As the metaphor unfolds further the principle subject in these metaphors becomes more specific than “America”. He describes the principle subjects of this metaphor as anyone who might feel alienated by or have a grievance against the majority. Patches in the American quilt include “the Hispanic, the small farmer, the peace activist, and the gay” just to name a few (22). “The Rainbow” becomes even more specific in detailing the grievances that it’s different colors have, for example: “The Rainbow is making room for the Native American, the most exploited people of all, a people with the greatest moral claim against us. We support them as they seek restoration of their ancient land” (31).

The “rainbow” and “quilt” are the secondary subjects here. Jackson recreates a picture of America for those who thought they could have no voice. New meaning emerges for each term. The Rainbow is now a coalition of isolated people of different colors and grievances that can change public policy. Another metaphor invites members of the Rainbow to work with him to change America: “Old wine skins must make room for new wine. We must heal and expand” (30). The rainbow also has great biblical significance. It represents God’s covenant with humanity (Genesis 9: 1-16).
The quilt metaphor differs slightly from the rainbow metaphor in that it offers another frame, the common thread, which holds the patches together. The importance of this metaphor is that each patch is necessary for the quilt to exist. Common ground exists on their dependence on one another.

One of the major rhetorical problems that Jackson faced was an allegation of anti-Semitism. Jackson gives extra emphasis to include Jews in both his rainbow and quilt. He explains, “we are co-partners in a long and rich religious history” (27). Jackson continues, “We are bound by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Rabbi Abraham Heschel, crying out from their graves for us to reach common ground” (29).

Jackson has now sought acceptance within the Party and created a new group identity consisting of people he sought to bring into the Party. His next strategy would be to identify a common bond that would tie him together with both Democratic Party leaders and the newly created American quilt or rainbow.

Jackson created a symbolic devil figure out of Ronald Reagan. Reagan, according to Jackson, was the person responsible for the nation’s misery (43). Several examples of Reagan’s poor leadership are provided. Social security benefits had been cut (44). Inflation had skyrocketed (57). The national deficit had grown larger in his administration than “the sum total of deficits from George Washington through Jimmy Carter combined” (58). The devil figure persona is made clear in the following passage:

Mr. Reagan will ask us to pray, and I believe in prayer. I have come to this way by power of prayer. But then, we must watch false prophecy. He
cuts breakfast programs from children, cuts lunch programs from children, cuts job training from children, and then says to an empty table, 'Let us pray.' Apparently he is not familiar with the structure of prayer. You thank the Lord for the food that you are about to receive, not the food that just left. I think that we should pray, but don't pray for the food that left. Pray for the man that took the food – to leave. (50)

As his verbal attack against Reagan progresses, he repeatedly interrupts with the charge, "We need a change". The problems of his entire audience could be blamed on Ronald Reagan. The solution to their problems was "change". Change could only occur if Reagan was voted out of office. The solution was a mutual dependence between the old Democratic Party and the newly created Rainbow coalition with Jackson playing the pivotal role to make it work.

Jackson then readdresses Democratic leaders on behalf of his newly created community to explain that they needed to change their own policies if they hoped to bring these isolated voices into the Party. In regards to the debates he lost earlier in the day, he stated: "We could afford to lose the vote; issues are non-negotiable. We could not afford to avoid raising the right questions. Our self-respect and our moral integrity were at stake. Our heads are perhaps bloody, but not bowed. Our back is straight. We can go home and face our people. Our vision is clear." (66)

His point is emphasized with yet another biblical reference. "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me" (79). He explains that if the Party "lifts up" his
programs to help the poor and the jobless, (79-81) “the whole nation will come running to us” (81).

In the final moments of the speech, Jackson continues to draw additional association between himself and America’s disadvantaged youth.

I told them that like Jesus, I too, was born in the slum, and just because you’re born in a slum does not mean the slum is born in you and you can rise above it if your mind is made up. I told them in every slum there are two sides. When I see a broken window that’s the slummy side. Train some youth to become a glazier; that is the sunny side. (83)

He continues to give several more examples of how to move from the slummy side to the sunny side. While the “slummy side” is meant literally, the “sunny side” works metaphorically. The principal subject in this case is the youth that Jackson addresses. The secondary subject is sunshine, which “relates to the fundamental struggle for survival and development” (Osborne 117). The meaning created from the juxtaposition of terms is hope. In a final purge of emotion he pleas with America to hope and “dream” (86) and promises his colleagues victory if they extend their hand toward those lacking economic freedom in the United States: “Give me your tired, give me your poor, your huddled masses who yearn to breathe free and come November, there will be a change because our time has come.” (89)
Address before the Democratic National Convention: July 19, 1988

Jackson’s address at the 1988 convention has been titled *Common Ground / Common Sense*. This title is appropriate for it describes perfectly the structural format of the speech. Jackson uses the same metaphor and devil figure strategies that he did in 1984 to re-establish “common ground” between the Democratic Party, disadvantaged Americans, and himself. After establishing common ground he proposes the policies that all will have to agree upon if progress is to be achieved. These policies, according to Jackson, are “common sense”.

Jackson begins the speech by labeling his immediate audience with the rainbow metaphor that was used in 1984: “When I look out at this convention, I see the face of America: Red, Yellow, Brown, Black and White. We are all precious in God’s sight – the real rainbow coalition.” (1) The Rainbow Coalition had by this time emerged from a metaphorical punch line into a tangible organization run by Jackson. The importance of stating that this audience was “the real rainbow coalition” is that he hoped to maintain the metaphorical usefulness of the term.

Jackson acknowledged that his ability to address the convention was a result of a long fight for liberation in the United States: “My right and my privilege to stand here before you has been won, won in my lifetime, by the blood and the sweat of the innocent” (6). This fight for freedom was not just an African American effort though. Jackson wanted to broaden the base of the Rainbow beyond minorities and mend past struggles with the Jewish community:
Many were lost in the struggle for the right to vote: Jimmy Lee Jackson, a young student, gave his life; Viola Liuzzo, a White mother from Detroit, called nigger lover, had her brains blown out at point blank range; Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman and James Chaney – two Jews and a Black – found in a common grave, bodies riddled with bullets in Mississippi; the four darling little girls in a church in Birmingham, Alabama. They died that we might have a right to live. (9)

In Jackson’s 1984 address, majority party delegates and members of the Rainbow coalition weren’t necessarily the same. As it was explained then, the Rainbow consisted of people who felt alienated. If the Democrats reached out to those people, they would “come running” to them. In this address Jackson extended the metaphor to include the Democratic Party and thus strengthen the community. He exclaimed, “we sit here together, a rainbow, a coalition – the sons and daughters of slavemasters and the sons and daughters of slaves, sitting around a common table, to decide the direction of our party and our country” (10).

New meaning emerged between Jackson and his immediate audience. The secondary subject of the Rainbow metaphor now included white majority delegates. The network of relationships between the disadvantaged, the Democratic Party, and Jackson had now faded into one solid community. Jackson now hoped to solidify this new meaning by showing his audience the common ground they shared.
Jackson argued that the differences between his audiences had dissolved when they met at a crossroad (12). He made two comparisons to illustrate how different cultures have existed within the same community. First he described Jerusalem, the birthplace of three different religions. He claimed, “when people come together, flowers always flourish – the air is rich with the aroma of a new spring” (14).

The principal subjects of this metaphor are people from different backgrounds coming together as a community. The secondary subjects are flourishing flowers. Springtime connotatively evokes images of a new beginning and flowers represent life. In a commentary titled “A Fresh Start”, the *Christian Science Monitor* explains the symbolic nature of spring: “the whole earth wakes up. Life is seen again in nature. There is new growth, even where the weather has sometimes been severe”. New meaning emerges for Jackson’s example of the crossroads at which they meet. People of different cultures and religions can exist together in the same community. This particular community was the Rainbow, which now fully included the Democratic Party. The 1988 election was a new beginning for the Party. New life existed in the party that had previously been through severe weather.

A second comparison is made to the city of New York. “What makes New York so special? It’s the invitation of the Statue of Liberty, ‘Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses who yearn to breathe free’. Not restricted to English only. Many people, many cultures, many languages – with one thing in common, they yearn to breathe free. Common Ground!” (15)
Again he identifies a city that is culturally diverse but this time defines the purpose for their unity. The common bond that binds the Rainbow together is their love for freedom. The differences between progressive and conservative Democrats should not make a difference so long as they realize their dependence on one another. Jackson uses yet another metaphor to illustrate this dependence:

Progress will not come through boundless liberalism nor static conservatism, but at the critical mass of mutual survival – not at boundless liberalism or static conservatism, but at the critical mass of mutual survival. It takes two wings to fly. Whether you’re a hawk or a dove, you’re just a bird living in the same environment, in the same world. (18)

The terms juxtaposed here are Democrats and birds. A key term in this metaphor is “mutual survival”. The meaning that emerges from this comparison is that members of the Democratic Party, with conflicting ideologies, all share the most basic survival needs. Doves and hawks, as different as they are, both depend on a good set of wings at the most basic level of their survival. All people depend on freedom at the most basic level of their survival.

Jackson moves from the general to the specific by focusing on the conservative leadership of Michael Dukakis and progressive leadership of himself:

He studied law; I studied theology. There are differences of religion, region, and race; differences in experiences and perspectives. But the genius of America is that out of many we become one. Providence has
enabled our paths to intersect. His foreparents came to America on immigrant ships; my foreparents came to America on slave ships. But whatever the original ships, we’re in the same boat tonight. Our ships could pass in the night – if we have a false sense of independence – or they could collide and crash. We could lose our passengers. But we can seek a high reality and a greater good. Apart, we can drift on the broken pieces of Reaganomics, satisfy our basic instincts, and exploit the fears of our people. At our highest we can call upon noble instincts and navigate this vessel to safety. The greater good is the common good. (28-30)

As discussed in chapter two, Democratic leaders in the 1980’s felt they needed to move from a liberal to a more conservative political platform to compete with the Republican Party. Both Mondale in 1984 and Dukakis in 1988 feared that Jackson’s liberal stance was hurting the Party and avoided him as much as possible. This metaphor works to directly confront that trend.

The principal subjects here are liberal Democrats represented by Jackson and conservative Democrats represented by Dukakis. The secondary subjects are boats, a part of the metaphor that evolved from acknowledging the very obvious differences between a white lawyer and a black reverend. The first meaning that emerges from this metaphor assumes crises with the image of darkness. If the two were in separate boats they may crash or pass in the night. Michael Osborne explains that the suggestion of darkness or night in metaphor brings “fear of the unknown, discouraging sight, making one ignorant of his environment – vulnerable to its dangers and blind to its rewards. One is reduced
to a helpless state, no longer able to control the world about him” (117). The new meaning that emerges from these terms is danger. The Party and nation would be in danger if both sides did not realize the need for dependence and acceptance of one another. The answer to success, according to Jackson, was not to become more like the Republican Party but to become a more unified Democratic Party. As a unified community they could avoid peril.

Jackson then re-introduces his quilt metaphor to explain how Republican politics can be defeated. He personalizes the metaphor with a narrative of a childhood memory:

When I was a child growing up in Greenville, South Carolina my grandmamma could not afford a blanket, she didn’t complain and we did not freeze. Instead she took pieces of old cloth – patches, wool, silk, gabardine, crockersack – only patches, barely good enough to wipe off your shoes with. But they didn’t stay that way very long. With sturdy hands and a strong cord, she sewed them together into a quilt, a thing of beauty and power and culture. Now Democrats, we must build such a quilt. (39)

Again, new meaning emerges for the secondary term; quilt. It represents what could be a powerful Democratic Party. The way that powerful Party could be built is by finding isolated pieces of America that need representation, piecing them together, and building a new unified community. Jackson then gives many examples of where those quilt patches can be found, for example: “Women, mothers, who seek Head Start, and day care and prenatal care on the front side
of life, relevant jail care and welfare on the back side of life – you are right – but your patch is not big enough” (41). After many more examples he ties his metaphors together, “conservatives and progressives, when you fight for what you believe, right wing, left wing, hawk, dove, you are right from your point of view, but your point of view is not enough” (42).

After expressing the need for unity, Jackson once again strengthened it by turning his audience against a common enemy. Ronald Reagan would soon be leaving office but he remained the unifying devil figure in this address. Reagan, according to Jackson, was solely responsible for the loss of economic freedom that his constituents deserved. He claimed, “That’s classic Reaganomics. They believe that the poor had too much money and the rich had too little money so they engaged in reverse Robin Hood – took from the poor and gave to the rich, paid for by the middle class. We cannot stand four more years of Reaganomics in any version, in any disguise” (47).

