

Girl Power and Competent Caregivers

Feminism, gender roles, and gender equality through personal writings in Norwegian politics

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Abstract

On gender equality rankings, Norway typically places as one of the most gender equal countries in the world. Likewise, some argue that there are still some barriers in place that prevent full gender equality between men and women. In order to explore this topic, I chose two books to compare using content analysis, feminist content analysis, and rhetoric: *Bare en kvinne? blå feminisme, hersketeknikker og likeverdige liv* (2012), written by Conservative Party State Secretary and Women's Forum leader Julie Brodtkorb, and Socialist-Left Party leader Audun Lysbakken's *Frihet, likhet, farskap* (2011). These books discuss gender equality through providing the authors' personal stories and political platforms.

My thesis statement asks: In what ways are Brodtkorb and Lysbakken similar and different to each other on the topics of feminism and gender equality, both as people and as representatives for their political parties? My research is divided into three parts. In the first part, I look at how both authors understand, identify with, and discuss feminism. Surprisingly, Brodtkorb was more focused on developing and expressing a feminist perspective than Lysbakken, who is currently the leader of the self-professed feminist Socialist-Left Party. The possible reasons behind this imbalance are explored based on Lysbakken's message and relationship to feminists presented in his book. In the second part, I explore how the authors understand and attempt to solve the problem of gender inequality in Norway. This problem is explained through their perception that traditional gender roles remain as a barrier to gender equality on both social and personal levels. To remedy this, both authors advocate women giving up some power at home and allowing men to be more active in order for the women to be able to balance family and careers. In the third part, I uncover blind spots in the authors' writing. This showed itself through the way in which Brodtkorb and Lysbakken discuss the family. While both stressed the importance of individuality and diversity, the family structure they describe falls into an ethnic Norwegian, heterosexual, fertile mold. This could easily alienate readers who do not fit into their A4 representation.

Although their parties rest on opposite sides of the political spectrum, Brodtkorb and Lysbakken's similarities and differences indicate that there is enough in common to point towards a greater Norwegian cultural goal of gender equality, the maintenance of the social democratic welfare state, and an ideal of a gender neutral worker-caregiver model.

Sammendrag

Norge ligger vanligvis på toppen i evalueringer når det gjelder likestilling. Likevel mener noen at det fortsatt en del som må endres for å oppnå likestilling mellom kjønnene. For å utforske dette, valgte jeg å bruke innholdsanalyse, feministisk innholdsanalyse, og retorikk på to bøker: *Bare en kvinne? Blå feminisme, hersketeknikker og likeverdige liv* (2012) av Julie Brodtkorb, leder av Høyres Kvinneforum og Statssekretær, og *Frihet, likhet, farskap* (2011) leder av Sosialistisk Venstreparti, Audun Lysbakken. Disse to bøkene handler om likestilling sett gjennom deres personlige historie og politikk.

Problemstillingen er: På hvilke måter er Brodtkorb og Lysbakken like og forskjellige fra hverandre når det gjelder feminisme og likestilling, både som mennesker og som politikere? Forskningen er delt i tre deler. I den første delen ser jeg på hvordan forfatterne forstår, identifiserer med, og bruker feminisme. Overraskende nok var Brodtkorb mer fokusert i å utarbeide feminisme som et begrep enn Lysbakken, som er leder av det feministiske partiet SV. I den andre delen ser jeg på hvordan forfatterne røver å fremme likestilling i dagens Norge ved å bryte med tradisjonelle kjønnsroller. De anbefaler at kvinner gir opp litt av makten de har og lar mennene ta en større rolle hjemme, slik at kvinnene kan lettere kombinere hjem og karriere. I den tredje delen ser jeg på Brodtkorb og Lysbakkens «blindeflekker», som ble **vist** gjennom måten de diskuterer familien på. Selv om begge forfatterne satser på individuell frihet og mangfold i samfunnet, blir familien konstruert som etnisk norsk, heterofil, og naturlig fruktbar. Da kan de som faller utenfor normen føler seg fremmedgjort.

Selv om partiene ligger på hver sin side av akse, tilsier forskjellene og likhetene mellom Brodtkorb og Lysbakken at de har nok til felles til å påpeke likestilling, den sosialdemokratiske velferdsstaten, og en kjønnsnøytral arbeider-omsorgsgiver rolle som kulturelle verdier i Norge.

Foreword

There were a handful of times I did not think I would finish this, but through the help of my amazing network, I can confidently, and with a heart full of thanksgiving, send my thesis out into the world.

First, Mom and Dad, although six hours and 4000 miles separate us, I could always feel you rooting for me. I don't expect y'all to read the whole thing, but now you have a copy to show off! And Andrew: I can't wait to see how you one up me, you ridiculous genius! If I can do this, you can literally do anything.

To my husband, Jørn, for not only for convincing me to make Norway my home, but also for always begin there. Your encouragement and love have helped me in ways beyond expression. And Enzo, Flexo, Thomas, and Rhonda/Hermes, thanks for the cuddles and companionship. Treats are on me!

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Fides et ratio.

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1 Introduction

In beginning my thesis, I will first explain how the thematic focus of this thesis came to be. I begin with stories from my personal history that led to my interest in feminism and gender equality politics in Norway. Following, I present my study questions and study objects to indicate the direction of my research.

1.1 Personal history as inspiration

Is there a mental image of who a feminist is? Are there certain criteria one must fulfill to be considered a feminist? Or is self-identification as a feminist enough? These are questions I have been asking myself for a long time. During my undergraduate years I was involved in a variety of campus organizations. All either directly or indirectly had a feminist ideological basis behind their messages, but had differing perspectives. Some held that men couldn't be feminists since men would never be able to fully experience or understand the oppression of women in a meaningful way. Others encouraged men to declare themselves as feminists to create solidarity, heightened awareness, and spread the message. Some were separatists, some integrated, and some held separatist meetings within an integrated group. While I enjoyed meeting and discussing feminism with people from so many different standpoints, I ultimately became confused. And while I've learned that feminism isn't really an ideology that can fit neatly within a box or defined precisely, the questions still remain - what is feminism? How do people construct a feminist identity? What does it mean to oneself and to society to be a feminist?

It is my opinion that anyone discussing gender politics has a perspective of feminism that they are using to present their ideas. For political parties to discuss certain measures over others informs on their specific understanding of gender, gender roles, power, and society. When I began planning my move to Norway, I scoured the internet for information about what to expect. I was excited to find the blog of another American woman who was in a similar situation to my own. I hoped to learn about the visa process, how to start language classes, and cultural nuances I hadn't picked up on during my visits. Her blog contained some of that information, but I also learned more. One of the first things to catch my eye was a banner for "Ladies Against Feminism," a conservative Christian group that encouraged women to embrace their "God-given roles" as homemakers (Chancey 2010). They blame feminism for

masculinizing women, feminizing men, and causing societal unrest (T. 2010). As a self-described feminist, I saw that our understandings of gender, gender roles, power, and society were different, even if both I and the blog writer share a deep love of baking cupcakes.

I moved to Norway in 2011 and found myself so excited to become a part of what seemed like a perfect, gender equal society that placed high importance and value on equality and access for everyone. Norway has long been considered one of the most gender equal countries in the world, and state agencies and processes like state feminism and gender equality laws, combined with a wide range of state-supported research on gender, are believed to ensure that women and men are granted equal access in all areas of society. While the role of the state is politically debated, it is widely accepted that men and women should be granted full and equal rights and access in society.

What also made Norway interesting, at least for an American like myself, was the wide spectrum of political parties represented in the government. With seven different parties represented in Parliament and differing coalitions over the years, it should seem that the government should be chaotic and accomplish very little. I mean, we Americans have trouble getting two parties to work together – how on Earth could seven manage to get anything resolved? But even among the wide range of perspectives and positions, cooperation and teamwork (and coalitions) among the parties have improved women and men's situations in the course of a hundred years. Since the state's role has been seemingly rather vital to gender equality, and a conservative victory widely predicted for the 2013 election, I wondered if anything would change, especially since many of the state run agencies that directly work with gender equality policy were being threatened with dramatic restructuring or even closure. What would happen to gender equality as Norway knew it? And what position did feminism have in this situation?

1.2 Thesis statement, study objects, and research questions

My thesis looks at the ways political parties on the left and right similar and different from each other when it comes to feminism and gender equality. I selected the Conservative Party (Høyre) and the Socialist-Left Party (SV) because they are two parties with very different positions on the political axis. The political positions they represent have seemingly very

little in common in terms of platform and ideological basis. SV's influence comes from a Marxist-socialist perspective, with society at the center, while Høyre is liberal-conservative, focusing on the individual within the society. In comparing the subjects of feminism and gender equality, my hope is to learn more about how and why they approach similar topics through these differing perspectives.

The purpose of this master thesis is twofold. In addition to learning more about the various feminist perspectives within the context of one of the allegedly most gender equal countries in the world, I also hope to provide information to English-speaking audiences interested in Norwegian gender equality and politics. This may be a lofty aspiration, but much of the research pertaining to Norwegian gender equality politics and feminism is written for Norwegian audiences. It is my hope that my research can help to inform non-Norwegians to better understand the political climate surrounding gender equality and feminism in Norway.

