returns to the themes of the story of her childhood in Texas that began the speech, and she creates a paradigm for political progress that stresses the connections, nurturance, and family relationships that govern female life:

I'm a grandmother now. And I have one nearly perfect granddaughter named Lily. And when I hold that grandbaby, I feel the continuity of life that unites us, that binds generation to generation, that ties us with each other.... As I look at Lily, I know that it is within our families that we learn both the need to respect individual human dignity and to work together for the common good. Within our families, within our nation, it is the same. As we sit there, I wonder if she'll ever grasp the changes I've seen in my life—if she'll ever believe that there was a time when blacks could not drink from public water fountains, when Hispanic children were punished for speaking Spanish in the public schools, and women couldn't vote. I think of all the political fights I've fought and all the compromises I've had to accept as part payment. And I think of the small victories that have added up to national triumphs.... And I will tell Lily that those triumphs were Democratic Party triumphs.... And our strength lies in the women who go to work every day, who struggle to balance their families and their jobs, and who should never, ever be forgotten. I just hope that—like her grandparents and her great-grandparents before—that Lily goes on to raise her kids with the promise that echoes in homes all across America: That we can do better. (1988b)

This narrative is a succinct expression of what Carol Gilligan has called women's ideal of care: “An activity of relationship, of seeing and responding to need, taking care of the... web of connection so that no one is left alone” (1982, p. 62). Richards uses the concrete concerns and values of family life and draws a connection to political responsibility. As we argue next, this emphasis on connection and relationships as the basis for political life is enacted in the relationship that Richards creates with her audience.

Nurturing and Empowerment

The above analysis of Richards' rhetoric offers several implications for the concept of the speaker/audience relationship in feminine style. As Campbell notes, identification is the goal of the personal connection forged between speaker and auditor in feminine style, and this identification serves as the basis for empowerment (1989, p. 13). We believe this conclusion can be extended to include a specific awareness of the roles that feminine style can invite speakers and audiences to play. If, as we have proposed, feminine style is grounded in the characteristics of women's social roles, central of which is that of nurturer in their primary relationships, then the notion that feminine style presupposes a peer relationship (Campbell, 1989, p. 13) must be adjusted somewhat. It is in this context that the connection between women's consciousness-raising groups and feminine rhetorical style (Campbell, 1989; Campbell, 1979) is made problematic.

Richards' rhetoric contains all the ingredients that indicate a participatory, peer tone using Campbell's definition; she acknowledges the audience in her inclusive pronouns, she encourages audiences to draw their own conclusions from the examples she offers, and she self-discloses, a strategy that presupposes the trust among peers. However, these characteristics also fit nurturing relationships, which, while not explicitly hierarchical in terms of a requirement for dominance, nevertheless imply guidance rather than pure equality.

We contend that the feminine style embodied in Richards' rhetoric reflects the complicated nature of a nurturing persona, in which authority is used for the
purpose of fostering the growth of the other toward the capacity for independent action. "Nurturing" is a term naturally associated with motherhood, and Ruddick identifies nurturing, and the ethic of "care" that underlies it, as central to what she calls "maternal thinking" (1989, p. 46). The characteristics of maternal thinking are closely allied with those Gilligan, Chodorow, and others delineate as central to feminine modes of reasoning, regardless of performance of motherhood.

Ruddick's description of the persona enacted through maternal thinking reflects the delicate balance of nurturing work in a mother's life that is illustrated in Richards' rhetoric. Richards' attempts to facilitate the reasoning of her audience through inductive use of examples, and her encouragement of the use of personal experience in understanding self and in judging the public world are trademarks of a nurturing attitude. Ruddick writes:

To be responsible for children's moral well-being means helping them to become people who will be reliably moral when they are alone or among peers. This means turning over moral initiative to the children themselves. . . . Her children's differences require the most challenging of a mother's many balancing acts: alongside her own strong convictions of virtues and excellence she is to place her children's need to ask and answer for themselves questions central to moral life. (1989, p. 108)

In this context, nurturance is central to the work of empowerment. Through empathy, attentiveness, and inducements to participation, those who nurture constantly negotiate the balance between authority and independence.