Pointing the finger at Reagan becomes the transition point in the speech. After establishing the need to find common ground Jackson explains how it’s common sense for the Party to understand his issues. His politics are common sense because as he explains: “If an issue is morally right, it will eventually be political. It may be political and never be right” (77).

While the first section of this speech relies on metaphor to connect with Party leadership, the final section seeks to strengthen the bond that Jackson hopes to continue building between himself and disadvantaged minority groups in America. He preaches a message of hope and asks them not to surrender
themselves to drugs (81-83). He insisted that he understands their suffering and asks for their trust. In poetic fashion, he reveals the suffering that he has experienced in his own life as a means to build a deeper connection with them, "I understand work. I was not born with a silver spoon in my mouth. I had a shovel programmed for my hand" (96).

He ended with this request of his supporters: "Every one of these funny labels they put on you, those of you who are watching this broadcast tonight in the projects, on the corners, I understand. Call you outcast, low down, you can't make it, you're nothing, you're from nobody, subclass, underclass; when you see Jesse Jackson, when my name goes in nomination, your name goes in nomination (99)." Jackson knew he would not win the nomination that year. His rhetoric followed the same format as it did in 1984 though. He continued his efforts to create a group identity through metaphor then strengthen it with a unifying enemy. He continued to inspire hope in his constituents. His name never did go on the nomination after this election. Jackson's efforts, however, remained consistent in the following years.

Address before the Democratic National Convention: July 14, 1992

The speeches in 1984 and 1988 were truly the masterpieces of Jackson's career. Although Jackson was running for president in 1984 and 1988, the purpose of his speeches was not a persuasive effort to win the presidency nor were they a concession to the winning nominee filled with guilt-ridden apologies for his own behavior during those campaigns. The core of Jackson's message
was to challenge the value system of majority politics. His strategy for achieving that was to create a community within the confines of an existing political party that could support his value system.

As a presidential candidate, Jackson's rhetoric employed metaphor as a means to build a strong support base whose survival relied on its interdependence with the Democratic Party. The result was a highly artistic display of public discourse. As chapter two discussed, in 1992 Democrats viewed Jackson as more of a ceremonial headpiece than a serious politician with serious ideas. For this reason Jackson may have chosen not to use the same level of metaphor as an argumentative strategy for this address. The focus was to make clear his political mission. The speech begins:

The great temptation in these difficult days of racial polarization and economic injustice is to make political arguments black and white, and miss the moral imperative of wrong and right. Vanity asks – is it popular? Politics asks – will it win? Morality and conscience ask – is it right? We are part of a continuing struggle for justice and decency, links in a chain that began long before we were born and will extend long after we are gone. History will remember us not for our positioning, but for our principles. Not by our move to the political center, left or right, but rather by our grasp on the moral and ethical center of wrong and right. We who stand with working people and poor have a special burden. We must stand for what is right, stand up to those who have the might. We do so
grounded in the faith, that what is morally wrong will never be politically right. But if it is morally sound, it will eventually be politically right. (5-7)

He acknowledges the personal success of his work for the first time in this speech: "We are more interdependent than we realize. Not only African Americans benefited from the movement for justice. It was only when African Americans were free to win and sit in these seats, that Bill Clinton and Al Gore from the new South could be able to stand on this rostrum" (10). He continues his praise of the party by stating that they were "bound together in a single garment of destiny. Red, yellow, brown, black and white" (10). As the only unifying metaphor in this speech he blends his two primary unifying metaphors from previous speeches, the rainbow and the quilt. Audience members are already familiar with the metaphors so the brief reference acts as an enthymeme in which Jackson doesn't need to explain himself further.

Next, Jackson describes the issues that the party should continue fighting for. Personal stories of his involvement with those who need the governments help add credibility to his platform (14-17).

Most of Jackson's previous years had been spent in Africa and Russia so his domestic enemies had dwindled. Even so, former Vice President Dan Quayle was an easy target to unify his community against a unifying devil figure. Jackson created a biblical metaphor to symbolically transform Quayle, who fought for family values, from a moral to immoral figure:

Remember, Jesus was born to a homeless couple, outdoors in a stable, in the winter. He was the child of a single mother. When Mary said Joseph
was not the father, she was abused. If she had aborted the baby, she would have been called immoral. If she had the baby, she would have been called unfit, without family values. But Mary had family values. It was Herod – the Quayle of his day – who put no value on family. (32)

The principal subject of this metaphor is Quayle. The secondary subject is Herod, an evil biblical King. New meaning emerged for Qualye’s stance on family values between Jackson and his audience. Herod, a murderer, was an evil ruler whose rules had no base in reason or morality but rather personal glory. (Matthew 2: 3-6) Quayle’s quest toward family values then was more of a quest for personal glory than a quest for the greater good.

Jackson signals the closing of his speech by urging supporters to continue building on what they have already accomplished (39-40). Finally, he narrates a touching observation he witnessed that defined the type of character his community should maintain. A college basketball giant went to the school that would not separate him from his dwarf twin sister (43). He maintained that this level of relational ethics was necessary for their work to continue. The final words of his speech echoed “keep hope alive” (44).

Unlike the previous two speeches, it’s more obvious that Jackson’s purpose was not to campaign. More time was spent proposing his alternative party policy that would focus on the economic liberation of disadvantaged Americans. He reminds the Democratic Party that they are still a part of his community despite their differences and that there is a greater enemy to focus their negative attention toward. Jackson’s address to the Democratic National
Convention in 1992 validates his life mission of human liberation through strong community effort.

Address before the Democratic National Convention: August 27, 1996

Jesse Jackson faced the Democratic Convention again in 1996. In 1984 and 1988 an important aspect of the discourse was to set a tone of crisis. This piece followed that standard by establishing crisis early in the address.

The tone was set by once again unifying his audience against a common enemy. The devil figure was now more than one single person. It consisted of right wing Republicans who were gaining popularity and power in the United States despite a Democratic presence in the executive office. Jackson begins, "remember America you can't judge a book by its cover. On the cover, Powell and Kemp. But on the inside, the book was written by Newt Gingrich and Ralph Reed and Pat Buchanan" (4). Jackson was suggesting that extreme conservatives like Gingrich, Reed, and Buchanan were influencing national policy and would continue to do so if Republicans had power.

Jackson then introduces a new metaphor that re-positions all the old actors in his previous metaphors including himself, the Democratic Party, and the disadvantaged people he represents. In previous speeches these were the only actors. After a group identity was introduced, Jackson would proceed to make that group aware of their unifying enemy. The following metaphor combines these strategies by introducing the evil Republican Party as another actor in the metaphor.
What is our vision tonight? Just look around. The publicly financed United Center is a new Chicago mountain top. To the South, Comiskey Park, another mountain. To the west, Cook County Jail, with its 11,000 mostly youthful inmates. Between these three mountains lies the canyon. Once Campbell's soup was in the canyon. Sears was there, and Zenith, Sunbeam, the stockyards. There were jobs and industry where now there is a canyon of welfare and despair. This canyon exists in virtually every city in America (5-6)

The remainder of the address revolves around this metaphor as Jackson and his audience re-creates the image of America. The principal subjects in this metaphor are all the actors that were previously introduced. Their role is juxtaposed by Jackson's image of America's class division represented by the mountain top and canyon of despair.

Those same people who were once described as the colors of the rainbow and patches of the American quilt are now described as those who lie in the canyon of despair. Jackson claims that one-fifth of Americans live in this canyon (7). Those on the mountaintops represent one percent of the population (7). Economic policies of past Republican Presidents are blamed for this class division and Jackson warns that conservative Republican politics will always further this margin.

Jackson asked, "What is our obligation to the people in the canyon?" (18) He suggests a number of policies but once again their success would be dependent on the interdependence of the Democratic Party and disadvantaged
Americans that should support them (13). The Democrats would need to reach out to these Americans in order to get votes and the people in the canyon would have to vote Democrat if change was possible. Jackson explains, "In 1994, the Gingrich tidal wave was not so high; our sea walls were too low. With only 40,000 more voters, Newt Gingrich would never have power. This low turnout cannot repeat itself in 1996; we must inspire and mobilize our base vote, the margin of our hope" (33).

Once again Jackson juxtaposes the term "votes" with a secondary subject. This time the comparison is made to a "sea wall". New meaning emerges for the term votes. Similar to the metaphor of David and Goliath in his 1984 campaign speech, votes became a powerful tool that could be used to protect oneself from harm.

Jackson concludes with the words of gospel and folk singer Tracy Chapman, "we must 'start all over, make a new beginning... make new symbols... redefine the world'" [46]. He was summarizing his own rhetorical strategy and inviting the audience to redefine their view of the world with him through metaphorical symbolism. He believed that a change toward a political system based on morality was only possible if he could create a community that shared his same worldview.

Address before the Democratic National Convention: August 15, 2000

In 2000, Jesse Jackson addressed the Democratic Convention for the fifth consecutive time. First, Jackson once again summarizes his political philosophy
known as the “moral center”. In this speech Jackson doesn’t introduce any new metaphors. He simply refers to a metaphor that the audience is already familiar with. He recognized his audience as the American quilt while simultaneously identifying their unifying enemy:

Two weeks ago, in Philadelphia, the nation was treated to a stage show – smoke, mirrors, hired acts that Republicans called inclusion. That was the inclusion illusion. In Philadelphia, diversity ended on the stage. They could not mention the words Africa, Appalachia, or AIDS once. So it is good to be here in Los Angeles, to look over this great assembly and see the real deal – the quilt of many patches that is America. (3)

At this stage in Jackson’s rhetorical career, his audience was very familiar with the quilt and understood their roles in the metaphor. Jackson finally had a productive relationship with Party leaders, primarily Al Gore the Democratic Presidential nominee. As a result, his role became more supportive. He repeated the phrase “more with Gore” (31-39). His role was more supportive because Gore, as explained in chapter two, had integrated Jackson’s value system into his own politics.

In Jackson’s previous speeches, where Ronald Reagan played the role of the symbolic prince of evil, the symbol was represented as a “false prophet”. The Republican Presidential nominee, George W. Bush, is also represented as a wolf in sheep’s clothing, so to speak. Jackson warns:

Papa Bush is a nice man, a gentle man. But chose Clarence Thomas.

Baby Bush, the governor of Florida, is a charming man. But he has
dismantled affirmative action in Florida. George W. Bush is an affable man, a friendly man. But he stood with Jefferson Davis and chose the confederate flag over the American flag. He refused to offer leadership on hate crimes legislation and wants to give the surplus back to the richest 20% to buy more yachts. I say there is a lesson here. Stay out of the Bushes. (29-32)

Jackson ends the speech with a familiar phrase: "Keep hope alive!" (40) Hope was the message that Jackson had been giving his constituents throughout the span of his involvement with politics. In this address, more than ever before, he was directing the vote of his constituents to the Democratic nominee whom he supported and who sought the support of Jackson. The network of relationships is solidly established in this address.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Jesse Jackson has spent the majority of his life chasing the dream of his mentor Martin Luther King Jr. King envisioned a different nation than the one he was born into. King's "poor people's campaign" was envisioned as a way to broaden civil rights activism beyond African American issues. He knew that an enormous number of Americans suffered class division due to unequal opportunity. He believed that the combined effort of all these people could challenge the majority and ultimately moralize American democracy. Jackson continues that effort today.

The rhetoric of Jesse Jackson resonated his will to provide economic freedom and equal opportunity to everyone. He believed that the most efficient way to challenge the system was through direct political involvement. Ideals of the Democratic Party were closer to Jackson than the Republican Party. His lifetime battle has been to register minority voters and sustain their support through the Democratic Party. His activism and rhetoric have had some impact on the nation as a whole and enormous impact on African Americans. By the year 2000; Democratic nominees knew that they must have Jackson's approval to get the majority of African American votes.
Rhetorically, Jackson had to persuade both his disadvantaged constituents and the Democratic Party that they were dependent on each other for survival. The Democrats needed more support to compete with Republicans. Americans with grievances needed a political party that would support them in exchange for their vote. Jackson’s cultural worldview relies on strong community. Freedom is attainable when an established network of working relationships exists.

Jackson’s rhetorical vision is made clearer by analyzing his discourse through his own worldview. It’s also equally important to note that much of Jackson’s audience did not share that worldview. Jackson’s reliance on community contradicts a strong sentiment of individualism in America. Jackson’s challenge then was to make his audience see the world through his eyes. Two strategies in Jackson’s rhetoric stand out as a means to this community effort.

It was wise of Jackson to use metaphor as an argumentative function because it allowed him to re-create meaning with his audience at the moment of delivery. It actively involved his audience as participants in a number of metaphors that reconstructed their vision of America and their place in it. Jackson was able to maintain some credibility for his role in the new vision of America as that of an “imperfect servant” with whom “God isn’t finished yet”. Creating a common enemy in each discourse worked to strengthen the sense of community that the argumentative metaphor created.