A traditional approach to this subject would most likely look at the political platforms for each party. During my initial perusal of both parties' platforms, I noticed three things. The first was that feminism was only discussed in SV's platform, making it difficult to compare the two on that subject. Second, while gender equality policy was present, it was not at a significant enough level to analyze. Third, both parties' documents were rather superficial. While both listed their action plans, they did not go into the theoretical reasoning behind their perspectives. Since their logical process in determining policy was a major interest to me, I decided to turn to another source.

My main study objects are two books: Julie Brodtkorb's *Bare en kvinne? blå feminisme, hersketeknikker, og likeverdige liv* (2012) and Audun Lysbakken's *Frihet, likhet, farskap* (2011). These books were selected because they combine memoir and manifesto as their genre – not quite autobiography and not quite party platform. This combination provides a more personal relation of the authors to their parties and its political standpoint, their individual political perspectives, and how both authors understand gender, gender equality, and feminism. Both books are fairly similar in length, Brodtkorb having 174 pages, and Lysbakken at 124 pages, and both authors are known political players within the realm of gender equality politics.

Julie Brodtkorb has been the leader of the Høyre's Women's Forum since 2010, and now works as state secretary for the Conservative Prime Minister, Erna Solberg. Brodtkorb's book

discusses bourgeois feminism, a direction within feminism based from a center-right perspective. In addition, she writes about overcoming master suppression techniques, a theme popularized by Norwegian sociologist and SV member Berit Ås, in both the workplace and in political debates.

Audun Lysbakken is currently the party leader of the Socialist Left Party and Member of Parliament. He was previously the minister of the Children, Gender Equality, and Social Inclusion department from 2009 to 2012 under Jens Stoltenberg from the Labor party (AP)'s red-green coalition with SV and the Center party (SP). Lysbakken's book is a combination of diary entries from his experiences while he was on paternal leave and his experiences both as minister and as a representative of SV through political statements and measures he hopes to introduce to increase gender equality in Norway.

As previously mentioned, the party platforms Høyre and SV are not my primary sources. However, the party platforms of both Høyre and SV will be considered when looking at both authors' perspectives. While party membership does not necessarily imply their full agreement, the long duration of their membership and participation at the elite levels does imply an at least general consent with its content.

My thesis statement asks: In what ways are Brodtkorb and Lysbakken similar and different to each other on the topics of feminism and gender equality, both as people and as representatives for their political parties? It is possible that they will have very few differences or many differences in their reasoning behind their platforms.

The questions guiding my research are:

- How and when is feminism used in their writing?
- How do the authors understand, explain, and attempt to solve gender inequalities in Norway?
- Finally, what are the authors' blind spots in their messages? What parts of their messages are centralized and which ones are marginalized or non-existent?

1.3 Relevance

My research will attempt to combine feminism, party politics, comparative study of Høyre and SV, as well as the use of personal history. As will be shown, master theses have studied the intersection of politics and gender equality, but rarely politics and feminism. Even fewer look to political elites to provide their personal stories as inspiration for and in relation to their political positions. My thesis attempts to fill some gaps in the research of feminism in Norway in this area.

1.4 Overview of thesis

I begin this thesis by providing a context. The history and theories of feminism and gender equality make up the initial context. Brodtkorb and Lysbakken's feminist perspectives are interpreted by me as best fitting with liberal and Marxist feminist perspectives, respectively, thus the origins and an overview of liberal and Marxist feminist understandings follow. In continuing to journey through history, state feminism and the welfare state bring the context to a Norwegian context, ending with a look at feminism's place in recent years. Next, the political parties are presented with an emphasis on Høyre and SV. Previous master theses conclude the context section though looking at what has already been studied before.

Chapter three introduces my methods: content analysis, feminist content analysis, and rhetoric. In chapter four, I look at the use, conceptualization, and application of feminism in both books. Chapter five explore how the authors look at the problem of gender equality through gender roles. Finally, chapter six discusses the authors' blind spots in relation to their writing about families. Chapter seven explores the similarities and differences between Brodtkorb and Lysbakken and concludes this thesis.

2 Background and Context

Knowing and understanding the context behind both books is necessary to properly understand and analyze their content. This section will explore the feminist theories that pertain to both authors' perspectives, their respective political parties, the welfare state as an actor in gender equality, and state feminism as a bureaucratic process to stimulate gender equality among Norwegians.

2.1 Feminist movements through history

Over the course of the last six hundred years, feminism has been expressed in a multitude of ways and through a variety of perspectives. Feminism is an ideology with many different directions. Halsaa divides feminism into six separate directions: liberal, Marxist, existentialist, radical, socialist, and post-structural feminisms (1996: 142). Holst, on the other hand, does not classify feminist directions in the same way. She writes that the postmodern nature of feminism today has led some feminists to follow a pure feminist ideology without the qualifier of radical or existentialist, while others maintain its use (2009: 73). Of the ideologies in place, she discusses liberal, conservative, socialist, and radical feminisms in depth, while also mentioning care, lesbian, multicultural, eco, techno, postmodern, French, and queer feminisms as prominent modern movements (2009: 142; 150-151; 177-180; 181). For the purposes of this thesis, the historical development of two particular feminist theories, liberal and Marxist feminism, will be explored in depth, as I interpret these directions as being most closely connected to Brodtkorb's and Lysbakken's own conceptualizations of feminism.

2.1.1 Early feminism

Feminism, as a movement, is often described in the terms of waves, with peaks and valleys occurring throughout history. Determining the emergence of the first peak is a difficult task, but for this thesis, I will place it in the last 1700s. At that time, the western world was changing. The United States had declared independence from the United Kingdom in 1776. The French Revolution followed soon after in 1789. French writer Olympe de Gouges wrote "Declaration of the Rights of Woman and the French Citizen" in 1791 after learning that the revolutionary's demand for equality did not extend to women, being ultimately guillotined for her activism (Halsall 1997a). Englishwoman Mary Wollstonecraft, being inspired by the

spirit of equality surrounding the French Revolution and as a response to Jean-Jacques Rousseau's unequal theories of education (Nagel 1993: 41, Owesen 2013a: 34), released “A Vindication of the Rights of Women” in 1792 (Owesen 2013a: 33). Regarding education, she wrote,

“if [women] are really capable of acting like rational creatures, let them not be treated like slaves; or, like the brutes who are dependent on the reason of man, when they associate with him; but cultivate their minds, give them the salutary, sublime curb of principle, and let them attain conscious dignity by feeling themselves only dependent on God. Teach them, in common with man, to submit to necessity, instead of giving, to render them more pleasing, a sex to morals” (Wollstonecraft 1792: 64).

Wollstonecraft's work spread widely, was translated to many languages, and has come to be a cornerstone of early feminist thought due to its discussion not just on equal education, but also on legal rights, including the right to vote, access to paid work, freedom of speech and inheritance (Nagel 1995: 41; Holst 2009: 46).

Towards the end of the 19th century, feminist ideas began to grow and spread, with women's organizations springing up across Europe and the United States. There were two main movements within; the first was the liberal feminist movement, spearheaded by the English John Stuart Mill and his wife, Harriet Taylor Mill (Nagel 1995: 42, Owesen 2013b: 119). The basis of the Mills' gender equality theories contained “The Subjugation of Women” and “Enfranchisement of Women” hinged on the belief that society would be improved if women were allowed to pursue their own happiness (Nagel 1995: 42), and advocating marriage as an equal partnership (Owesen 2013b: 120).

Shortly after and taking inspiration from Wollstonecraft and the Mills, the Norwegian feminist movement focused on the unmarried middle class woman. Liberal feminist groups advocated for education, employment, land rights, and suffrage. Gina Krog and the Norwegian Association for Women's Rights¹ championed the way for many women's organizations and furthered the cause for women's equality (Nagel 1995: 44, Owesen 2013b: 135). Artists of the era also brought up liberal feminist questions about marriage and the right to happiness. Camilla Collett's 1854 novel, “The District Governor's Daughters”, which told the story of young wealthy women of her time being forced into loveless marriages as the only way to guarantee a living, was the first successful novel written by a woman in Norway

¹ *Norsk Kvinnesaksforening*

(Owesen 2013a: 60). Henrik Ibsen, well-known for his play “A Doll's House” also placed “the individual's experience in the center, in contrast to the average perceptions of gender and its social definitions” (Nagel 1995: 44, Owesen 2013b: 122). In this play, a woman decides to leave her husband and children and discover herself, rather than remain in an unfulfilling marriage. These authors provided another face of the female experience during their time, showing that the pinnacle of woman's existence was not to make a good marriage and have children, but that she should be encouraged to become an individual in the same way as men. Taking the rights of the individual as its focus, liberal feminism emerged to look at how the concept of the individual was gendered and its influence on political, legal, and social rights.

2.1.2 Liberal feminism

Classical liberalism is centered on the individual and that the ability to reason makes all people equal (Halsaa 1996: 153). Freedom is the main goal – freedom from pressure from the authorities, and autonomy for self-determination (Halsaa). The individual is also perceived as an egoistic creature, more concerned with their own needs than the needs of others (Halsaa). And while liberals desire to maintain a sharp distinction between public and private spheres, they do accept that the state can legislate the private sphere so long as it does not interfere with individual freedom, autonomy or one's private life (Halsaa 1996: 154).

The problem with liberalism for women was that the individual was male, and women were not addressed within liberal theories (Halsaa 1996: 154). The earliest liberal feminists' main argument was that the liberal principles of individual rights and equality should also be granted to women to the same extent as men (Halsaa 1996: 153). Women were often considered to be unintelligent and lacking reason, so the early constructors of liberal feminism saw education, and eventually paid employment, as the keys to women's equality with men (Halsaa 1996: 154-155).