In Richards' rhetoric, the wisdom she offers from her own experience, the connections she urges her audience to draw from their experiences, her insistence on an ethic of care from leaders, and her development of a family paradigm for political judgment both enact a nurturing relationship to the audience and celebrate a nurturing philosophy. Synthesis of form and substance are realized here, because a conception of what is desirable that is guided by the activity of care requires "a mode of thinking that is contextual and narrative rather than formal and abstract" (Gilligan, 1982, p. 19). The end result of such activity, both in traditional nurturing contexts and in Richards' rhetoric, is empowerment, a goal Richards articulates specifically in a 1988 speech:

In the sixth century before the birth of Christ, the Chinese philosopher Lao-Tzu noted that, "when the best leader's work is done, the people say 'We did it ourselves.' " And, today, as we fret about the absence of leaders, what we are really looking for is someone who will help us do it ourselves. (1988a)

The relationship that Richards describes and enacts for her audience is key to her appeal and has potential for alleviating the increasing disaffection with traditional politics, by both politicians and voters. Such a relationship reduces distance between rhetor and audience and empowers audiences to trust their own perceptions and judgments. In an increasingly complex political climate, recognition of new and effective modes of political communication is important. While we suggest that the philosophy reflected by Richards' rhetoric can be illuminated by its connections with women's roles and experiences, its use is not necessarily restricted to women; just as women have long adapted to masculine modes of discourse, men could surely learn the usefulness of what we have called a "feminine" mode. Moreover, Richards'
success in a state as large and diverse as Texas indicates that the appeal of her style and philosophy for audiences is not limited by gender.

CONCLUSION

We believe that this analysis illustrates the potential for an alternative perspective on feminine style, one that includes its philosophical as well as its strategic value. If feminine style is a reflection of the conditions of female existence, then perhaps feminine style reveals the potential, in the public sphere, for reproducing positive elements of those conditions. In the context of public, political discourse (rather than feminist social reform), feminine style can be interpreted as reproducing those conditions for the purpose of creating alternative grounds for political judgment.

To say that the form of feminine discourse reflects a philosophical standpoint is to recognize an intimate relation between form and content, one that Leff and Sachs have labelled "iconicity," in which the "aesthetic dimension" of a work "appears intimately connected with its political function" (1991, p. 269). Such a perspective reveals "the power of discourse to blend form and meaning into local unities that 'textualize' the public world and invite audiences to experience the world as the text represents it" (1991, p. 270).

If the content of public, political discourse can be studied for its implicit, or explicit, philosophy, a task with long precedent, then to ask how the form of discourse contributes to that philosophy is a natural evolution. In Richards' rhetoric three vital equations make such a process evident. First, reliance on concrete examples and anecdotes in feminine style, particularly in the process of evaluating political action, reflects a philosophy stressing the utility of practical wisdom in judging truth. The contingent reasoning on which women rely, in their social roles as wives and mothers, is privileged here. Second, Richards' use of self-disclosure and sharing of emotion, elements of both feminine style and women's nurturing roles, promotes a political philosophy governed by the fostering of connections and affective relationships. Finally, the combination of the above elements with Richards' explicit avowal of a family model for political progress results in a rhetor/audience relationship based on nurturing principles.

These conclusions foster realization of feminine style as a philosophy with important implications for the study of women's rhetoric. Restricting examination of feminine style only to the context of social reform rhetoric aimed at disempowered female audiences is to limit its relevance and implicitly to reify the public/private distinction that devalues women's communication. Campbell certainly does not endorse such separation; indeed, she explicitly notes that feminine style is not exclusive to women, as rhetors or audiences. However, only if we test the implications of feminine style beyond its original context can we realize the transformative potential of its use in a variety of situations.

For example, a developing trend in political theory emphasizes how traditionally feminine values might be integrated into politics. In a review essay of work in this area, Jane Mansbridge notes that this project "requires seeing relations formed in the private, domestic, and particular realm as reasonable models for, or the first steps toward, some forms of public spirit" (1990, p. 133). Such a feminine political theory might include valuation of the ethic of care, of enhanced emotional capacity, and of empathy in relationships (Mansbridge, 1990, pp. 134–135). Our analysis