Earlier in this analysis, I asked “What sets Jackson apart from other African Americans who have actively sought to change American politics within
the system?" I would argue now that Jackson neither adapted to the majority in his discourse nor did he overlook the fact that cultural differences existed that might impede his message. Instead, he used the power of the symbol to reconstruct meanings and roles of his participants at the moment of delivery. These strategies may be helpful for orators who face the same difficult task of communicating with diverse audiences. Metaphor as a means of unifying audiences and other symbolic unifying strategies can work to create and maintain group identity. Additionally, the fact that metaphor can function argumentatively as well as figuratively has infinite possibilities for rhetorical strategy.

I agree with Paula Wilson that Jackson's rhetoric is complex (262). For that reason this research is also limited. I do believe that this study helps to explain the very core of Jackson's message, however. Future research on Jesse Jackson's rhetoric should extend the concepts that have been discussed in this analysis. Earlier texts should be examined. Jackson's tendency to repeat phrases and metaphors is a valuable asset to any critic who could put these convention speeches in broader context with discourse delivered earlier in Jackson's career and speeches that are yet to be delivered. Future research should also identify the other aspects of Jackson's discourse that provide subsequent support to the core message. Above all, rhetorical critics should continue to examine the different ways in which symbolic and figurative language function persuasively.
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85

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Address before the Democratic National Convention
July 18, 1984

1. Tonight we come together bound by our faith in a mighty God, with genuine respect and love for our country, and inheriting the legacy of a great party, the Democratic Party, which is the best hope for redirecting our nation on a more humane, just and peaceful course.

2. This is not a perfect party. We are not a perfect people. Yet, we are called to a perfect mission: our mission to feed the hungry; to clothe the naked; to house the homeless; to teach the illiterate; to provide jobs for the jobless; and to choose the human race over the nuclear race.

3. We are gathered here this week to nominate a candidate and adopt a platform which will expand, unify, direct and inspire our Party and the Nation to fulfill this mission.

4. My constituency is the desperate, the damned, the disinherited, the disrespected, and the despised. They are restless and seek relief. They've voted in record numbers. They have invested faith, hope and trust that they have in us. The Democratic Party must send them a signal that we care. I pledge my best not to let them down.

5. There is the call of conscience, redemption, expansion, healing, and unity. Leadership must heed the call of conscience, redemption, expansion, healing and unity, for they are the key to achieving our mission. Time is neutral and does not change things. With courage and initiative, leaders can change things.

6. No generation can choose the age or circumstance in which it is born, but through leadership it can choose to make the age in which it is born, an age of enlightenment, an age of jobs and peace and justice.

7. Only leadership — that intangible combination of gifts, the discipline, information, circumstance, courage, timing, will and divine inspiration —
can lead us out of the crisis in which we find ourselves. The leadership can mitigate the misery of our nation. Leadership can part the waters and lead our nation in the direction of the Promised Land. Leadership can lift the boats stuck at the bottom.

8. I've had the rare opportunity to watch seven men, and then two, pour out their souls, offer their service and heal - and heed the call of duty to direct the course of our Nation. There is a proper season for everything. There is a time to sow, a time to reap. There is a time to compete, and a time to cooperate.

9. I ask for your vote on the first ballot as a vote for a new direction for this Party and this Nation. A vote of conviction, a vote of conscience.

10. But I will be proud to support the nominee of this convention for the Presidency of the United States of America. Thank you.

11. I have watched the leadership of our party develop and grow. My respect for both Mr. Mondale and Mr. Hart is great. I have watched them struggle with the crosswinds and crossfires of being public servants, and I believe they will both continue to try to serve us faithfully.

12. I am elated by the knowledge that for the first time in our history a woman, Geraldine Ferraro, will be recommended to share our ticket.

13. Throughout this campaign, I've tried to offer leadership to the Democratic Party and the Nation. If in my high moments, I have done some good, offered some service, shed some light, healed some wounds, rekindled some hope, or stirred someone from apathy and indifference, or in any way along the way helped somebody, then this campaign has not been in vain.

14. For friends who loved and cared for me, and for a God who spared me, and for a family who understood, I am eternally grateful.

15. If, in my low moments, in word, deed or attitude, through some error of temper, taste or tone, I have caused anyone discomfort, created pain or revived someone's fears, that was not my truest self. If there were occasions when my grape turned into a raisin and my joy bell lost its resonance, please forgive me. Charge it to my head and not to my heart, which is boundless in its love for the human family. I am not a perfect servant. I am a public servant doing my best against the odds. As I develop and serve, be patient. God is not finished with me yet.

16. This campaign has taught me much; that leaders must be tough enough to fight, tender enough to cry, human enough to make mistakes, humble
enough to admit them, strong enough to absorb the pain and resilient
enough to bounce back and keep on moving.

17. For leaders, the pain is often intense. But you must smile through your
tears and keep moving with the faith that there is a brighter side
somewhere.

18. I went to see Hubert Humphrey three days before he died. He had just
called Richard Nixon from his dying bed, and many people wondered why.
I asked him. He said, “Jesse, from this vantage point, with the sun setting
in my life, all of the speeches, political conventions, the crowds and the
great fights are behind me now. At a time like this you are forced to deal
with your irreducible essence, forced to grapple with that which is really
important to you. And what I have concluded about life,” Hubert
Humphrey said, “When all is said and done, we must forgive each other,
and redeem each other, and move on.”

19. Our party is emerging from one of its most hard fought battles for the
Democratic Party’s presidential nomination in our history. But our healthy
competition should make us better, not bitter.

20. We must use the insight, wisdom, and experience of the late Hubert
Humphrey as a balm for the wounds in our Party, this Nation and the
world. We must forgive each other, redeem each other, regroup and
move on.

21. Our flag is red, white and blue, but our nation is a rainbow – red, yellow,
brown, black and white – and we’re all precious in God’s sight.

22. America is not like a blanket – one piece of unbroken cloth, the same
color, the same texture, the same size. America is more like a quilt –
many patches, many pieces, many colors, many sizes, all woven and held
together by a common thread. The white, the Hispanic, the black, the
Arab, the Jew, the woman, the native American, the small farmer, the
businessperson, the environmentalist, the peace activist, the young, the
old, the lesbian, the gay and the disabled make up the American quilt.

23. Even in our fractured state, all of us count and all of us fit somewhere. We
have proven that we can survive without each other. But we have not
proven that we can win and progress without each other. We must come
together.

24. From Fannie Lou Hamer in Atlantic City in 1964 to the Rainbow Coalition
in San Francisco today; from the Atlantic to the Pacific, we have
experienced pain but progress as we ended American apartheid laws, we
obtained open

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housing, as young people got the right to vote. We lost Malcolm, Martin, Medgar, Bobby, John and Viola. The team that got us here must be expanded, not abandoned.

25. Twenty years ago, tears welled up in our eyes as the bodies of Schwerner, Goodman and Chaney were dredged from the depths of a river in Mississippi. Twenty years later, our communities, black and Jewish, are in anguish, anger and pain. Feelings have been hurt on both sides.

26. There is a crisis in communications. Confusion is in the air. But we cannot afford to lose our way. We may agree to agree; or agree to disagree on issues; we must bring back civility to these tensions.

27. We are co-partners in a long and rich religious history - the Judeo-Christian traditions. Many blacks and Jews have a shared passion for social justice at home and peace abroad. We must seek a revival of the spirit, inspired by a new vision and new possibilities. We must return to higher ground.

28. We are bound by Moses and Jesus, but also connected with Islam and Mohammed. These three great religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, were all born in the revered and holy city of Jerusalem.

29. We are bound by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Rabbi Abraham Heschel, crying out from their graves for us to reach common ground. We are bound by shared blood and shared sacrifices. We are much too intelligent; much to bound by our Judeo-Christian heritage; much too victimized by racism, sexism, militarism and anti-Semitism; much too threatened as historical scapegoats to go on divided one from another. We must turn from finger pointing to clasped hands. We must share our burdens and our joys with each other once again. We must turn to each other and not on each other and choose higher ground.

30. Twenty years later, we cannot be satisfied by just restoring the old coalition. Old wine skins must make room for new wine. We must heal and expand. The Rainbow Coalition is making room for Arab Americans. They, too, know the pain and hurt of racial and religious rejection. They must not continue to be made pariahs. The Rainbow Coalition is making room for Hispanic Americans who this very night are living under the threat of the Simpson-Mazzoli bill. And farm workers from Ohio who are fighting the Campbell Soup Company with a boycott to achieve legitimate workers' rights.

31. The Rainbow is making room for the Native American, the most exploited people of all, a people with the greatest moral claim amongst us. We
support them as they seek the restoration of their ancient land and claim amongst us. We support them as they seek the restoration of land and water rights, as they seek to preserve their ancestral homelands and the beauty of a land that was once all theirs. They can never receive a fair share for all they have given us. They must finally have a fair chance to develop their great resources and to preserve their people and their culture.

32. The Rainbow Coalition includes Asian Americans, now being killed in our streets, scapegoats for the failures of corporate, industrial and economic policies.

33. The Rainbow is making room for the young Americans. Twenty years ago, our young people were dying in a way for which they could not even vote. Twenty years later, young America has the power to stop a war in Central America and the responsibility to vote in great numbers. Young America must be politically active in 1984. The choice is war or peace. We must make room for young America.

34. The Rainbow includes disabled veterans. The color scheme fits in the Rainbow. The disabled have their handicap revealed and their genius concealed; while the able-bodied have their genius revealed and their disability concealed. But ultimately, we must judge people by their values and their contribution. Don’t leave anybody out. I would rather have Roosevelt in a wheelchair than Reagan on a horse.

35. The Rainbow includes for small farmers. They have suffered tremendously under the Reagan regime. They will either receive 90 percent parity of 100 percent charity. We must address their concerns and make room for them.

36. The Rainbow includes lesbians and gays. No American citizen ought to be denied equal protection from the law.

37. We must be unusually committed and caring as we expand our family to include new members. All of us must be tolerant and understanding as the fears and anxieties of the rejected and of the party leadership express themselves in so many different ways. Too often what we call hate – as if it were some deeply rooted in philosophy or strategy – it is simply ignorance, anxiety, paranoia, fear and insecurity.

38. To be strong leaders, we must be long-suffering as we seek to right the wrongs of our Party and our Nation. We must expand our Party, heal our Party, and unify our Party. This is our mission in 1984.
39. We are often reminded that we live in a great nation—and we all do. But it can be greater still. The Rainbow is mandating a new definition of greatness. We must not measure greatness from the mansion down, but from the manger up.

40. Jesus said that we should not be judged by the bark we wear but by the fruit we wear. Jesus said that we must measure greatness by how we treat the least of these.

41. President Reagan says the nation is in recovery. Those 90,000 corporations that made a profit last year but paid no Federal taxes are recovering. The 37,000 military contractors who have benefited from Reagan's more than doubling of the military budget in peacetime surely they are recovering.

42. The big corporations and rich individuals who received the bulk of a three-year, multibillion tax cut from Mr. Reagan are recovering. But no such recovery is under way for the least of these. Rising tides don't lift all boats, particularly those stuck at the bottom.

43. For those boats stuck at the bottom there's a misery index. This Administration has made life more miserable for the poor. Its attitude has been contemptuous. Its policies and programs have been cruel and unfair to working people. They must be held accountable in November for increasing infant mortality among the poor. In Detroit—in Detroit, one of the greatest cities in the western world, babies are dying at the same rate as Honduras, the most underdeveloped Nation in our hemisphere. This Administration must be held accountable for policies that have contributed to the growing poverty in America. There are now 34 million people in poverty, 15 percent of our Nation. Twenty-three million are White, 11 million are Black, Hispanic, Asian and others. By the end of this year, there will be 41 million people in poverty. We cannot stand idly by. We must fight change now.

44. Under this regime, we look at Social Security. The 1981 budget cuts included nine permanent Social Security benefit cuts totaling $20 billion over five years.

45. Small businesses have suffered on the Reagan tax cuts. Only 18 percent of total business tax cuts went to them, 82 percent to big business.

46. Health care under Mr. Reagan has already been sharply cut. Education under Mr. Reagan has been cut 25 percent. Under Mr. Reagan there are now 9.7 million female head families. They represent 16 percent of all families. Half of all of them are poor. Seventy percent of all poor children live in a house headed by a woman, where there is no man.
47. Under Mr. Reagan, the Administration has cleaned up only six of 546 priority toxic waste dumps.