Liberal feminists today still base their theories on the rights of the individual, but have expanded them to avoid essentialism, and focusing more in equality between genders (Halsaa 1996: 156). Many base their view on Rawls' ideas of “freedom, equality, and redistribution,” advocating use of the state and preferential treatment in careful and equitable ways to foster equality (Holst 2009: 76). Differences between men and women are to be seen as individually-based, and not essentialized as universal representations of a gender (Halsaa 1996: 156). In terms of legislation, liberal feminists favor a gender-neutral legal system, the

same rights and responsibilities as men, and the establishment of public institutions that ensure that women are able to receive their legal rights (Halsaa 1996: 156). And where biology is politically relevant, for example, regarding child birth, liberal feminists support legislation and initiatives that protect women-specific rights (Halsaa 1996: 156). Unlike traditional liberalist thinkers, modern liberal feminists are not as concerned with protecting the private sphere in instances that are relevant to obtaining gender equality, domestic violence legislation, for example, but still favor a significant amount of personal autonomy in private matters (Halsaa 1996: 156-157).

This definition fits well within Brodtkorb's conceptualization of feminism. One difference is that she labels herself a bourgeois feminist. This, however, is primarily a rhetorical device used to join together feminists from the center-right political parties, commonly known as the bourgeois parties, and there is no significant ideological variance between liberal and bourgeois feminisms (Wæthing 2011).

2.1.3 Marxist feminism

Karl Marx' writings emerged as a critique of liberalism, seeing the capitalism of the Industrial Revolution leading to an economic system that favored the wealthy and the liberal form of government leading to oppression of the worker (Halsaa 1996: 157). The proletariat, or the working class, would be the main force behind the revolution for liberation (Halsaa 1996: 157). Marxism views people both as social and biological beings, that work is necessary for survival, and that the person's consciousness and thoughts are formed through praxis, meaning Marxists refute the liberal idea of “pure common sense” (Halsaa 1996: 58). While liberals believed that the economic system was self-regulatory, Marxists view it as “a power structure where workers are exploited and degraded” (Halsaa, 1996: 158). Gender-based divisions of labor have always existed, according to Marxist theory, but the differences are not based on biology, rather history and society (Halsaa 1996: 160). Women's oppression was a result of not being economically self-sufficient, instead depending on families and husbands for their sustenance (Halsaa 1996: 159). The main task of the housewife, according to Marxism, is to renew the workforce through reproduction, while also acting as a cheap source of reserve labor when needed (Halsaa 1996: 160). In the Marxist system, women were to be included in paid, “productive” labor, as working at home was considered unproductive (Halsaa 1996: 160).

Also during the late 1800s, the Marxists, with Friedrich Engels, August Bebel, Clara Zetkin in Germany, and Alexandra Kollontaj in Russia, advocated for female liberation in addition to the liberation of the worker (Nagel 1995: 43). In Norway, the workers movement provided the catalyst for the socialist women's movement (Nagel 1995: 45). In the aftermath of the Match worker's Strike in 1889, the first female workers union began, with local unions emerging over the next ten years until they all merged into AP's Women's Union in 1901 (Nagel 1995: 45). Together they worked so women could have improved working conditions, the right to learn a trade, higher wages, and reproductive freedom (Nagel 1995: 45). Katti Anker Møller, a representative for AP, became known for her work for women's health, reproductive rights, and women's hygiene. Although she received support from her socialist colleagues, she found little backing elsewhere (Nagel 1995: 45).

Marxist feminism, while agreeing with much of Marxist theory, likewise criticized Marxism “for reducing the question of women to a question of class struggle ... for assuming that men and women in the same social class had the same interests,” and for seeing paid work as the only route to women's liberation (Halsaa 1996: 160-161). Marxist feminist have also asserted that women's assumption of housework has provided benefits for men, unlike the Marxist view that unpaid housework only benefits capitalism (Halsaa 1996: 162).

Marxist feminism laid the groundwork for both socialist feminist and radical feminist movements. Socialist movements differentiate themselves from Marxists by viewing women's oppression as existing beyond economic class, with “gender playing its own role,” while radical ideology is closely identified with the 1960s and 70s focus on “women's liberation through consciousness raising” of the female experience (Halsaa 1996: 171; 166). Today's Marxist feminists still view the situation of women in light of socio-economic class and productive labor (Halsaa 1996: 162). The social, cultural, and psychological aspects of gender are of importance, but the materialist theory remains the basis (Holst 2009: 85). Looking at non-biological gender would be meaningless unless seen through the organization of labor and production (Holst 2009: 85). Examples of modern self-proclaimed Marxist feminism are visible in the Red party and unofficially, the Norwegian Newspaper, *Klassekampen* (Rødt Ungdom 2014:online). Lysbakken's perspective more closely resembles Marxist rather than socialist feminism in two ways. First, both women's and men's freedom are deeply connected to paid employment, as will be seen in his discussions on parental leave. Second, Lysbakken is not noticeably inspired by radical feminism in the same way that

socialist feminists tend toward. While he does write of his personal experience as being relevant, he tends to highlight statistics over pure consciousness raising.

Additionally, I will not be calling Lysbakken a “Marxist feminist.” Use of that term has largely fallen out of favor, and those who would identify along the same lines are typically considered “leftist” or “radical feminists.” Since radical feminism is considered a separate ideology, albeit one used as an umbrella term for feminists also aligned with leftist politics, I will instead use the term “leftist feminists” in my research to indicate those with a Marxist-inspired feminism, as this term is seemingly more common in other research.

Leftist feminists view politics as a tool to foster gender equality, through legislation or programs. Creating public services, such as child and elderly care, were viewed as ways to help women obtain a larger place in the labor market. With this expansion of the public sector beginning the 1960s, women became increasingly dependent on the welfare state, both as clients to receive services as well as employees in the various care and administrative branches (Holst 2002: 56). What was surprising, however, was that although women were increasingly present in the welfare state, they were still underrepresented in politics (Holst 2002: 56). To define, analyze, and further develop women's deepening connection to the welfare state, Helga Hernes coined the term state feminism in the 1980s.

2.2 State feminism and the welfare state

There are three ways to describe state feminism. First, it can be described as an analytical tool for explaining a specific social development, i.e. the historical and cultural factors that made the Nordic societies seemingly prioritize gender equality. It can also be seen as a descriptive characteristic of a specific type of political process, as in the political measures undertaken to further develop gender equality. Lastly, it can be seen as a vision for an ideal social formation. At the time of Hernes' writing, the wheels of state feminism as a process had already been set in motion since the 1970s, but could nevertheless be improved upon. Hernes describes this emerging “woman-friendly society” as a utopian, yet realistic, society where men and women would be considered equal, and was based on the social democratic welfare state (Skjeie and Teigen 2003: 34). In my readings of Hernes and respondents, it is this optimistic vision that shines brightest.

There are three main types of welfare states according to Esping-Anderson: liberal, conservative, and social-democratic, influenced by each state's cultural, historical, and political factors (1990: 26-32). The liberal state, found in the United States, Canada, and Australia, is characterized by means-tested benefits, modest universal transfers and social insurance. Often the only groups who qualify for programs are the lower-classes, and a social stigma is typically attached to their participation. Much of Europe, including Germany, France and Austria, are classified as the conservative, or corporatist-statist model. Here, class and status are maintained through state-administered benefits and a moderate amount of de-commodification. Traditional family structures tend to be upheld through a combination of encouragement to have children, historical church influence, and underdeveloped child-care and family services. High de-commodification, mild redistribution, and extensive universal programs and insurance are the characteristics of the social democratic welfare state, the type found in Scandinavian countries. Programs are offered to all and have middle-class quality standards, thus creating a sense of equality or solidarity among the population. The government depends on high tax revenue to pay for the wide range of services provided, so full employment is encouraged and supported through extensive care structures, such as kindergartens and elder care. This takes those burdens away from the family and enabling, and encouraging, women to seek full time employment outside of the home.

It was within these social democratic welfare state programs that Hernes saw the basis for the woman friendly state. State feminist systems are a combination of mobilization from below through grassroots organizations and social movements meeting with feminization from above through the aforementioned programs policies, and procedures to demand the inclusion of and increased opportunities for women (Hernes 1987: 29) In addition, women's high employment in the welfare state acts as a third avenue for increased female influence (Holst 2002: 60). Hernes viewed the social democratic ideology as the best way to create a woman-friendly society. As previously mentioned, the social democratic model values equality and solidarity, and through Scandinavia's uniquely homogeneous cultural history, feelings of unity, loyalty, and obligation converge to make the Norwegian social democratic welfare state seem more of a blessing than a curse (Holst 2002: 66)

Expressions of state feminism through political programs include gender quotas in government and business, gender mainstreaming, and a generous parental leave that reserves

a portion of the total leave for the father. These measures are believed to encourage women to be more active in work, have more independence, and be less likely to be discriminated against. Women's freedom is also further strengthened with the extensive state-run health care, and care system for children and the elderly (Holst 2002: 59). On the political side, the development and fulfillment of the Gender Equality Law, the creation of the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion and Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombudsman seek to ensure that women's legal rights are upheld (Holst 2002: 58).