48. Farmers' real net income was only half its level in 1979.

49. Many say that the race in November will be decided in the South. President Reagan is depending on the conservative South to return him to office. But the South, I tell you, is unnaturally conservative. The South is the poorest region in our nation and, therefore, the least to conserve. In his appeal to the South, Mr. Reagan is trying to substitute flags and prayer clothes for food, and clothing, and education, health care and housing.

50. Mr. Reagan will ask us to pray, and I believe in prayer. I have come to this way by power of prayer. But then, we must watch false prophecy. He cuts energy assistance to the poor, cuts breakfast programs from children, cuts lunch programs for children, cuts job training from children, and then says to an empty table, "Let us pray." Apparently he is not familiar with the structure of prayer. You thank the Lord for the food that you are about to receive, not the food that just left. I think that we should pray, but don't pray for the food that left. Pray for the man that took the food — to leave.

51. We need a change. We need a change in November.

52. Under Mr. Reagan, the misery index has risen for the poor. The danger index has risen for everybody. Under this administration, we have lost the lives of our boys in Central America and Honduras, in Grenada, in Lebanon, in a nuclear standoff in Europe. Under this Administration, one-third of our children believe that they will die in a nuclear war. The danger index is increasing in this world.

53. All the talk about the defense against Russia; the Russian submarines are closer, and their missiles more accurate. We live in a world tonight more miserable and a world more dangerous. While Reaganomics and Reaganism is talked about often, so often we miss the real meaning. Reaganism is a spirit, and Reanomics represents the real economic facts of life.

54. In 1980, Mr. George Bush, a man with reasonable access to Mr. Reagan, did an analysis of Mr. Reagan's economic plan. Mr. George Bush concluded that Reagan's plan was "voodoo economics." He was right.

55. Third-party candidate John Anderson said "a combination of military spending, tax cuts and a balanced budget by 1984 would be accomplished with blue smoke and mirrors." They were both right.
56. Mr. Reagan talks about a dynamic recovery. There's some measure of recovery. Three and a half years later, unemployment has inched just below where it was when he took office in 1981. There are still 8.1 million people officially unemployed, 11 million working only part-time. Inflation has come down, but let's analyze for a moment who has paid the price for this superficial economic recovery.

57. Mr. Reagan curbed inflation by cutting consumer demand. He cut consumer demand with conscious and callous fiscal and monetary policies. He used the Federal budget to deliberately induce unemployment and curb social spending. He then weighed and supported tight monetary policies of the Federal Reserve Board to deliberately drive up interest rates, again to curb consumer demand created through borrowing. Unemployment reached 10.7 percent. We experienced skyrocketing interest rates. Our dollar inflated abroad. There were record bank failures; record farm foreclosures; record business bankruptcies; record budget deficits; record trade deficits.

58. Mr. Reagan brought inflation down by destabilizing our economy and disrupting family life. He promised - he promised in 1980 a balanced budget. But instead we now have a record toward a billion dollar budget deficit. Under Mr. Reagan, the cumulative budget deficit for his four years is more than the sum total of deficits from George Washington through Jimmy Carter combined.

59. I tell you, we need a change.

60. How is he paying for these short-term jobs? Reagan's economic recovery is being financed by deficit spending - $200 billion a year. Military spending, a major cause of this deficit, is projected, over the next five years, to be nearly $2 trillion, and will cost about $40,000 for every taxpaying family.

61. When the Government borrows $200 billion annually to finance the deficit, this encourages the private sector to make its money off of interest rates as opposed to development and economic growth.

62. Even money abroad, we don't have enough money domestically to finance the debt, so we are now borrowing money abroad, from foreign banks, governments and financial institutions: $40 billion in 1983; $70-80 billion in 1984 (40 percent of our total); and over $100 billion (50 percent of our total) in 1985. By 1989, it is projected that 50 percent of all individual income taxes will be going just to pay for interest on the debt.

63. The United States used to be the largest exporter of capital, but under Mr. Reagan we will quite likely become the largest debtor nation.
64. About two weeks ago, on July 4th, we celebrated our Declaration of Independence, yet every day supply-side economics is making our Nation more economically dependent and less economically free. Five to six percent of our Gross National Product is now being eaten up with President Reagan's budget deficits. To depend on foreign military powers to protect our national security would be foolish, making us dependent and less secure, yet Reaganomics has us increasingly dependent on foreign economic sources.

65. This consumer-led but deficit-financed recovery is unbalanced and artificial. We have a challenge as Democrats to point a way out. Democracy guarantees opportunity, not success. Democracy guarantees the right to participate, not a license for either a majority to dominate. The victory for the Rainbow Coalition in the Platform debates today was not whether we won or lost, but that we raised the right issues.

66. We could afford to lose the vote; issues are non-negotiable. We could not afford to avoid raising the right questions. Our self-respect and our moral integrity were at stake. Our heads are perhaps bloody, but not bowed. Our back is straight. We can go home and face our people. Our vision is clear.

67. When we think, on this journey from slaveship to championship, that we have gone from the planks of the Boardwalk in Atlantic City in 1964 to fighting to help write the planks in the platform in San Francisco in 1984 there is a deep and abiding sense of joy in our souls in spite of the tears in our eyes. Though there are missing planks, there is a solid foundation on which to build. Our party can win, but we must provide hope, which will inspire the people to struggle and achieve; provide a plan that shows a way out of our dilemma and then lead the way.

68. In 1984, my heart is made to feel glad because I know there is a way out - justice. The requirement for rebuilding America is justice. The linchpin of progressive politics in our nation will not come from the North, they in fact will come from the South.

69. That is why I argue over and over again. We look from Virginia around to Texas, there's only one black Congressperson out of 115. Nineteen years later, we're locked out Congress, the Senate and the Governor's mansion.

70. What does this large black vote mean? Why do I fight gerrymandering and annexation and at-large elections? Why do we fight over that? Because I tell you, you cannot hold someone in the ditch unless you linger there with them. Unless you linger there.
71. If you want a change in this nation, you enforce the voting rights act. We'll get 12 to 20 Black, Hispanics, female and progressive congresspersons from the South. We can save the cotton, but we have got to fight the boll weevils. We have got to make a judgment. We have got to make a judgment.

72. It is not enough to hope that ERA will pass. How can we pass ERA? If Blacks vote in great numbers, progressive Whites win. It is the only way progressive Whites win. If Blacks vote in great numbers, Hispanics win. When Blacks, Hispanics and progressive Whites vote, women win. When women win, children win. When women and children win, workers win. We must all come together. We must come together. Thank you.

73. I tell you, in all our joy and excitement, we must not save the world and lose our souls. We should never short-circuit enforcing the Voting Rights Act at every level. When one of us rises, all of us will rise. Justice is the way out. Peace is the way out. We should not act as if nuclear weaponry is negotiable and debatable.

74. In this world in which we live, we dropped the bomb on Japan and felt guilty, but in 1984 other folks have also got bombs. This time, if we drop the bomb, six minutes later we, too, will be destroyed. It is not about dropping the bomb on somebody. It is about dropping the bomb on everybody. We must choose to develop minds over guided missiles, and then think it out and not fight it out. It is time for a change.

75. Our foreign policy must be characterized by mutual respect, not by gunboat diplomacy, bit stick diplomacy and threats. Our nation at its best feeds the hungry. Our Nation at its worst, at its worst, will mine the harbors of Nicaragua; at its worst will try to overthrow their government, at its worst will cut aid to American education and increase the aid to El Salvador; at its worst, our Nation will have partnership with South Africa. That is a moral disgrace. It is a moral disgrace. It is a moral disgrace.

76. We look at Africa. We cannot just focus on Apartheid in Southern Africa. We must fight for trade with Africa, and not just aid to Africa. We cannot stand idly by and say we will not relate to Nicaragua unless they have elections there, and then embrace military regimes in Africa overthrowing democratic governments in Nigeria and Liberia and Ghana. We must fight for democracy all around the world, and play the game by one set of rules.

77. Peace in this world. Our present formula for peace in the Middle East is inadequate. It will not work. There are 22 nations in the Middle East. Our nation must be able to talk and act and influence all of them. We must build upon Camp David, and measure human rights by one yard stick. In that region we have too many interests and too few friends.
There is one way out, jobs. Put America back to work.

When I was a child growing up in Greenville, South Carolina, the Reverend Sample used to preach ever so often a sermon relating to Jesus and he said, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me." I didn't quite understand what he meant as a child growing up, but I understand a little better now. If you raise up truth, it is magnetic. It has a way of drawing people.

With all this confusion in this Convention, the bright lights and parties and big fun, we must raise up the single proposition: If we lift up a program to feed the hungry, they will come running; if we lift up a program to start a war no more, our youth will come running; if we lift up a program to put America back to work, and an alternative to welfare and despair, they will come running.

If we cut that military budget without cutting our defense, and use that money to rebuild bridges and put steel workers back to work, and use that money and provide jobs for our cities, and use that money to build schools and pay teachers and educate our children, and build hospitals, and train doctors and train nurses, the whole nation will come running to us.

As I leave you now, we vote in this convention and get ready to go back across this nation in a couple of days, in this campaign I tried to be faithful to my promise. I lived in old barrios, ghettos and in reservations and housing projects.

I have a message for our youth. I challenge them to put hope in their brains and not dope in their veins. I told them that like Jesus, I, too, was born in the slum, and just because you're born in the slum does not mean the slum is born in you and you can rise above it if your mind is made up. I told them in every slum there are two sides. When I see a broken window that's the slummy side. Train some youth to become a glazier; that is the sunny side. When I see a missing brick, that is the slummy side. Let that child in a union and become a brick mason and build; that is the sunny side. When I see a missing door, that is the slummy side. Train some youth to become a carpenter, that is the sunny side. When I see the vulgar words and hieroglyphics of destitution on the walls, that is the slummy side. Train some youth to be a painter and artist, that is the sunny side.

We leave this place looking for the sunny side because there's a brighter side somewhere. I am more convinced than ever that we can win. We will vault up the rough side of the mountain. We can win. I just want young America to do me one favor, just one favor.
85. Exercise the right to dream. You must face reality, that which is. But then dream of a reality that ought to be, that must be. Live beyond the pain of reality with the dream of a bright tomorrow. Use hope and imagination as weapons of survival and progress. Use love to motivate you and obligate you to serve the human family.

86. Young America, dream. Choose the human race over the nuclear race. Bury the weapons and don’t burn the people. Dream – dream of a new value system. Teachers who teach for life and not just for a living; teach because they can’t help it. Dream of lawyers more concerned about justice than a judgeship. Dream of doctors more concerned about public health than personal wealth. Dream of preachers and priests who will prophesy and not just profiteer. Preach and dream! Our time has come. Our time has come.

87. Suffering breeds character. Character breeds faith, and in the end faith will not disappoint. Our time has come. Our faith, hope and dreams have prevailed. Our time has come. Weeping has endured for nights but that joy cometh in the morning.

88. Our time has come. No grave can hold our body down. Our time has come. No lie can live forever. Our time has come. We must leave the racial battle ground and come to the economic common ground and moral higher ground. America, our time has come.

89. We come from disgrace to amazing grade. Our time has come. Give me your tired, give me your poor, your huddled masses who yearn to breathe free and come November, there will be a change because our time has come.

90. Thank you and God bless you.
Address before the Democratic National Convention
July 19, 1988

1. Tonight, we pause and give praise and honor to God for being good enough to allow us to be at this place, at this time. When I look down at this convention, I see the face of America: Red, Yellow, Brown, Black and White. We are all precious in God’s sight – the real rainbow.

2. All of us – all of us who are here think that we are seated. But we’re really standing on someone’s shoulders. Ladies and gentlemen, Mrs. Rosa Parks. The mother of the civil rights movement. [Mrs. Rosa Parks was brought to the podium.]

3. I want to express my deep love and appreciation for support my family has given me over the past months. They have endured pain, anxiety, threat and fear. But they have been strengthened and made secure by our faith in God, in America, and in you. Your love has protected us and made us strong. To my wife Jackie, the foundation of our family; to our five children whom you met tonight; to my mother, Mrs. Helen Jackson, who is present tonight; and to our grandmother, Mrs. Matilda Burns; to my brother Chuck and his family; to my mother-in-law, Mrs. Gertrude Brown, who just last month at age 61 graduated from Hampton Institute – A marvelous achievement.

4. I offer my appreciation to Mayor Andrew Young who has provided such gracious hospitality to all of us this week.

5. And a special salute to President Jimmy Carter. President Carter restored honor to the White House after Watergate. He gave many of us a special opportunity to grow. For his kind words, for his unwavering commitment to peace in the world, and for the votes that came from his family, every member of his family, led Billy and Amy, I offer special thanks to the Carter family.

6. My right and my privilege to stand here before you has been won, won in my lifetime, by the blood and the sweat of the innocent.

7. Twenty-four years ago, the late Fannie Lou Hamer and Aaron Henry – who sits here tonight from Mississippi – were locked out into the streets in Atlantic City; the head of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.

8. But tonight, a Black and White delegation from Mississippi is headed by Ed Cole, a Black man from Mississippi; 24 years later.

9. Many were lost in the struggle for the right to vote: Jimmy Lee Jackson, a young student, gave his life; Viola Liuzzo, a White mother from Detroit,
called nigger lover, had her brains blown out at point blank range; [Michael] Schwerner, [Andrew] Goodman and [James] Chaney – two Jews and a Black – found in a common grave, bodies riddled with bullets in Mississippi; the four darling little girls in church in Birmingham, Alabama. They died that we might have a right to live.

10. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. lies only a few miles from us tonight. Tonight he must feel good as he looks down upon us. We sit here together, a rainbow, a coalition – the sons and daughters of slavemasters and the sons and daughters of slaves, sitting together around a common table, to decide the direction of our party and our country. His heart would be full tonight.

11. As a testament to the struggles of those who have gone before; as a legacy for those who will come after; as a tribute to the endurance, the patience, the courage of our forefathers and mothers; as an assurance that their prayers are being answered, their work have not been in vain, and hope is eternal; tomorrow night my name will go into nomination for the Presidency of the United States of America.

12. We meet tonight at the crossroads, a point of decision. Shall we expand, be inclusive, find unity and power; or suffer division and impotence?

13. We’ve come to Atlanta, the cradle of the old South, the crucible of the new South. Tonight, there is a sense of celebration, because we are moved, fundamentally moved from racial battlegrounds by law, to economic common ground. Tomorrow we will challenge to move to higher ground.

14. Common ground! Think of Jerusalem, the intersection where many trails meet. A small village that became the birthplace for three religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Why was this village so blessed? Because it provided a crossroads where different people met, different cultures, different civilizations could meet and find common ground. When people come together, flowers always flourish – the air is rich with the aroma of a new spring.

15. Take New York, the dynamic metropolis. What makes New York so special? It’s the invitation of the Statue of Liberty, “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses who yearn to breathe free.” Not restricted to English only. Many people, many cultures, many languages – with one thing in common, they yearn to breathe free. Common Ground!

16. Tonight in Atlanta, for the first time in this century, we convene in the South; a state where Governors once stood in school house doors; where Julian Bond was denied a seal in the State Legislature because of his conscientious objection to the Vietnam War; a city that, through its five
Black Universities, has graduated more black students than any city in the world. Atlanta, now a modern intersection of the south.

17. Common ground! That's the challenge of our party tonight. Left wing. Right wing.

18. Progress will not come through boundless liberalism nor static conservatism, but at the critical mass of mutual survival — not at boundless liberalism nor static conservatism, but at the critical mass of mutual survival. It takes two wings to fly. Whether you're a hawk or a dove, you're just a bird living in the same environment, in the same world.

19. The Bible teaches that when lions and lambs lie down together, none will be afraid and there will be peace in the valley. It sounds impossible. Lions eat lambs. Lambs sensibly flee from lions. Yet even lions and lambs will find common ground. Why? Because neither lions nor lambs can survive nuclear war. If lions and lambs can find common ground, surely we can as well — as civilized people.

20. The only time that we win is when we come together. In 1960, John Kennedy, the late John Kennedy, beat Richard Nixon by only 112,000 votes — less than one vote per precinct. He won by the margin of our hope. He brought us together. He reached out. He had the courage to defy his advisors and inquire about Dr. King's jailing in Albany, Georgia. We won by the margin of our hope, inspired by courageous leadership.

21. In 1964, Lyndon Johnson brought wings together — the thesis, the antithesis, and the creative synthesis — and together we won.

22. In 1976, Jimmy Carter unified us again, and we won. When we do not come together, we never win.

23. In 1968, the vision and despair in July led to our defeat in November. In 1980, rancor in the spring and the summer led to Reagan in the fall.

24. When we divide, we cannot win. We must find common ground as the basis for survival and development and change, and growth.

25. Today when we debated, differed, deliberated, agreed to agree, agree to disagree, when we had the good judgment to argue a case and then not self-destruct, George Bush was just a little further away from the White House and a little closer to private life.

26. Tonight I salute Governor Michael Dukakis. He has run — He has run a well-managed and dignified campaign. No matter how tired or how tried, he always resisted the temptation to stoop to demagoguery.
27. I've watched a good mind fast at work, with steel nerves, guiding his campaign out of the crowded field without appeal to the worst in us. I have watched his perspective grow as his environment has expanded. I've seen his toughness and tenacity close up. I know his commitment to public service. Michael Dukakis' parents were a doctor and a teacher; my parents a maid, a beautician and a janitor. There's a great gap between Brookline, Massachusetts and Haney Street in the Fieldcrest Village housing projects in Greenville, South Carolina.

28. He studied law; I studied theology. There are differences of religion, region, and race; differences in experiences and perspectives. But the genius of America is that out of the many we become one.

29. Providence has enabled our paths to intersect. His foreparents came to America on immigrant ships; my foreparents came to America on slave ships. But whatever the original ships, we're in the same boat tonight. Our ships could pass in the night - if we have a false sense of independence - or they could collide and crash. We could lose our passengers. But we can seek a high reality and a greater good.

30. Apart, we can drift on the broken pieces of Reaganomics, satisfy our baser instincts, and exploit the fears of our people. At our highest we can call upon noble instincts and navigate this vessel to safety. The greater good is the common good.

31. As Jesus said, "Not My will, but Thine done." It was his way of saying there's a higher good beyond personal comfort or position.

32. The good of our Nation is at stake. It's commitment to working men and women, to the poor and the vulnerable, to the many in the world.

33. With so many guided missiles, and so much misguided leadership, the stakes are exceedingly high. Our choice? Full participation in a democratic government, or more abandonment and neglect. And so this night, we choose not a false sense of independence, and our capacity to survive and endure. Tonight we choose interdependency, and our capacity to act and unite for the greater good.

34. Common good is finding commitment to new priorities to expansion and inclusion. A commitment to expand participation in the Democratic Party at every level. A commitment to a shared national campaign strategy and involvement at every level.

35. A commitment to new priorities that insure that hope will be kept alive. A common ground commitment to a legislative agenda for empowerment, for
the John Conyers bill – universal, on-site, same-day registration everywhere. A commitment to D.C. statehood and empowerment – D.C. deserves statehood. A commitment to economic set-asides, commitment to the Dellums bill for comprehensive sanctions against South Africa. A shared commitment to a common direction.

36. Common ground! Easier said than done. Where do you find common ground? At the point of challenge. This campaign has shown that politics need not be marketed by politicians, packaged by pollsters and pundits. Politics can be a moral arena where people come together to find common ground.

37. We find common ground at the plant gate that closes on workers without notice. We find common ground at the farm auction, where a good farmer loses his or her land to bad loans or diminishing markets. Common ground at the school yard where teachers cannot get adequate pay, and students cannot get a scholarship, and can't make a loan. Common ground at the hospital admitting room, where somebody tonight is dying because they cannot afford to go upstairs to a bed that's empty waiting for someone with insurance to get sick. We are a better nation than that. We must do better.

38. Common ground. What is leadership if not present help in a time of crisis? So I met you at the point of challenge. In Jay, Maine, where paper workers were striking for fair wages; in Greenville, Iowa, where family farmers struggle for a fair price; in Cleveland, Ohio, where working women seek comparable worth; in McFarland, California, where the children of Hispanic farm workers may be dying from poisoned land, dying in clusters with cancer; in an AIDS hospice in Houston, Texas, where the sick support one another, too often rejected by their own parents and friends.

39. Common ground. America is not a blanked woven from one threat, one color, one cloth. When I was a child growing up in Greenville, South Carolina my grandmamma could not afford a blanket, she didn't complain and we did not freeze. Instead she took pieces of old cloth – patches, wool, silk, gabardine, crockersack – only patches, barely good enough to wipe off your shoes with. But they didn't stay that way very long. With sturdy hands and a strong cord, she sewed them together into a quilt, a thing of beauty and power and culture. Now, Democrats, we must build such a quilt.

40. Farmers, you seek fair prices and you are right – but you cannot stand alone. Your patch is not big enough. Workers, you fight for fair wages, you are right – but your patch is not big enough. Women, you seek comparable worth and pay equity, you are right – but your patch is not big enough.
41. Women, mothers, who seek Head Start, and day care and prenatal care on the front side of life, relevant jail care and welfare on the back side of life - you are right - but your patch is not big enough. Students, you seek scholarships, you are right - but your patch is not big enough. Blacks and Hispanics, when we fight for civil rights, we are right - but our patch is not big enough.

42. Gays and lesbians, when you fight against discrimination and a cure for AIDS, you are right - but your patch is not big enough. Conservatives and progressives, when you fight for what you believe, right wing, left wing, hawk, dove, you are right from your point of view, but your point of view is not enough.

43. But don’t despair. Be as wise as my grandmamma. Pull the patches and the pieces together, bound by a common thread. When we form a great quilt of unity and common ground, we’ll have the power to bring about health care and housing and jobs and education and hope to our Nation.

44. We, the people, can win!

45. We stand at the end of a long dark night of reaction: We stand tonight united in the commitment to a new direction. For almost eight years we’ve been led by those who view social good coming from private interest, who view public life as a means to increase private wealth. They have prepared to sacrifice the common good of the many to satisfy the private interests and the wealth of a few.

46. We believe in a government that’s a tool of our democracy in service to the public, not an instrument of the aristocracy in search of private wealth. We believe in government with the consent of the government with the consent of the governed, “of, for and by the people.” We must now emerge into a new day with a new direction.

47. Reaganomics. Based on the belief that the rich had too little money and the poor had too much. That’s classic Reaganomics. They believe that the poor had too much money and the rich had too little money so they engaged in reverse Robin Hood – took from the poor and gave to the rich, paid for by the middle class. We cannot stand four more years of Reaganomics in any version, in any disguise.

48. How do I document that case? Seven years later, the richest 1 percent of our society pays 20 percent less in taxes. The poorest 10 percent pay 20 percent more. Reaganomics.
Reagan gave the rich and the powerful a multibillion-dollar party. Now the party’s over, he expects the people to pay for the damage. I take this principal position, convention, let us not raise taxes on the poor and the middle-class, but those who had the party, the rich and the powerful must pay for the party.

I just want to take common sense to high places. We’re spending $150 billion a year defending Europe and Japan 43 years after the war is over. We have more troops in Europe tonight than we had seven years ago. Yet the threat of war is ever more remote.

Germany and Japan are now creditor nations; that means they’ve got a surplus. We are a debtor nation. It means we are in debt. Let them share more of the burden of their own defense. Use some of that money to build decent housing. Use some of that money to educate our children. Use some of that money for long-term health care. Use some of that money to wipe out these slums and put America back to work!

I just want to take common sense to high places. If we can bail out Europe and Japan; if we can bail out Continental Bank and Chrysler – and Mr. laccoca, makes $8,000 an hour, we can bail out the family farmer.

I just want to make common sense. It does not make sense to close down 650,000 family farms in this country while importing food from abroad subsidized by the U.S. Government. Let’s make sense.

It does not make sense to be escorting all our tankers up and down the Persian Gulf paying $2.50 for every $1 worth of oil we bring out, while oil wells are capped in Texas, Oklahoma and Louisiana. I just want to make common sense.

Leadership must meet the moral challenge of its day. What’s the moral challenge of our day? We have public accommodations. We have the right to vote.

We have open housing. What’s the fundamental challenge of our day? It is to end economic violence. Plant closings without notice – economic violence. Even the greedy do not profit long from greed – economic violence.

Most poor people are not lazy. They are not black. They are not brown. They are mostly White and female and young. But whether White, Black or Brown, a hungry baby’s belly turned inside out is the same color – color it pain, color it hurt, color it agony.
58. Most people are not on welfare. Some of them are illiterate and can't read the want-ad sections. And when they can, they can't find a job that matches the address. They work hard everyday. I know, I live amongst them. They catch the early bus. They work every day. They raise other people's children. They work everyday.

59. They clean the streets. They work everyday. They drive dangerous cabs. They change the beds you slept in, in these hotels last night and can't get a union contract. They work everyday.

60. No, no, they're not lazy. Someone must defend them because it's right and they cannot speak for themselves. They work in hospitals. I know they do. They wipe the bodies of those who are sick with fever and pain. They empty their bedpans. They clean out their commodes. No job is beneath them, and yet when they get sick they cannot lie in the bed they made up every day. America, that is not right. We are a better Nation than that!