In the years since Hernes' description, the definition, or at least the perception, of state feminism has changed. The mobilization component has become less prevalent, and state feminism has now become another term for “gender equality politics” (Skjeie 2013: 29). Grassroots mobilization still occurs, but more commonly with gender as an additional consideration, not the main theme (Skjeie 2013: 37), although feminist- and women's issues-based organizations continue to exist. Women still dominate in public sector jobs, with 70% of position in the public and communal sectors staffed by women (NOU 2012: 8.2.2). And above all, more women are now economically independent and have greater political influence (Holst 2002: 57).

Each party's perspective on the size of the welfare state is also similar to how they view state feminism. Høyre advocates having a “strong but limited government that ensures a division of power, gives room for diversity, and sets limits as to what will become politicized²” (Høyre 2008: 3). Ensuring that women have equal rights and access is, of course, important to them, but not all traditional state feminist procedures are interpreted by Høyre as fostering individual freedom. For example, even though Høyre introduced gender-based quotas in order to increase women's representation on corporate boards, they are presently against them as they are now seen as an unnecessary political intervention into the corporate sector³ (Høyre 2008: 7) But SV, taking a socialist perspective, sees that positive social change can be created through these same quotas, meaning that programs that encourage or mandate a

² “Høyre ønsker en sterk, men begrenset stat som sikrer maktspredning, gir rom for mangfold og som setter grenser for hva som skal være politikk.” (Høyre 2008: 3)

³ “Høyre mener det er feil å tillegge enkeltmennesker egenskaper kun i kraft av å tilhøre en gruppe. Høyre er derfor motstander av radikal kvotering.” (Høyre 2008: 7)

certain percentage of women and ethnic minorities in certain arenas will only benefit society⁴ (SV 2011: 8; 14). In other words, SV wants to continue to increase state intervention when it comes to gender equality policy while Høyre prefers the government to have a smaller, yet present, role.

When it comes to the welfare state in Norway, there is more or less universal agreement that it should remain, but debate focuses on how large it should be. The conservative parties advocate privatization of some sectors and allowing private businesses to offer the same services, possibly lowering the prices through competition. The socialist parties are more in favor of maintaining a large welfare state, as they fear private companies will focus more on profits than people and disrupt social equality through not all being able to access the private services.

2.3 Suffrage and post-war movements

We go back in history to explore major social movements in feminist history. The suffrage movement began to grow in support with the Seneca Falls conference in 1848 in the United States (Owesen 2013b: 138). Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony led the fight for American women's suffrage, although neither were able to enjoy it, as both women died before its ratification in 1920 (Owesen 2013b: 141). In England, Millicent Garrett Fawcett started the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies in 1880, which served as inspiration for Gina Krog, followed by Emmeline Pankhurst's Women's Social and Political Union in 1903 (Owesen 2013b: 137-138). English women finally obtained the right to vote in 1928 (Owesen 2013b: 138). Women's groups in Norway seldom banded together across political lines, but when suffrage came into play as a possibility, they worked together to achieve their common goal until they received it in 1913 (Nagel 1995: 45). After gaining this achievement, the women's rights movement worked in a quieter, yet present direction for the next fifty years.

⁴ "SV vil arbeide for målrettede tiltak mot underrepresentasjon av kvinner og etniske minoriteter, og herunder øke bruken av kvotering" (SV 2011: 8)

⁵ "SV er tilhenger av å ta i bruk radikale virkemidler for å endre strukturene som opprettholder kjønnsmakten i samfunnet herunder kvotering av kvinner til maktposisjoner." (SV 2011: 14)

From the First World War and through to the 1960s, a “housewife ideal” emerged as the standard for women (Nagel 1995: 47, Wetterberg and Melby 2009: 56). Housewives had traditionally only been middle-class women who took care of the home, usually with paid help, but increased economic prosperity came to include women of any class responsible for the home (Danielsen 2013a: 233). This process of “housewife-ization” shifted the ideology of women as employable to being defined as, or as potentially being housewives (Danielsen 2013a: 237). AP, having previously worked to ensure women access to paid employment instead saw the working women as burdened by being doubly employed as a worker while being responsible for housework (Danielsen 2013a: 221). This wasn't viewed as a return to traditional values but rather a progressive way to make life less stressful (Danielsen). To financially provide for women to remain at home, and to stimulate the sinking birthrate, the government instituted a child benefit as incentive (Danielsen 2013a: 238). The housewife ideal became the Norwegian social standard with one exception – Margaret Bonnevie's “Marriage and Employment” from 1932 advocated liberation for women though economic independence (Nagel 1995: 47). But the housewife ideal was not to remain much longer.

During the 1960s, women began flooding the universities and colleges to seek higher education. With increased knowledge of the world and peace movements occurring in response to the Vietnam war and atomic weapons, the women's movement that followed wanted “to establish a new ideal – the liberated and independent woman” (Nagel 1995: 47; Danielsen 2013b: 277). Liberation was the main goal – a liberation that gave women the power to make their own decisions, to combine work and family, for women to explore their sexuality with whomever they wanted, and to decide for themselves if and when they reproduced (Nagel 1995: 47; Danielsen 2013b: 291). While earlier feminist movements sought increased legal and political rights for women, the “second wave's” messages combined women being taken seriously as a group with individual rights, such as freedom to take control over one's own reproduction. The housewife ideal lost much of its support, in part due to Betty Friedan's “The Feminine Mystique.” She wrote of a wave of housewives feeling unsatisfied with their lives, calling it “the problem that has no name.” Consciousness raising through the sharing of personal stories and experiences became a way for these housewives and other women to learn about the similarities and differences among them and develop feelings of sisterhood. It is through consciousness raising that the phrase “the personal is political” was developed (Hanisch, 2006). The phrase is often attributed to an

essay by Carol Hanisch from 1969, but Hanisch and others assert that the phrase came before her (Hanisch, 2006). Norwegian groups like The New Feminists⁶, who were inspired by radical feminism, and The Women's Front⁷, who focused on the socialist “class conflict under capitalism” also emerged at this time, bringing consciousness raising into the political sphere (Nagel 1995: 50).

There were also many legal changes during this time. The law against unmarried cohabitation was abolished in 1972, even though it was rarely enacted prior to its removal (Danielsen 2013b: 300). The Gender Equality law was enacted in 1978 by Høyre and AP with disagreement from both left and right political parties over how woman-specific the law should be, with the Høyre wanting something a little more gender-neutral, and SV wanting to highlight the situation of women (Danielsen 2013b: 323, 325). But one of the biggest battles of the 1970s was for the legalization of self-determined abortion (Danielsen 2013b: 328).

Approved in 1960 and enacted in 1964, abortion first became legalized in situations where the pregnant woman's “living conditions or circumstances could lead to the woman developing physical or mental 'hazards to her health'” (Danielsen 2013b: 306). Prior to this, women could apply for an abortion in instances of rape or if the life of the mother or child were at risk (Danielsen). The desire for a legal self-determined abortion began in 1969 with AP, with support from the Socialist Union of Doctors in 1971, and the first public demonstration occurring the same year (Danielsen). The New Feminists, the Women's Front, and the Norwegian Association for Women's Rights began to take active roles in “writing news articles, arranging meetings and demonstrations” to increase public support for abortion after the Christian People's Party (KRF) won the election in 1972 (Danielsen 2013b: 306-308). Public support rose, and in 1975 the abortion law was revised, changing the phrase “hazards to her health” to “unreasonable burden” (Danielsen 2013b: 308). SV was unhappy with this minor adjustment, while the conservative parties wanted to protect the rights of the fetus (Danielsen 2013b: 312). Finally, in 1978 self-determined abortion was legalized, with AP and SV leading the votes. This law change shows the power of mobilization through regular women being able to create change (Danielsen 2013b: 312).

⁶ *Nyfeministene*

⁷ *Kvinnefronten*

Throughout the 1970s and -80s it became easier for women to combine work with children, as the state began to subsidize kindergartens, expanded maternity leave⁸. Gro Harlem Brundtland, from AP, was elected the first female Prime Minister of Norway in 1981. Brundtland served three terms as Prime Minister, a feat that has only occurred two other times in Norway's history. The “father's quota” was introduced in 1993, with four weeks of leave reserved exclusively for the father⁹. Today, parents share 49 weeks of leave, with 10 weeks reserved for the mother and 10 weeks reserved for the father^{10 11} (NAV 2014). The father is allowed to not use his reserved weeks, but in that case these weeks are not transferred over to the mother and are simply lost¹² (NAV 2014). The remaining weeks are free to be divided between the parents however they wish¹³ (NAV 2014).

2.4 Norwegian political parties

There are currently eight political parties represented in the Parliament: AP, Høyre, the Progress Party (FRP), KRF, SP, the Liberal Party (Venstre), SV, and the Green Party (MDG). Here, the initial origins of these parties are presented, with more detail about Høyre and SV in the following two sections.

Høyre and Venstre were the first two parties created, with Venstre representing the rural opposition to Høyre's urban elite electorate (Rokkan 1967: 374-375). AP began as the political branch of a trade union, and came into national influence in 1903 with its first representative elected to Parliament (Rokkan 1967: 394). SV was established in 1961 after fifty years of reformatting since its initial split from AP in 1919 (Rokkan 1967: 398). Two

⁸ "På 1980- og 90-tallet handlet likestillingspolitikken særlig om retten til å kombinere lønnsarbeid og omsorg for barn. Målet om full barnehagedekning ble lansert, foreldrepermisjonen ble gradvis utvidet fra noen få måneder til et år, det ble etablert skolefritidsordninger, rett til fri ved barns sykdom og ammefri." (Store Norske leksikon, “likestillingspolitikk”)

⁹ "Fedrekvoten i foreldrepermisjonen ble etablert i 1993, da som en rett til fire ukers lønnet permisjon forbeholdt far." (SNL 2013)

¹⁰ "Mødrekvoten er på 10 uker for fødsler og omsorgsovertakelser som skjer etter 1. juli 2014." (NAV 2014)

¹¹ "Fedrekvoten er på 10 uker for fødsler og omsorgsovertakelser som skjer etter 1. juli 2014." (NAV 2014)

¹² "Hvis du ikke benytter deg av fedrekvoten, mister dere disse ukene med mindre far er for syk til å ta seg av barnet." (NAV 2014)

¹³ "Fellesperioden er resten av ukene med foreldrepender, og den kan dere dele som dere ønsker." (NAV 2014)

parties split from Venstre in the following years. SP split in 1915 after perceiving Venstre as not protecting the interests of rural farmers (Rokkan 1967: 399). KRF split from Venstre in 1933 as a response to the abolition of prohibition and increasing secularization of society (Rokkan 1967: 399). FRP began in 1973 as a party to significantly reduce taxes, fees, and government intervention (Fremskrittspartiet 2013). MDG is an environmental party that began in 1988, and received its first parliamentary seat in 2013 (Miljøpartiet De Grønne 2014).

Høyre and FRP joined together during the 2013 election to create a Center-Right coalition. KRF and Venstre's votes went toward the coalition but they eventually decided to not participate in the “blue-blue government.” They, as well as AP, SP, SV, and MDG are currently the opposing parties.

In the following sections I will present Høyre and SV through their histories and basic political perspectives, as my study objects are representatives for each party.

2.4.1 Høyre

The history of Høyre begins at the writing of the Norwegian constitution in 1814. Having just been put into a union with Sweden after 400 years under Danish rule, Norway was given full autonomy in taking care of domestic affairs. With Sweden's involvement solely in matters of international politics (Rokkan 1966: 74). Universal suffrage had not yet come into play, and the newly established Norwegian government consisted of educated "elite officials and patricians" (Rokkan 1966: 75). Rural peasants and social reformers worked together to broaden the right to vote, creating a dominance in the Parliament in both 1870 and 1882. In 1884, Venstre established itself as a voice for reform and against the dominance of the urban, Danish-influenced elites (Rokkan 1966: 75; Rokkan 1967: 375). Seeking to defend the constitution, Høyre was established only a few months later through the combination of the conservative regional and parliamentary groups (Kaartvedt 1984: 52).

Høyre has only occasionally won the Prime Minister seat in government, competing most often with AP. Most parties work in coalitions to obtain a majority, although Høyre did win the 1981 election with a simple majority vote, placing party leader Kåre Willoch into the seat

of Prime Minister. At the most recent election in 2013, Høyre worked with the FRP, Venstre, and KRF to obtain a majority, with Erna Solberg from Høyre elected leader.

Høyre's party platform for 2013-2017 has four main areas of focus: creating safe workplaces, improving the education system, creating options in and improving the quality of health care through privatization, and building up both roads and collective transport (Høyre 2013: online). Gender equality is mentioned in three sections. In “family,” through equalizing parents' rights as caregivers (78), in work life, aiming to reduce gender dominance in workplaces through encouraging men and women to choose untraditional employment (82), and in social policy, by creating a universal gender equality and anti-discrimination law (89).

2.4.2 SV

AP was the main socialist party in Norway up until 1919, when a more radical faction broke off to create the Norwegian Social-democratic Labor Party (NSA) (Rokkan 1967: 398). In 1923, however, disagreement within NSA caused some members to establish the Norwegian Communist party, and subsequently NSA and AP reunited in 1927. Internal disagreement continued for the next forty years within AP, especially within the realms of foreign policy. A final split occurred in 1961, when after debate about atomic weapons on Norwegian soil forced some AP members to leave and form their own party, the Socialist People's Party (Rossavik 2011: 39). The Socialist People's Party eventually changed into four smaller, yet united parties under the Socialist Electoral Pact in 1973 after further disagreements, but joined back together in 1975 as the SV we know today (Rossavik 2011: 167).

SV's first presence in the government came in Jens Stoltenberg's (AP) second government in 2005 through a coalition with them and SP, and was reelected in 2009. This same red-green coalition was defeated in the 2013 election by Solberg's conservative coalition. SV's party platform from 2011 lists eight main political priorities: environmental concerns such as protecting Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja from oil drilling and increasing collective transportation, fighting privatization of the public sector, maintaining high taxes to pay for health and elder care, and to improve the school system, building more housing, ensuring women have access to permanent and full time employment, and maintenance of paternal leave (SV 2014). SV labels itself a feminist party and dedicated an entire chapter in its

political platform to the explanation of its position and how they will fight to ensure women's freedom and liberation (SV 2014).

2.5 Previous master theses

Given the breadth and scale of feminist research, it would take a very long time to sort through everything written about feminism and politics. And given the small scale and short duration of this project, I have elected to not write a complete overview of all previous research completed on this subject. I have instead chosen to write about previous master-level research. The following theses helped me to decide the direction of my thesis through seeing what others had written about, and what they had not written about.

30 master theses with feminism as a topic were submitted between 1997 and 2013, compared to 75 concerning gender equality from 2004 to 2012, and 361 with gender as a component. These theses come from a variety of backgrounds. Buvik explored the generational aspects of feminism, the differences between young women in the 1970s and 2000s in the way they conceptualized feminism, the awareness they have of each other's movements and perspectives, and the different perspectives they have when it comes to activist strategies (2001). Reymert looked at why fewer women than men voted for conservative populist parties. In addition to a pre-existing male dominance of the representatives, another reason was the intersection of the women's and the party's different awareness of feminism (2011). Rood analyzed four different organizations' perspectives through theories of intersectionality and positionality to map the Norwegian feminist landscape (2007). Espelid researched three feminist science fiction books, connecting the narratives to feminist history and how the authors related to their era (2012). Finally, Stø interviewed district-level SV party members' ability to influence feminist politics within their party (2007).

Master-level studies of party politics in Norway is very broad, with focuses ranging from the environment (Westvik 2003), debates about the state budget (Nordal 2003), and the role of media (Fredriksen 2012). Malin Lenita Vik's 2012 thesis combines party politics and gender equality politics through Carol Bacchi's "what's the problem represented to be" approach. She analyzed party platforms from 1980 to 2012 to see how the parties conceptualize gender equality and how their measures inform their positions. Regarding the left-right axis, I was

not able to find a comparative study of SV and Høyre's politics. In comparative studies, SV is usually compared to Frp (Ørjasæter 2012, Jahr 2007, Mjelde 2005), and Høyre's foil party is more frequently AP (Karlsen 2003, Thoresen 2000).

3 Methods and Procedure

In this section I will discuss the selection of content analysis, feminist content analysis, and rhetoric as my methods, beginning with a discussion about the positive and negative aspects of my chosen methods.

3.1 Data and analytical method

The main method I am using is content analysis. Feminist content analysis is an extension of traditional content analysis that also asks what isn't being said to shed light on information or interpretations that would otherwise go unnoticed. Additionally, rhetorical analysis is used to better understand the authors' storytelling styles as political messages.

3.1.1 Choice of data

I considered many different ways to study feminism and Norwegian gender equality politics. I began wanting to conduct interviews with female party leaders and other female political elites. However, a parliamentary election was scheduled for the same time I had hoped to undertake the interviews. Since I knew it would be extremely difficult to persuade politicians to schedule in time to speak with me, a lowly master student, about their perspectives, I knew I would have to select a different approach. Analyzing an already existing text was thus the next best thing, as I could still learn about their perspectives without having to go through multiple secretaries and unanswered emails. I considered news articles, but had difficulty and little time to select one story to follow. The selection of Brodtkorb's and Lysbakken's books streamlined my interests by providing two different perspectives discussing similar topics.

I am fairly certain that these were the only two recent books written by active and influential politicians about feminism and gender equality politics. I had hoped to find a third written by a more centrist party but I did not find one. While this may have limited the breadth of my analysis, it did allow me to dig deeper into each book individually. I was also able to use the books to help guide my research, being able to modify my research based on what the books contained. While I came to my first reading of the books with some ideas and questions, interesting or thought-provoking sections, and similarities or differences in messages, modified my ideas and brought me to the questions I eventually analyzed.

Even though there are differences, both authors still have plenty in common and make their books appropriate to compare. Both authors have had long histories of being involved in gender politics, and both write about the intersection of their involvement and their personal perspectives. Both write about similar topics and even share the same ideas from time to time. Their differences also make them worth comparing. Brodtkorb being female and Lysbakken being male could inform if an author's gender had an impact on the kind of perspective they have regarding feminism and politics. Both are from different political parties who, albeit are rarely in direct competition with each other, have very different perspectives on the role of the state, especially when it comes to gender equality policy. This combination of similarities and differences creates an interesting situation ripe for analysis.