61. We need a real war on drugs. You can't "Just say no." It's deeper than that. You can't just get a palm reader or an astrologer. It's more profound than that.

62. We are spending $150 billion on drugs a year. We've gone from ignoring it to focusing on the children. Children cannot buy $150 billion worth of drugs a year; a few high-profile athletes - athletes are not laundering $150 billion a year - bankers are.

63. I met with children in Watts who unfortunately, in their despair, their grapes of hope have become raisins of despair, and they're turning on each other and they're self-destructing. But I stayed with them all night long. I wanted to hear their case.

64. They said, "Jesse Jackson, as you challenge us to say no to drugs, you're right; and to not sell them, you're right; and to not use these guns, you're right." And by the way, the promise of CETA; they displaced CETA - they did not replace CETA. "We have neither jobs nor houses nor services nor training; no way out.

65. "Some of us take drugs as anesthesia for our pain. Some take drugs as a way of pleasure, good short-term pleasure and long-term pain. Some sell drugs to make money. It's wrong, we know, but you need to know that we know. We can go and buy the drugs by the boxes at the port. If we can buy the drugs at the port, don't you believe the Federal government can stop it if they wan to?"
66. They say, "We don't have Saturday night specials anymore. They say, we buy AK47's and Uzi's, the latest make of weapons. We buy them across and along these boulevards."

67. You cannot fight a war on drugs unless until you're going to challenge the bankers and the gun sellers and those who grow them. Don't just focus on the children, let's stop the drugs at the level of supply and demand. We must end the scourge on the American Culture!

68. Leadership. What difference will we make? Leadership. We cannot just go along to get along. We must do more than change Presidents. We must change direction.

69. Leadership must face the moral challenge of our day. The nuclear war build-up is irrational. Strong leadership cannot desire to look tough and let that stand in the way of the pursuit of peace. Leadership must reverse the arms race. At least we should pledge no first use. Why? Because first use begets first retaliation. And that's mutual annihilation. That's not a rational way out.

70. No use at all. Let's think it out and not fight it out because it's an unwinnable fight. Why hold a card that you can never drop? Let's give peace a chance.

71. Leadership. We now have this marvelous opportunity to have a breakthrough with the Soviets. Last year 200,000 Americans visited the Soviet Union. There's a chance for joint ventures in space − not Star Wars and war arms escalation but a space defense initiative. Let's build in space together and demilitarize the heavens. There's a way out.

72. America, let us expand. When Mr. Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev met there was a big meeting. They represented together one-eighth of the human race. Seven-eighths of the human race was locked out of that room. Most people in the world tonight − half are Asian, one-half of them are Chinese. There are 22 nations in the Middle East. There's Europe; 40 million Latin Americans next door to us; the Caribbean; Africa − a half-billion people.

73. Most people in the world today are Yellow or Brown or Black, non-Christian, poor, female, young and don't speak English in the real world.

74. This generation must offer leadership to the real world. We're losing ground in Latin America, Middle East, South Africa because we're not focusing on the real world. That's the real world. We must use basic principles, support international law. We stand the most to gain from it. Support human rights; we believe in that. Support self-determination,
we're built on that. Support economic development, you know it's right. Be consistent and gain our moral authority in the world. I challenge you tonight, my friends, let's be bigger and better as a Nation and as a Party!

75. We have basic challenges — freedom in South Africa. We have already agreed as Democrats to declare South Africa to be a terrorist state. But don't just stop there. Get South Africa out of Angola; free Namibia; support the front line states. We must have a new humane human rights consistent policy in Africa.

76. I'm often asked, “Jesse, why do you take on these tough issues? They're not very political. We can't win that way.”

77. If an issue is morally right, it will eventually be political. It may be political and never be right. Fannie Lou Hamer didn't have the most votes in Atlantic City, but her principles have outlasted the life of every delegate who voted to lock her out. Rosa Parks did not have the most votes, but she was morally right. Dr. King didn't have the most votes about the Vietnam War, but he was morally right. If we are principled first, our politics will fall in place. “Jesse, why do you take these big bold initiatives?” A poem by an unknown author went something like this: “We mastered the air, we conquered the sea, annihilated distance and prolonged life, but we're not wise enough to live on this earth without war and without hate.”

78. As for Jesse Jackson: “I'm tired of sailing my little boat, far inside the harbor bar. I want to go out where the big ships float, out on the deep where the great ones are. And should my frail craft prove too slight for waves that sweep those billows o'er, I'd rather go down in the stirring fight than drowse to death at the sheltered shore.”

79. We've got to go out, my friends, where the big boats are.

80. And then for our children. Young America, hold your head high now. We can win. We must not lose to the drugs, and violence, premature pregnancy, suicide, cynicism, pessimism and despair. We can win. Wherever you are tonight, now I challenge you to hope and dream. Don't submerge your dreams. Exercise above all else, even on drugs, dream of the day you are drug free. Even in the gutter, dream of the day that you will be up on your feet again.

81. You must never stop dreaming. Face reality, yes, but don't stop with the way things are. Dream of things as they ought to be. Dream. Face pain, but love, hope, faith and dreams will help you rise above the pain. Use hope and imagination as weapons of survival and progress, but you keep
on dreaming, young America. Dream of peace. Peace is rational and reasonable. War is irrational in this age, and unwinnable.

82. Dream of teaches who teach for life and not for a living. Dream of doctors who are concerned more for public health than private wealth. Dream of lawyers more concerned about justice than a judgeship. Dream of preachers who are concerned more about prophesy than profiteering. Dream on the high road with sound values. And then America, as we go forth to September, October, November and then beyond, America must never surrender to a high moral challenge.

83. Do not surrender to drugs. The best drug policy is a "no first use." Don't surrender with needles and cynicism. Let's have "no first use" on the one hand, or clinics on the other. Never surrender, young America. Go forward.

84. America must never surrender to malnutrition. We can feed the hungry and clothe the naked. We must never surrender. We must go forward.

85. We must never surrender to inequality. Women cannot compromise ERA or comparable worth. Women are making 60 cents on the dollar to what a man makes. Women cannot buy meat cheaper. Woman cannot buy bread cheaper. Woman cannot buy milk cheaper. Women deserve to get paid for the work that you do. It's right and it's fair.

86. Don't surrender, my friends. Those who have AIDS tonight, you deserve our compassion. Even with AIDS you must not surrender.

87. In your wheelchairs. I see you sitting here tonight in those wheelchairs. I've stayed with you. I've reached out to you across our Nation. Don't you give up. I know it's tough sometimes. People look down on you. It took you a little more effort to get here tonight. And no one should look down on you, but sometimes mean people do. The only justification we have for looking down on someone is that we're going to stop and pick them up.

88. But even in your wheelchairs, don't you give up. We cannot forget 50 years ago when our backs were against the wall. Roosevelt was in a wheelchair. I would rather have Roosevelt in a wheelchair than Reagan and Bush on a horse. Don't you surrender and don't you give up. Don't surrender and don't give up.

89. Why I cannot challenge you this way? "Jesse Jackson, you don't understand my situation. You be on television. You don't understand. I see you with the big people. You don't understand my situation."
90. I understand. You see me on TV, but you don't know the me that makes me, me. They wonder, "Why does Jesse run?" because they see me running for the White House. They don't see the house I'm running from.

91. I have a story. I wasn't always on television. Writers were not always outside my door. When I was born late one afternoon, October 8th, in Greenville, South Carolina, no writers asked my mother her name. Nobody chose to write down our address. My mama was not supposed to make it, and I was not supposed to make it. You see, I was born of a teen-age mother, who was born of a teen-age mother.

92. I understand. I know abandonment, and people being mean to you, and saying you're nothing and nobody and can never be anything.

93. I understand. Jesse Jackson is my third name. I'm adopted. When I had no name, my grandmother gave me her name. My name was Jesse Burns until I was 12. So I wouldn't have a blank space, she gave me a name to hold me over. I understand when nobody knows your name. I understand when you have no name.

94. I understand. I wasn't born in a hospital. Mama didn't have insurance. I was born in the bed at the house. I really do understand. Born in a three-room house, bathroom in the backyard, slop jar by the bed, no hot and cold running water.

95. I understand. Wallpaper used for decoration? No. For a windbreaker. I understand. I'm a working person's person. That's why I understand you whether you're Black or White.

96. I understand work. I was not born with a silver spoon in my mouth. I had a shovel programmed for my hand.

97. My mother, a working woman. So many of the days she went to work early, with runs in her stockings. She knew better, but she wore runs in her stockings so that my brother and I could have matching socks and not be laughed at, at school. I understand.

98. At 3 o'clock on Thanksgiving Day, we couldn't eat turkey because momma was preparing somebody else's turkey at 3 o'clock. We had to play football to entertain ourselves. And then around 6 o'clock she would get off the Alta Vista bus and we would bring up the leftovers and eat our turkey – leftovers, the carcass, the cranberries – around 8 o'clock at night. I really do understand.

99. Every one of these funny labels they put on you, those of you who are watching this broadcast tonight in the projects, on the corners, I
understand. Call you outcast, low down, you can’t make it, you’re nothing, you’re from nobody, subclass, underclass; when you see Jesse Jackson, when my name goes in nomination, your name goes in nomination.

100. I was born in the slum, but the slum was not born in me. And it wasn’t born in you, and you can make it.

101. Wherever you are tonight, you can make it. Hold your head high, stick your chest out. You can make it. It gets dark sometimes, but the morning comes. Don’t you surrender. Suffering breeds character, character breeds faith. In the end faith will not disappoint.

102. You must not surrender. You may or may not get there but just know that you’re qualified. And you hold on, and hold out. We must never surrender. America will get better and better.


104. I love you very much. I love you very much.
Address before the Democratic National Convention
July 14, 1992

1. Chairman Ron Brown, you've done a difficult job well. You have brought down barriers. Your work survived a tough spring. It will make you stronger for the fall. With your stripes you must heal and make us better. The hopes of many depend upon your quest. Be comforted that you do not stand alone.

2. Vice President Al Gore comes to this task tested and prepared. He has been a reasoned voice for environmental sanity, a supporter for social justice, an original sponsor of DC statehood. And I, for one, look forward to the vice-presidential debate.

3. We stand as witnesses to a pregnant moment in history. Across the globe, we feel the pain that comes with new birth. Here, in our country pain abounds. We must be certain that it too leads to new birth, and not a tragic miscarriage of opportunity.

4. We must turn to power, pain into partnership, not pain into polarization.

5. The great temptation in these difficult days of racial polarization and economic injustice is to make political arguments black and white, and miss the moral imperative of wrong and right. Vanity asks – is it popular? Politics asks – will it win? Morality and conscience ask – is it right?

6. We are part of a continuing struggle for justice and decency, links in a chain that began long before we were born and will extend long after we are gone. History will remember us not for our positioning, but for our principles. Not by our move to the political center, left or right, but rather by our grasp on the moral and ethical center of wrong and right.

7. We who stand with working people and poor have a special burden. We must stand for what is right, stand up to those who have the might. We do so grounded in the faith, that what is morally wrong will never be politically right. But if it is morally sound, it will eventually be politically right.

8. When I look at you gathered here today, I hear the pain and see the struggles that prepared the ground that you stand on. We have come a long way from where we started.

9. A generation ago – in 1964, Fanny Lou Hamer had to fight even to sit in this convention. Tonight, 28 years later, the chair of the Party is Ron Brown from Harlem; the manager is Alexis Herman, an African American woman from Mobile, Alabama. We have come a long way from where we started.
10. We are more interdependent than we realize. Not only African Americans benefited from the movement for justice. It was only when African Americans were free to win and sit in these seats, that Bill Clinton and Al Gore from the new South could be able to stand on this rostrum. We are inextricably bound together in a single garment of destiny. Red, yellow, brown, black and white, we are all precious in god’s sight. We have come a long way from where we started.

11. Tonight we face another challenge. Ten million Americans are unemployed, 25 million on food stamps, 35 million in poverty, 40 million have no health care. From the coal miners in Bigstone Gap, West Virginia to the loggers and environmentalists in Roseburg, Oregon, from displaced textile workers in my hometown of Greenville, South Carolina to plants closing in Van Nuys, California, pain abounds. Plants are closing, jobs leaving on a fast track, more are working for less, trapped by repressive anti-labor laws. The homeless are a source of national shame and disgrace.

12. There is a harshness to America that comes from not seeing and a growing mindless materialism. Our television sets bring the world into our living rooms, but too often we overlook our neighbors.

13. We have a president who has traveled the world, but has never been to Hamlet, North Carolina. Yet we must not overlook Hamlet.