3.1.2 Choice of method

The problem with texts is that they cannot answer additional questions. Because of this, my research would have to be primarily based around what the books already contained, although feminist content analysis does allow me some room to ask questions. Some of my initial questions had to be modified or replaced. Content analysis in conjunction with interviews could have brought more information, or clarified pre-existing information, but again, this was deemed difficult to schedule. Because of this, feminist content analysis, which is described in detail below, was selected as an additional method to explore unanswered questions. Feminist content analysis provides an additional dimension through looking at absence and subtext. This addition helped me answer questions I could not answer with traditional content analysis by helping me to look beyond the words on the page and think more critically about their positions through looking for missing information. Rhetoric is commonly used to study politics, as word choice can be influential in presenting a message. My inclusion of rhetoric as a supplementary method helped me to look at the connection between political messages and the connection between the author and the reader.

3.2 Content analysis

The primary method I am using to analyze these texts is qualitative content analysis. Content analysis, a form of textual analysis, systematically studies pre-existing data (Leavy 2007: 227). It is a broad and far-reaching method that can be utilized in a variety of fields and on a variety of materials. Ole Holsti defines content analysis as “any technique for making

inferences by systematically and objectively identifying special characteristics of messages” (Berg 2001: 240). The specific “special characteristics” of the books I will study is the authors' conceptualization and use of feminism, politics, and personal stories, using my own inferences in a structured way to learn more about feminism in Norway today.

Content analysis can be used by looking either at manifest content or latent content. Manifest content is what which is “physically present and countable” while latent content “is extended to an interpretive reading of the symbolism underlying the physical data” (Berg 2001: 242). It is possible to combine both forms, providing that the latent analysis is supported with additional documentation. Berg recommends using at least “three independent examples for each interpretation” (2001: 243), which I intended to follow. This was, however, difficult to obtain due to a lack of research on my study areas.

3.3 Feminist content analysis

In following with the idea on latent content, feminist content analysis asks additional questions about what is not explicitly written. In addition to analyzing the words on the page, feminist content analysis also asks “what is absent within a representation, what is taken for granted, and what is centrally located versus what is forced to the peripheries” (Leavy 2007: 230). Focusing only on the main, noticeable message can be interesting and useful, but just as much can be said through silence as through speech. This was a useful method in instances where I had additional questions, sections that were unclear or difficult to interpret. Through asking “what isn't being said,” I was able to get further insight into the author's perspectives.

3.4 Rhetorical analysis

Rhetoric is the study of persuasion through words or symbols (Foss, Foss, and Griffin 1999: 6). Within political science, it looks at the ways in which political actors “understand and persuasively present” their cases (Finlayson 2012: 758). Ideologies and platforms are presented through a “dynamic interaction of predispositions with both opponents and events” (Finlayson 2012: 758). Tropes, delivery, narrative arrangement and the invention of reasons are rhetorical devices to help persuade the audience (Finlayson 2012: 758). Within the study of rhetoric, political ideologies can help structure the actors' arguments. Their ideologies include “a series of locally established 'commonplace' arguments” that are adapted to the

medium being used to present their message (Finlayson 2012: 759). The resulting rhetorical acts thus become not only expressions of the ideology, but also become part of the ideology itself (Finlayson 2012: 759). This means that certain rhetorical arguments have a tendency to be used more in some ideologies.

There are three main methods in which ideologies are rhetorically presented to the audience. The first is *ethos*. *Ethos* is an authority-based argument, where credibility is assigned by the audience “to rhetors who demonstrate intelligence, moral character, and good will” (Foss, Foss, and Griffin 1999: 122). Within the study of political ideologies, the way in which authorities are “identified and sustained” is of interest (Finlayson 2012: 759-760). Finlayson further writes that “*ethos* is fundamentally about the creation of community through forms of identification” through alliance with an ideology (2012: 760). The second argument, *pathos*, is an argument that is based on emotions (Finlayson 2012: 761). These messages have often been degraded as sentimental and simplistic to exploitive through using fear or prejudice in the arguments (Finlayson 2012: 761). “However, a range of contemporary political theorists acknowledge the potential importance of emotions in politics, their capacity to be a source and form of knowledge about the states of affairs and of our own relationships to them, enhancing our capacity to exercise judgment” (Finlayson 2012: 761). *Logos* is the third argument. These are logic-based arguments, through “definitions, relations of various kinds such as division, appeals to probability, reciprocity, and classical rhetorical *topoi* such as cause and effect, means and end” (Finlayson 2012: 761). The audience will come to conclusions based on the logical formatting of these arguments (Finlayson 2012: 760).

3.5 Analysis procedure

I took an inductive approach to the books, allowing them to first present themselves as a whole, and eventually to see what both books had in common and where they differed. This method, as well as my interest in feminist labels and definitions assisted me in developing my research questions. After multiple re-readings to fully immerse myself in each book's style and message, I began analysis.

I began my analysis quantitatively, searching for and writing down every use of the words “feminism” and feminist/s.” I also kept an eye out for words and phrases often found in the vocabulary of feminist theory: “women's liberation,” “patriarchy,” “oppression,” and “gender

roles” but these were considered secondary, and play a role in conjunction with feminist content analysis.

Once again, my research questions are:

- How and when is feminism used in their writing?
- How do the authors understand, explain, and attempt to solve gender inequalities in Norway?
- Finally, what are the authors' blind spots in their messages? What parts of their messages are centralized and which ones are marginalized or non-existent?

After the qualitative compilation, relevant sections were taken from the text and typed into a separate document. Relevant sections were determined by many factors. First, all paragraphs that mention “feminism” or “feminist” were selected. The surrounding paragraphs were checked for contextual relevance. If the mention of “feminism” or “feminist” was directly linked to the surrounding paragraph then it was included as a relevant section. Second, all personal stories were compiled, summarized and indexed. Finally, the stories that directly related to the study questions were noted as such and typed for analysis.

After all relevant sections were typed I began to breakdown my research questions. I reduced each question into smaller questions and looked for connections and patterns. Finding the connections and patterns served as a type of macro-analysis, looking for larger trends rather than analyzing individual sentences or words. In combining the quantitative section with the connections and patterns, I began my analysis – the smaller, more detail-based analysis. Here, I looked at context, word choice, and connections to other sections. I asked “who, what, where, when, why, and how?” from content analysis in addition to “what isn't here?” from feminist content analysis. These questions helped me to create a structure in analyzing the unstructured nature of both books. Finally, this quote by Finlayson helped me to get into the right head-space when reading:

“We should not only ... read theorists as politicians but ... read politicians as theorists.' That entails making 'the performances of politicians' a distinct object of investigation, examining how they interpret their situation, assessing their 'contestational imagination' and asking

questions concerning 'how' they act when they act politically ... how they take a stand, or justify or explicate a certain standpoint” (Finlayson 2012: 750).

In looking at the authors as theorists, I could use content analysis, feminist content analysis, and rhetoric to look at their arguments in the same way as theorists: What do we learn from them? What do they show me? What is the greater application of their perspective?

Being aware of my influence in interpreting the data, I tried to remain as neutral to each author as possible. I attempted to select my words wisely, to treat both authors with equal respect, and to consider any strong reactions I had to sections of the texts. I can honestly say I enjoyed both books, albeit for different reasons, and do not align myself with the politics of either party. I typically list Brodtkorb first purely for alphabetical and organizational reasons, not because of a “ladies first” mentality or any other possible hierarchy. Further, some sections may include more analysis on Brodtkorb's book. After careful self-reflection, this is due solely to her writing more about feminism than Lysbakken.

3.6 Chapter summary

To conclude and combine, I am using content analysis, feminist content analysis, and rhetoric to complete my analysis. My interpretations, informed by the manifest and latent content, are the results of my analysis. Whenever possible, I will use additional, pre-existing research to support my interpretations, but given the lack of research on the subject, some analyses will have to stand on their own.

4 Feminism

In this first question, I wanted to look at the instances where “feminism” or “feminists” were used. I was hoping to find out how feminism played a part in both authors' personal and work lives, their sense of identity, and how they feel feminism could be used in politics. This chapter includes the various ways the authors discuss, explain, relate to, respond to, and apply feminism, and serves as a context for the following chapters about the problem of gender inequality. In learning about their feminist conceptualizations, we learn about their understandings of gender, gender relations, and gender equality.

4.1 How and when is feminism used?

I begin with a quantitative compilation of the number of times the authors directly discuss feminism. This chart contains the total mentions of feminism by theme and page references to each citation. Some pages contain multiple uses of “feminism” and/or “feminist.”

Table 1: Uses of feminism in total and divided by theme.

	Brodtkorb		Lysbakken	
	Amount	Citations	Amount	Citations
4.2: Definition	23	5; 11; 12; 13; 14; 15; 16; 21; 29; 34; 129.	0	-
4.3: Ideological context	24	5; 9; 11; 13; 16; 22; 27; 29; 34; 44; 67; 77; 129; 139; 146.	6	18; 23; 71; 114; 120.
4.4: Personal affiliation	11	5; 10; 11; 13; 29; 71; 73; 141.	0	-
Citations from other authors	0	-	4	121.
Total uses of “feminism” and/or “feminists/s”	56		10	

Since both books are relatively similar in size, albeit with a difference of 49 pages in length, I had originally assumed they would write about feminism to a similar degree. This is obviously not the case, as Brodtkorb directly mentioned feminism 56 times while Lysbakken discussed it ten times.

It took quite a few readings and eventually counting each individual use of the words in order for me to discover that there was a significant difference. Part of the lack of noticing could be due to frequent use of the phrase “gender equality¹⁴” in both books. While “feminism” and “gender equality” are not always synonymous, both words do discuss the social dynamics between men and women. Casual reading does not always pick up on small details such as word choice; instead we tend to notice the thematic content. While both word choice and thematic content can inform the reader to feel a certain emotional response, few pick up on how many times a specific word is used over the course of a book.