14. It was there that 25 workers died in a fire at Imperial Foods, more women than men, more white than black. They worked making chicken parts in vats heated to 400 degrees, with few windows and no fans. The owners locked the doors on the outside. The workers died trapped by economic desperation and oppressive work laws.

15. One woman came up to me after the fire - she said "I want to work. I don’t want to go on welfare. I have three children and no husband. We pluck 90 wings a minute. Now I can’t bend my wrist, I got the carpel thing. Then when we’re hurt they fire us, and we have no health insurance, and no union to help us. We can’t get another job because we’re crippled, so they put us on welfare and call us lazy." I said you are not lazy, and you are not alone.

16. Her friend, a white woman came up and said: “I’m 7 months pregnant. We stand in two inches of water with two five-minute bathroom breaks. Sometimes we can’t hold our water, and then our bowels, and we faint.” We wept together.
17. If we keep Hamlet in our hearts and before our eyes, we will act to empower working people. We will protect the right to organize and to strike. We will empower workers to enforce health and safety laws. We will provide a national health care system, a minimum wage sufficient to bring workers out of poverty, paid parental leave. We must build a movement for economic justice across the land.

18. We face a difficult challenge. Our cities have been abandoned, farmers forsaken, children neglected. Floods in Chicago; fires in LA. They say they can’t find $35 billion for the mayors, but the latest down payment for the S&L bailout was $25 billion. It is time to break the mold.

19. Now is the time to rebuild America. We must be the party with the plan and the purpose. Four years ago, we fought for a program to reinvest in America, paid for by fair taxes on the rich and savings from the military. This year, Governor Bill Clinton has taken a substantial step in that direction. He has expressed Democratic support for DC statehood, same day on site universal voter registration. He has vowed to challenge corporations to invest at home, retrain their workers and pay their share of taxes. He has made a commitment to raising and indexing the minimum wage. We must build upon that direction and go further still.

20. In 1932, Franklin Roosevelt ran on a “balance-the-budget” platform in the middle of a recession. Working people in motion pushed him into the New Deal. The impetus for change will not come top down, it must come bottom up.

21. The Rainbow Coalition has put forward a “Rebuild America Plan.” At its heart is a proposal, with the aid of Felix Rohatyn, one of America’s leading experts in public finance, for an American Investment Bank. There are $3 trillion in public and private pension funds, that with government guarantees, could provide $500 billion in seed money, and attract an additional $500 billion, to create a ten-year, $1 trillion plan to rebuild America. Pension funds are the workers money. That money is now used to prop up South Africa, for LBO’s, and high risk speculation and greed. We should use the workers’ money, with the workers’ consent and government guarantees, to secure our future by rebuilding America.

22. We must have a plan on a scale that corresponds with the size of the problems we face. Taiwan has a $1 trillion plan – it is the size of Pennsylvania. Japan has a $3 trillion plan over ten years. We found the money to help rebuild Europe and Japan after World War II, we found the money to help Russia and Poland. We found $600 billion to bail out the mess left by the buccaneer bankers. Surely we can find the money to rebuild America and put people back to work.
23. We must have a vision sufficient to correspond with the size of our opportunity. Across the world, walls are coming down. The Cold War is over; the Soviet Union is no more. Russia wants to join NATO. We can change our priorities, reinvest in educating our children, train our workers, rebuild our cities. Today Japan makes fast trains; we make fast missiles. If we change our priorities, and build a high speed national railroad, we could go from NY to LA in 8 hours. We could make the steel, lay the rail, build the cars and drive them. Scientists can stop devising weapons we don’t need and start working on environmental advances we can’t live without.

24. We must have an imagination strong enough to see beyond war. In Israel, Prime Minister Rabin’s election is a step toward greater security and peace for the entire region. Rabin’s wisdom in affirming negotiation over confrontation, land for peace, bargaining table over battlefield has inspired hope, not only in the hearts of democratic Israel, but on the West Bank. Israeli security and Palestinian self-determination are inextricably bound, two sides of the same coin. If peace talks continue, this generation may be able to witness a Middle East tasting the fruits of peace.

25. In Africa today, democracy is on the march. In Nigeria, we witnessed successful elections last week. But democracy cannot flourish amid economic ruins. Democracy protects the right to vote; it does not insure that you can eat. Today, President Deuf of Senegal, head of development for the Organization of African Unity, is pushing for African development. Like other regions of the world, Africa needs debt relief and credits so it can have the opportunity to grow.

26. We must understand that development in the Third World and economic prosperity at home are inextricably bound. We can be a force for peace in the Middle East, development to Africa and Latin America, hope in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

27. Politics cannot be reduced to a matter of money and ambition. We must stay true to our values, or lose our way.

28. In 1939 – 900 Jews were turned away from the shores of Miami by the U.S. government, sent back to Germany haunted by Hitler.

29. In 1942 – 120,000 Japanese Americans were founded up and put in American concentration camps.

30. In 1192 – the U.S. government is turning Haitians away, back into the arms of death, and relaxing sanctions on South Africa.
31. It was anti-Semitic and wrong in 1939 to lock the Jews out. It was racist and wrong in 1942 to lock the Japanese Americans up. And it is racist and wrong in 1992 to lock the Haitians out and abandon Nelson Mandela in South Africa. South Africa remains a terrorist state. Sanctions should be reimposed until the interim government is established.

32. We hear a lot of talk about family values, even as we spurn the homeless on the street. Remember, Jesus was born to a homeless couple, outdoors in a stable, in the winter. He was the child of a single mother. When Mary said Joseph was not the father, she was abused. If she had aborted the baby, she would have been called immoral. If she had the baby, she would have been called unfit, without family values. But Mary had family values. It was Herod – the Quayle of his day – who put no value on the family.

33. We who would be leaders must feel and be touched by people’s pain. How can you be a doctor and not touch the hurt? Gandhi adopted the untouchables. Dr. King marched with violent gang members, hoping to turn them to the discipline of non-violence.

34. Above all, we must reach out and touch our children. Our children are embittered and hurt, but it is not a congenital disease. They were not born that way. They live amidst violence and rejection, in broken streets, broken glass, broken sidewalks, broken families, broken hearts. Their music, their rap, their video, their art reflects their broken world. We must reach out and touch them.

35. Before the riots in Los Angeles, Rep. Maxine Waters and I visited the Imperial Courts and Nickerson Gardens housing projects in Watts, where we spent the night with our children, and then visited the youth detention center with Arsenio Hall and James Almos. We listened to the youth describe their busted and deferred dreams. They suffer 50 percent unemployment, with no prospects of a job or going to college. It costs $5,000 to send them to high school, $34,000 to send them downtown to the youth detention center.

36. For many of them, jail is a step up. In jail, they are safe from drive-by shootings. In jail, it’s warm in the winter, cool in the summer. In jail they get three balanced meals, access to health care, education and vocational training. Everything they should have on the outside they only get on the inside.

37. Too many of our children see jail as a relief station, and death as a land beyond pain. We must reach out and touch them. Surely, it is better to have dirty hands and clean hearts than clean hands and a dirty heart.
38. If we reach out, we can win — and deserve to win. We have heard many different arguments about a winning strategy — whether to rally the base or appeal to those who have strayed. But these are not choices. We will win only if we put forth a vision that corresponds with the size of our problems and the scope of our opportunity, if we reach out to those in despair and those who care, reach across the lines that divide by race, region, or religion.

39. As for the Rainbow Coalition, we will continue to build a movement for economic justice in this land. We will work to mobilize working and poor people to change the course of this country. We will join in defeating George Bush in the fall — that is a necessary first step.

40. We must continue to build. When Roosevelt came to office, a movement of working people made a new deal possible. When Kennedy came to office, he did not teach Dr. King about civil rights; Dr. King led a movement that made civil rights unavoidable. When Bill Clinton comes to office, we must build a movement that keeps economic justice at the forefront of the agenda.

41. I know it's dark. But in the dark the flame of hope still burns.

42. In LA, they focused on Rodney King, beaten by white officers, who were acquitted by an all-white jury. But it was a white man who had the instinct and the outrage to film it and take it public. The media focus was on the white truck driver beaten by black youth. But it was four young black youth who stepped in and saved his life, good Samaritans.

43. In the final analysis it comes down to a question of character. On a small Southern college campus, I once observed a lesson never to be forgotten. I saw a dwarf and a giant walking together — they were an odd couple. He was six feet three, she was three feet tall. When they reached the parting paths, they embraced. He handed her her books and she skipped down the path. It looked to be romantic. I asked the president — what is this I am seeing? He said, I thought you would ask. You see, that is his sister, in fact his twin sister. By a twist of fate he came out a giant, she a dwarf. All the big schools offered him athletic scholarships. The pros offered him money. But he said I can only go where my sister can go. And so he ended up here with us.

44. Somewhere that young man learned ethics, caring for others. Few of us are driven by a tailwind. Most of us struggle with headwinds. Not all of us can be born tall, some are born short, motherless, abandoned, hungry, orphaned. Somebody has to care. It must be us. And if we do, we will win, and deserve to win. Keep hope alive.
Address before the Democratic National Convention^v  
August 27, 1996

1. Thirty-three years ago tonight, a young preacher about the same age as my son was putting the final touches on one of the great prophetic messages of our age.

2. On August 28, 1963, Dr. King projected a vision of peace and equality that could heal our nation, and a troubled world.

3. His vision touched America's conscience. The Republicans in San Diego put forward the image, the vision, of a big tent.

4. Remember, America you can't judge a book by its cover. On the cover, Powell and Kemp. But on the inside, the book was written by Newt Gingrich and Ralph Reed and Pat Buchanan.

5. What is our vision tonight? Just look around. This publicly financed United Center is a new Chicago mountain top. To the South, Comiskey Park, another mountain. To the west, Cook County Jail, with its 11,000 mostly youthful inmates.

6. Between these three mountains lies the canyon. Once Campbell's soup was in this canyon. Sears was there, and Zenith, Sunbeam, the stockyards. There were jobs and industry where now there is a canyon of welfare and despair. This canyon exists in virtually every city in America.

7. As we gather here tonight: one-fifth of all American children will go to bed in poverty; one-half of all African-American children, growing up amidst broken sidewalks, broken families, broken cities, broken dreams; the No. 1 growth industry in urban America, jails; one-half of all the public housing built in this nation during the last decade, jails; the top 1 percent wealthiest Americans own as much as the bottom 95 percent – the greatest inequality since the 1920's.

8. As corporations downsize jobs, outsource contracts, scab on workers' rights, a class crisis emerges as a race problem. The strawberry pickers in California, the chicken workers in North Carolina, deserve a hearing and justice.

9. We must seek a new moral center.

10. We have been here before. The last time we gathered in Chicago, high winds ripped our tent apart. We could not bridge the gap. We lost to Nixon by the margin of our despair.
11. In 1968, the tension within our party was over welfare. In 1996, it's welfare. Last week, over the objections of many Democratic Party leaders, and the opposition of millions of Americans, Franklin Roosevelt's six-decade guarantee of support for women and children was abandoned.

12. On this issue, many of us differ with the President. Patricia Ireland and I even picketed the White House.

13. But we can disagree and debate, and still work together. Diversity is the measure of this party's strength; how we handle adversity, the measure of our character.

14. We must find a bridge, keep our tent intact. And we must make the commitment to right the wrongs in this bill.

15. Now that we have ended welfare as we know it, we must provide jobs and job training and education and day care as we ought to know it.

16. The fight was never about welfare, but always about jobs and opportunity. Welfare is the exhaust pipe of a failed economic engine. We want to be a part of the engine of growth.

17. The passage of a welfare bill creates a moral imperative to provide a job with a living wage for every man and woman in America. That was Roosevelt's dream, and Dr. King's.

18. What is our obligation to people in the canyon?

19. First, we must claim and reclaim our children. We must lift our children up, not lock them up. Instead of three strikes and you're out, we must have 4 balls and you're on. In prenatal care and Head Start, ball one; an adequately funded education, ball two; access to a marketable skill or a college education, ball three; a good job at a living wage, ball four.

20. Eleven thousand youthful inmates to our West, without treatment, most return sicker and slicker.

21. We need a trade policy that works for working people.

22. Right now, we subsidize corporate welfare to take jobs out of the canyon.

23. I recently visited Indonesia, and I am clear on this: When corporations can downsize and outsource to nations which pay 30 cents an hour, our workers cannot compete nor should they have to.
24. And tonight, labor leader Muchtar Pakpahan and opposition leaders Mrs. Megawati face government interrogation and harassment. Respect for human rights must remain a non-negotiable part of fair trade.

25. In the canyon, we must have a plan to rebuild and redeem our cities, to reinvest in America.

26. I suggest we have at least as much sense as the honeybee, which knows enough to repollinate her flower.

27. When the Berlin Wall came down, we offered Poland a development bank, 40-year loans, three-fourths of 1 percent, first payment due in 10 years.