So I asked, "Why there are differences?" One explanation is the difference in the structure and content of both books. Brodtkorb's book is very organized and explanatory; using 51 pages on the history and definition of bourgeois feminism, while also providing advice to women on how to balance a career and a family. Lysbakken's book, being derived from a journal he wrote while on paternal leave, is less explanatory and follows a narrative approach in informing the reader of his message, weaving in stories from his political career with his time on leave with his daughter.

In the following sections I will discuss my qualitative analysis of my first topic, feminism. There are three main ways the words feminism or feminist/s were applied.

- As a noun for definition or explanation
- As part of an ideological message
- As a personal affiliation

These three categories were created through looking at context and word choice, and every effort was made to find research to support my interpretations. Additionally, a fourth category is the authors’ use of consciousness raising, a tool used frequently in feminist circles

¹⁴ *likestilling*

during the 1960s and 70s, is presented here to show how they combine discussions of feminism and politics as well as attempt to connect to the reader.

4.2 As a noun for definition or explanation

In order to establish the authors' conceptualizations of feminism, we must look at how they define feminism themselves. In this section, feminism is used in statements with additional information that inform on a definition or explanation of feminism. These statements can be purely definitive in nature, used to explain an aspect of feminism, or in a way to criticize notions of feminism. This section is divided into three subsections: the author's own definitions, addressing others' definitions, and a discussion of 70s-era feminists.

4.2.1 Personal definitions

Although liberal feminism has been around for centuries, the possible novelty of being both a conservative and a feminist requires Brodtkorb to explain, define, and discuss her feminist conceptualization to her audience. Defining and explaining a “new” topic can also explain why feminism is mentioned more frequently in her book. The first half of the book begins during her youth and her exposure to feminism through her mother and Mary Wollstonecraft¹⁵ (10). These women inspired her, and a feeling of thanksgiving is palpable in her descriptions. After, she explains how she sees bourgeois feminism as a valuable tool in Norwegian gender equality politics.

Brodtkorb's definition of bourgeois feminism does not stray significantly from the definition of liberal feminism provided in chapter two. Individual choice and autonomy are her central values, and the best practices to her are small, slow steps, utilizing the free market economy, and encouraging other women. She “doesn't want a feminism that uses laws and regulations to standardize our lives” but that women should be allowed to explore, to be brave, and take advantage of every opportunity “with no limits”^{16 17} (29; 12). Personal decisions are to

¹⁵ "I min oppvekst var ikke mor medlem av noe parti, men like fullt var hun svært politisk engasjert. Hun lærte meg tidlig om viktige kvinneskikkelser, som for eksempel Mary Wollstonecraft – en av opplysningsfilosofene som forsvarte at kvinner og menn hadde like naturlige rettigheter." (10)

¹⁶ "De ideologiske prinsippene for vår feminisme var likevel de samme som for borgerlige feminister før oss, og vi ønsker ikke en feminisme som med lover og reguleringer standardiserer våre liv."

¹⁷ "Kvinnepolitikkenes rolle i konservatismen og den borgerlige feminismen er å sørge for at også kvinner får utholde seg og bruke sine muligheter, uten begrensninger."

remain personal, with rare interference by the state. Bourgeois feminism, she writes “facilitates and stimulates” the family to make decisions based on what works best for them while also encouraging men and women to share work and care responsibilities equally¹⁸ (34). Bourgeois feminism to Brodtkorb is, just like liberal feminism, a feminism that centers itself on individual freedom, but differs from each other through bourgeois feminism advocating significantly more individual autonomy from the state. This could be the case because of the difference between the type of welfare states found in the United Kingdom and the United States, where liberal feminism originated and developed, compared to the large social democratic welfare state in found in Norway.

Bourgeois feminism is also a uniting movement. She writes that although the label “conservative feminist” would fit, she would rather unite all center-right women under the banner of bourgeois feminism to facilitate and encourage teamwork¹⁹ (11). And she sees it has worked. She writes that “a majority of women on the 'blue' side have identified themselves as bourgeois feminists”²⁰ (13). In changing her conceptualization from conservative feminist to bourgeois feminist, Brodtkorb attempts to include more women, creating a larger and stronger movement.

Since Lysbakken doesn't explicitly discuss feminism as a term to define, we can look at possible reasons why it isn't included. One possibility is that because of SV's identification as a feminist party, Lysbakken assumes that the reader is already familiar with feminism and SV's platform. Feminism as explained by the SV party program is inspired by leftist feminism, encouraging “everyone to participate in society regardless of appearance, sexuality or gender”²¹ (SV 2011:14). Participation in society can mean a few different things, but given SV's subsequent statistics on gender inequalities in the labor market, full participation in society likely follows the Marxist position of ensuring everyone participates in productive

¹⁸ “Den borgerlige feminismen legger til rette for og stimulerer til at den enkelte familie gjør gode, selvstendige vurderinger ut fra egne behov, men legger til grunn at rettighetene og pliktene som omsorgspersoner må være like for menn og kvinner.” (34)

¹⁹ “I bunn og grunn kunne jeg kanskje kalt meg en konservativ feminist, men vi har behov for å samle alle kvinner på sentrum/høyre-siden av norsk politikk under en kvinnefane med saker vi kan jobbe sammen om.” (11)

²⁰ “Selv om liberalister, konservative og verdikonservative kan være uenige i enkeltsaker, har de fleste kvinner på den blå siden definert seg som borgerlige feminister.” (13)

²¹ “Alle mennesker skal ha like muligheter i samfunnet, uavhengig av kjønn, seksuell orientering eller kjønnsuttrykk.” (SV 2011: 14)

labor. This is further supported in the Labor and Employment sections of SV's platform, as they write that the battles for women's equality and social equality are interconnected.

However, when Lysbakken writes about his interactions with feminists, the group members he describes seem to fall outside of SV's definition of all-inclusive participation and teamwork. It seems he perceives feminism as having been co-opted by a portion of hegemonic feminists. This hegemonic feminism closely resembles radical feminism. Radical feminism, as a movement, seeks to "promote, explore, and in a way, celebrate the female body. Radical feminism has shown how women's reproductive role has been used as an argument for subordination, but likewise makes it central to show women's strength"²² (Halsaa 1996: 167). In his advocating three-part leave, Lysbakken receives criticism from these feminists in two ways. The first is that women should have more leave because of physical reasons, and the second that maternity leave is a woman's right, not a man's. These feminists are outspoken and unafraid to voice their radical perspective, and eventually feminism becomes colloquially defined as their brand of feminism. In addressing these two reasons, Lysbakken fights against hegemonic radical feminism and attempts to turn paternal leave into his own project to increase gender equality.

Interestingly, his book is the only one to use the word "patriarchal" (70). While this is not the same as discussing feminism per se, the concept of patriarchy as an existing structural barrier to gender equality is something typically accepted among leftist feminists. In another section, Lysbakken looks at gender roles in relation to labor and employment – the traditional working class system of an overworked man with a wife at home to take care of him, all made possible by capitalist oppression. He writes,

"The (male) worker received food, rest, and clean clothes even though he worked long and strenuous hours, because there was a female volunteer at home. This was how the working class' lack of freedom under capitalism was inextricably connected to women's lack of freedom at home"²³ (114).

²² "Et viktig element i radikal-feminismen har vært å framheve, dyrke og tildels feire den kvinnelige kroppen. [Radikal feminisme] har påvist hvordan kvinners reproduktive rolle har blitt brukt som argument for underordning, men tar samtidig utgangspunkt nettopp i denne for å vise kvinners styrke." (Halsaa 1996: 167)

²³ "Arbeideren fikk mat, hvile og rent tøy til tross for at han jobbet lange og knallharde arbeidsdager, fordi det var en kvinnelig gratisarbeider hjemme. Slik var arbeiderklassens mangel på frihet under kapitalismen uløselig knyttet til kvinnens mangel på frihet i familien." (114)

Taking a class-based understanding is typically associated with a Marxist approach. So while this is not an explicit alliance with leftist feminism, these two contextual factors provide a slight insight into his perspective when it comes to feminism.

4.2.2 Others' definitions

Defining one's own feminism means that certain criteria or characteristics are excluded or unfavorable. Here, Brodtkorb critiques leftist feminism through the fear appeal while Lysbakken addresses hegemonic leftist feminists and hegemonic masculinity.

Brodtkorb discusses the idea that conservatism and a feminism oppose each other, since feminism is typically perceived to take the position that society requires large changes to create equality while conservatives believe the opposite²⁴ (11). While this citation is not implicitly negative in her perspective, Brodtkorb seems to feel the need to defend bourgeois feminism in the surrounding paragraphs. She lists three other center-left political parties in Europe, writes of the importance of individual freedom and the free market economy, and how this creates a situation where women will be more able to take advantage of their options and continue to fight for gender equality²⁵ (12). Her disagreement is with those who have pigeonholed feminism into only being an option for parties on the left. She understands their perspective, and through listing fellow parties and further explaining bourgeois feminism, she hopes to change their belief.