28. America has $6 trillion in private and public pension funds. We could take 5 percent of the workers' money, with workers' consent, government secured, to rebuild our infrastructure. It will not increase taxes.

29. After World War II, we helped rebuild Germany, the Marshall Plan. We helped rebuild Japan, the MacArthur Plan. Now we must rebuild America.

30. Sometimes, though, you have to play good defense before you get back on offense. President Clinton has been our first line of defense against the Newt Gingrich Contract-on-America right wing assault on our elderly, our students, our civil rights.

31. We must maintain that line of defense against and protect the First Lady, too, from their mean-spirited attacks.

32. We must re-elect the President and take back the Congress, and stop the right wing train in its track.

33. In 1994, the Gingrich tidal wave was not so high; our sea walls were too low. With only 40,000 more voters, Newt Gingrich would never have power. This low turnout cannot repeat itself in 1996; we must inspire and mobilize our base vote, the margin of our hope. The stakes are so very high.

34. This year, for the first time in our lives, the right-wing extremists Dole, Gingrich, Lott, Armey, Helms, and Scalia, Thomas have a chance to take over all three branches of our government. This would be an unparalleled disaster for our people.

35. Our job is to win in November.

36. Our mission is to lift America up with a higher vision, to redeem the canyon, to find the moral center.
37. In this season of high stakes and critical choices, if you don't vote, you are irrelevant to the process. If you go along to get along, you're a coward. Only by principled engagement can you be a force for change and hope.

38. Remember our history: Progress comes through an enlightened President, in coalition with an energized people.

39. In 1932, F.D.R. did not run on a New Deal platform. The people mobilized around their economic plan, and F.D.R. responded with the New Deal. F.D.R. was the option. The people provided the answer.

40. In 1960, neither Kennedy nor Nixon ran for President on the promise of a public accommodations bill. But Dr. King supported Kennedy, J.F.K. was the best option.

41. Desegregated public accommodations came from Greensboro and Birmingham, from sit-ins and marches and street heat. From we, the people, in motion.

42. In 1964, neither Goldwater nor Johnson campaigned on the Voting Rights Act. But Dr. King supported L.B.J.; he was the best option. We won voting rights on the bridge at Selma.

43. We, the people provided the answer.

44. In 1996, Bill Clinton is our best option. The cross is on his shoulders. But burdens shared are easier to bear.

45. We, the people must organize and mobilize to help the President provide a better answer for America.

46. In Tracy Chapman's words, we must "start all over, make a new beginning ... make new symbols ... redefine the world."

47. After November, we, the people must hold on to the moral center, and continue to fight for expansive, inclusive, humane politics in America.

48. This is our mission. It is a vision worth struggling for.

49. Keep hope alive.
Address before the Democratic National Convention
August 15, 2000

1. The long arm of justice reaches neither for the political left nor the political right, but for the moral center. Vanity asks the question, is it popular? Politics asks the question, would it work? Can I win? Morality and conscience asks the question, “is it right?” In the end, if it is morally right, politics and popularity has to adjust to unyielding power of the moral center. Tonight, we gather in Los Angeles – home of the dream makers who entice the world – and home of the janitors and sanitary workers who clean up your world. Los Angeles – home of a handful of America’s richest people and hundreds of thousands of America’s poorest workers.

2. This Democratic convention is set in that great divide – between Beverly Hills and South Central – between the dream makers and dream breakers. And we commit ourselves today to make America better, to stand with the janitors who had to strike to get a $1.00 more an hour, to stand with the hotel workers who work everyday but don’t get healthcare. We are on your side.

3. Two weeks ago, in Philadelphia, the nation was treated to a stage show – smoke, mirrors, hired acts that Republicans called inclusion. That was the inclusion illusion. In Philadelphia, diversity ended on the stage. They could not mention the words Africa, Appalachia, or AIDS once. So it is good to be here in Los Angeles, to look over this great assembly and see the real deal – the quilt of many patches that is America.

4. There are 1,000 union workers here. One thousand African Americans. One thousand Latinos and Asian Americans. As many women as men. America’s working families stand here. And headed by a southern Baptist and an orthodox Jew. America’s dream team. And in this diversity is our strength. Many people, all equal under one flag. The same flag in South Carolina as in Harlem. The same flag in Mississippi and in the south side of Chicago. One flag, one America. That is the American way. One big tent that includes all. Last week when Al Gore chose Joe Lieberman as his running mate, he stood up for justice. He appealed to the best in America and I applaud him for it. In selecting Joe Lieberman, Al Gore has brought the sons and daughters of slaves and slave masters, together with the sons and daughters of Holocaust survivors. He raised the moral chin bar. When a barrier falls for one of the locked out, it opens the doors for all.

5. I have devoted much of my life striving to bring light to dark places. Four decades ago on July 17, 1960, I was jailed with seven of my classmates for trying to use a public library. On July 17, 1984, I addressed you in San Francisco. We have come a long way. Tonight, the struggle to make America better continues. I know something about the tides of change. I
have moved with it when the tide was coming in, and labored against it when it was flowing out. I have seen enough and done enough to know when the moment is ripe for history to be made once again.

6. My fellow Americans, we face such a moment today. This is a moment pregnant with possibility. A moment that we have waited for more than a generation to come our way.

7. Remember the dream of Dr. King? The dream of genuine economic opportunity for all? It has been deferred for too long – deferred by the assassination of Dr. King. By the Vietnam War. By the cold war. By the era of staggering deficits. Our vision has been limited. Our imaginations have been shackled.

8. Now America has no global military rival. Deficits have turned to surpluses. And there are promises to keep. This economy has enjoyed record growth, but Americas working families are still struggling to get by. Jobs are plentiful, but less secure. Wages are up, but haven’t made up ground lost over the last twenty-five years.

9. Forty-five million people have no health insurance. They work one illness away from bankruptcy.

10. In the midst of great wealth, one in five children still grow up in poverty. This is a moral disgrace that we must never accept. A coal miner still dies every six hours from black lung disease. In Mud Creek, Kentucky, kids still go to schools with not enough books to go around.

11. Think of Appalachia and remember. Most poor people are not on welfare. They do the heavy lifting. They take the early bus. They work the late shift. They work every day that they can and still cannot lift their children from poverty, still cannot afford health care. We have promises to keep.

12. This election takes place in that moment of great possibility and unmet need. And it presents each of us with a choice: two teams, two plans, two directions.

13. On the right side, the Republican team is trying to change its uniform colors, to blur the differences. But don’t be fooled. Look at the team. Not just Bush and Cheney but also the grizzled veterans such as Jesse Helms, Dick Army, Tom Delay, Strom Thurman, and Trent Lott. Pat Robertson, Ralph Reed.

14. And they want to take the surplus and give it away in tax breaks, primarily to benefit the already wealthy that pay for their party. Its a touchdown for them, a shut out for us.
15. On the other side, the team of Gore, Lieberman, Gephardt, Bonior, Daschle, Wellstone, Jackson, Jr. and Waters, Clyburn, Gutierrez, Velasquez, Sanchez, Wu offers a plan that will make America better. They would use that surplus to save social security, and add greater benefits for women.

16. Use that surplus to bolster Medicare, and add a real prescription drug benefit. Use that surplus to invest in education. To rebuild our schools and hire new teachers. To guarantee health care to poor working people.

17. The question is clear. What shall we do with the surplus created by economic growth? How shall we make America better? Bush and Cheney would give most of it to those who are already doing just fine. Gore Lieberman would use that money to make America stronger. That is the choice.

18. George W. Bush tells us we should look into his heart. But whatever is in his heart, the question is what is in his budget. He says leave no one behind – but they are left behind in his budget priorities. This contest is not about race or religion, but about resource distribution and budget priorities.

19. George W. Bush says, don’t mess with Texas. That’s fair. It seems to me that Texas has been messed with enough. I just left Houston where I visited children’s' hospitals. In Texas, 1.5 million children live in poverty, 10% of the nations poor children, 500,000 are eligible for the children’s’ health insurance program but can’t get through the bureaucracy. Six hundred thousand eligible for Medicare but can’t get it.

20. Texas: last in children’s’ health care. Last in environmental protection. The third worst state to raise a child, the 4th worst drop out rate and 38th in teacher salaries.

21. I say, don’t mess with Texas any more. But contain the damage. Don’t mess with the rest. Don’t mess with California. Don’t mess with Illinois. Don’t mess with Maine. Lets keep moving forward.

22. Now this Democratic Party will continue to wrestle with historic challenges. We cannot duck the challenge of making the global economy work for working people, of fair trade, protecting labor rights and not just the environment, so that we lift wages and conditions abroad, and not drive them down at home. The movement for change will continue to grow. We affirm protests. We must make room for protesters and turn their idealism and creative energy into progress. We must build on our tradition. We challenge with hope and healing, not hate and hostilities.
23. 1960: public accommodations were not a plank on the platform. It was a protest. 1964: the Fanny Lou Hamer challenge in Atlantic City, black and white from Mississippi, was a protest. Liebermans going to Mississippi in 1963 was a protest. Last year the former disenfranchised of Mississippi and white allies determined the governor. 1984 convention: the free Mandela movement was a protest. Israel/PLO talks was a protest, now its central to or foreign policy. Martin Luther King was a protestor. Now the tallest tree in our moral forest. Jesus was a protestor. Rome locked out its creativity and his genius and thus engaged in capital punishment to silence him. But the grave is too static and too shallow to contain truth. Truth crushed unto earth will rise again.

24. We must affirm, affirmative action. Reactionaries seek to use it as a race negative to instill fear. It is a majority issue, not a minority issue - women and people of color, and the disabled. Colin Powell was an affirmative action pool made possible by President Carter and Secretary Clifford Alexander. Today we have a million available high tech jobs. Without affirmative action, training and employing workers at home, we would have to import millions of workers. Al Gore ended the quota of zero Jewish Americans on the national ticket last week. This was a bold act of affirmative action.

25. We must address Africa, which subsidized America's development for 200 years of work without wages. We must repair the damage and seek reparations. We must respond to the threat posed by the global AIDS epidemic. We cannot ignore the poverty Appalachia, which contains some of the country's richest land and hardest workers.

26. We cannot continue to wage a failed war on drugs, rather than a campaign against drug addiction. Can't continue to spend more on prisons than on colleges. When Governor Ryan, the conservative governor of Illinois, imposes a moratorium on the death penalty, we cannot dodge that question. We are a better people than that; we are a better party than that.

27. But we are big enough to fight for what's right, to disagree without being disagreeable, to battle these questions out under one big tent.

28. And those disagreements should not confuse us about what is at stake in this election. I say the stakes are enormous, and potential great. The issues facing America are not about personality. They are not about smiles and styles. They are about public policy. And the choice is clear.
29. Papa Bush is a nice man, a gentle man. But chose Clarence Thomas. Baby Bush, the governor of Florida, is a charming man, a gentle man. But he has dismantled affirmative action in Florida.

30. George W. Bush is an affable man, a friendly man. But he stood with Jefferson Davis and chose the confederate flag over the American flag. He refused to offer leadership on hate crimes legislation and wants to give the surplus back to the richest 20% to buy more yachts.

31. I say there is a lesson here. Stay out of the Bushes.

32. He picked Cheney who voted against the Clean Air Act, and to keep Nelson Mandela in jail. Stay out of the Bushes.

33. He gave emergency relief not to poor children, but to big oil. Stay out of the Bushes.

34. He wouldn’t even spend the money Texas was given for children who didn’t have health care; stay out of the Bushes.

35. Look at the record, look at the policy choice, look at the team on the field. And I say to you, you will agree there is more with Gore. We don’t have a prosperity deficit.

36. More commitment to public education – more with Gore! More commitment to affordable health care for all Americans – more with Gore!

37. More commitment to fighting AIDS around the globe – more with Gore! More commitment to equal justice – more with Gore – more with Gore!

38. A fair and just Supreme Court – more with Gore!

39. Keep hope alive!


VITA

Graduate College
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Lance M. Young

Local Address:
981 Whitney Ranch Dr. #318
Henderson, NV 89014

Degrees:
Bachelor of Science, Communication, 1998
University of Wyoming

Thesis Title: Creating Community through Symbolic Discourse: An Analysis of Jesse Jackson's rhetoric at the Democratic National Conventions, 1984-2000

Thesis Committee:
Chairperson, Dr. Thomas Burkholder, Ph.D.
Committee Member, Dr. David Henry, Ph.D.
Committee Member, Dr. Dolores Tanno, Ph.D.
Graduate Faculty Representative, Dr. Craig Walton, Ph.D.