A “fear appeal” is a persuasive tactic frequently used in marketing to elicit an emotional response. These messages “arouse fear by depicting a personally relevant and significant threat, followed by a description of feasible recommendations for deterring the threat” (Gore et. al. 1998: 35). In one section, Brodtkorb employs a fear appeal in order to critique radical feminism. She writes, “What is dangerous about radical feminism is that it is governmentally

²⁴ “Mange har ment at det er en direkte motsetning mellom å si at man sverger til konservatismen og å være feminist. Begrunnelsen er gjerne at feminismen mener at samfunnet må gjennomgå kraftige endringer for å gi likeverd mellom menn og kvinner, mens konservatismen ikke vil ha store forandringer.” (11)

²⁵ “Det finnes en bred og stor gruppe partier som identifiserer seg med den konservative ideologien: Tysklands kristendemokrater, Frankrikes gaullister, og Sveriges Moderaterna er noen av dem. Det de har til felles, er at de er sentrum-høyre partier med fokus på individuell frihet og markedsøkonomi, og at de ser et stort sosialt ansvar i å ta vare på de grunnleggende verdiene i et samfunn i rask endring. ... Kvinnepolitikkenes rolle i konservatismen og den borgerlige feminismen er å sørge for at også kvinner får utfolde seg og bruke sine muligheter, uten begrensninger. Før i tiden var kvinnepolitikken først og fremst en kamp oppover: Kvinner måtte kjempe for å oppnå samme rettigheter som menn. I dag kjempes denne kampen på andre områder, fordi man stort sett har fått like formelle rettigheter.” (12)

mandated²⁶” (27). Selecting a word such as “dangerous” carries a significant amount of baggage. “Dangerous” implies not only danger, but fear, uncertainty, or even death. A more neutral writing of the same sentence could use the phrase “I disagree with radical feminism because...” But creating a neutral comment is clearly not her intention. A few sentences later, she follows with this statement: “With small steps we move closer to a society where public sector politics will 'liberate' people from the burdens of choosing for ourselves, thinking for ourselves, and taking responsibility for ourselves²⁷” (27). Prior to this section, Brodtkorb makes it well known that individual freedom in determining one's life is central to her politics. She thus compares her perspective with an automaton-like future of oppression should radical feminism, and leftist politics it can be assumed, continue to play significant roles in Norwegian politics. There will be no freedom in that society, and her readers should recognize their own fear of not having freedom in the future.

In the paragraph that follows, Brodtkorb writes of how the conservative government in Sweden encouraged women to return to work after childbirth through offering them a tax break for one year. She considers this to be a more effective use of money than following the “red-green” government's funding of a gender equality directorate. “(The directorate) will create more bureaucracy, not necessarily more gender equality,” she writes²⁸ (28). What is interesting is the rhetorical difference between a tax break and a directorate. Directorates are symbolic of the large, interfering government, while a tax break is individually assigned, and as we have seen, liberal feminists prefer the individual's freedom to overarching state intervention. Through the combination of picturing the conformist future with an individual-based solution, Brodtkorb follows Gore et. al's definition of a fear appeal to the letter.

When writing about men's roles and paternity leave, Lysbakken writes of an “ambivalence” among feminists regarding the topic²⁹ (120). He describes this in terms of the areas in which gender equality has not yet been reached: “the balance of power and money, in the fight

²⁶ “Det farlige ved den radikale feminismen er at den statliggjøres.” (27)

²⁷ “Med små skritt beveger vi oss nærmere et samfunn hvor politikken gjennom det offentlige vil 'befri' folk fra byrden ved å velge selv, tenke selv, og ta ansvar selv.” (27)

²⁸ “Dette bygger mer byråkrati, ikke nødvendigvis mer likestilling.” (28)

²⁹ “Blant feminister merker jeg iblant en ambivalens til alt snakket om pappaperm og mannspanel og nye manssroller” (120).

against violence and for equal pay³⁰” (120). In his perspective, feminists are ambivalent to the role of men because they construct the question of gender equality in terms of women's lower positions and do not consider the areas in which men are also placed into subjugated roles. This is defined as the same hegemonic feminism that focuses on developing women's rights over rights for both women and men.

Lysbakken also delves deeper into the concept of hegemonic masculinity and how men are forced to conform to a role that does not allow them to express their emotions (58).

Hegemonic masculinity, according to R. Connell, is when “one form of masculinity rather than others is culturally exalted,” meaning that every culture has their own ideal of masculine behavior and activity (Connell 1995: 77). Those who do not conform to the preferred expression are often considered less manly. Through looking at expressions of masculinity, Lysbakken stresses the importance for gender equality politics to take men's challenges into account and “break the power of gender roles over us³¹” (61). The discussion of men and men's gender roles has admittedly only recently been accepted and included in feminist theories, with masculinity theory coming to the discussion first in the 1990s. Lysbakken's critique of feminism as not embracing this new dimension of gender has increasingly received more support in recent years, and he critiques feminists in a way that both understands their historical perspective as well as encouraging them to explore other ways of understanding gender roles. These sections, while critical of feminism, are more constructive than aggressive. Feminism is not always portrayed in a positive light, but his hope for feminism's progress is.

4.2.3 70s era feminism

Explaining feminism can also involve looking to historical figures to support arguments. Interestingly, both authors discuss the feminists of the 1970s in a positive, inspiring way. These feminists were a source of great power, able to bring forth social changes that modern Norwegian women enjoy today (Brodtkorb 22; Lysbakken 114). Brodtkorb “honors” both the radical and bourgeois feminists of the 70s because of their ability to debate each other and

³⁰ “Nettopp fordi det er så langt igjen, i fordelingen av makt og penger, i kampen mot vold og for likelønn, er det for noen kontroversielt at også menn snakker om likestilling.” (120)

³¹ “Det sentrale i en moderne likestillingspolitikk er å bryte ned kjønnsrollenes makt over oss, slik at vi alle får frihet til å leve mest mulig uavhengig av dem.” (61)

still create change³² (22). In writing about how the traditional family structure oppressed women, Lysbakken writes that 70s-era feminists were “completely correct” when they said “the personal is political” and critiqued the traditional family structure³³ (114). He also acknowledges feminists as having fought for the now generous parental leave system Norwegians have today³⁴ (18). This cross-political acknowledgement and thankfulness encourages feelings of community and commonality, which in turn could lead to stronger women's movements should cross-political alliances be made a priority in the future (Leets and Bowers 2009: 335). While each author may feel their position is the best, they are not above finding inspiration, value, and cooperation from outside sources.

4.2.4 Section summary

Defining and supporting bourgeois feminism is Brodtkorb's main goal in this section. Seeing that bourgeois feminism is not as well-known as leftist feminism, it makes sense that Brodtkorb would devote a significant amount of space in explaining this perspective. Lysbakken is silent in direct explanations of feminism, but through using a leftist feminist vocabulary – discussing patriarchy, women's liberation, and the class struggle – he shows at least a desire to explain and defend the intersection of Marxism and gender politics, he just does not directly label it as feminism. But his interactions with feminism indicate an ideological break between his message of equality with his reception as an advocate for three-part leave from feminists. Lysbakken's meetings with hegemonic feminists will be further explored throughout this thesis, as it is a main theme in his book.

4.3 As part of an ideological message

As feminism can inform one's politics, and one's politics can inform one's feminism, this section looks at explicit mentions of feminism that also explicitly mention politics. These explicit political mentions can include mentioning a political party or ideology, or discussing a political message. The intersection of these political and feminist mentions can help show the reasons behind each author's political and feminist perspectives.

³² “Jeg vil hedre alle 70-tallsfeministene – både de radikale og de borgerlige.” (22)

³³ “Det private er politisk, sa søttittallsfeministene med brodd mot den tradisjonelle familien. De hadde helt rett.” (114)

³⁴ “For feministene som hadde kjempet fram de rause permisjonsordningene, var det et stort tankekors.” (18)

Brodtkorb combined feminism and politics in two ways: through explaining how feminism and conservatism can work well together and discussing feminism in general as a unifying and powerful ideology.

Very few have labeled themselves as conservative feminists, typically because it seems that the two ideologies cannot possibly have enough in common (Holst 2009: 82). Yet Brodtkorb writes of the political impact in combining both ideologies. It may not always be obvious, but it is both possible and useful³⁵ (5). Similar to section 4.2, many of these mentions are definition-based, explaining how the two ideologies are able to work together for society's benefit. Historical bourgeois feminists had previously worked to ensure women had the same legal rights as men³⁶ (16). Today, especially those that are also conservative, they are working towards ensuring that women are free to live their own, self-determined lives³⁷ (12). In discussing family politics, she writes that bourgeois feminists encourage families to independently make decisions that work best for them, not state interventions and policies³⁸ (34; 27). Capitalism can help women because it encourages social equalization and thus leads to women's liberation through economic independence^{40 41 42}(15; 16). Although both ideologies have acquired a bad reputation from the other, Brodtkorb tries to change this by showing how they can have shared goals and be compatible.

Unity through feminism is the second way Brodtkorb discusses feminism in a political way. As previously mentioned, Brodtkorb looked back at feminists of the 1970s as powerful. Additionally, she congratulates both the radical and bourgeois feminists of the 1970s for

³⁵ “Jeg er verdikonservativ, og jeg er feminist. Er det mulig? Jeg er skeptisk til brå endringer, mens feminister som regel oppfattes som tilhengere av brå forandringer. Går det i hop? Ja, og vi kaller det borgerlig feminisme.” (5)

³⁶ “De borgerlige feministene kjempet for at kvinner skulle få statsborgerlige friheter og rettigheter: ytringsfrihet, bevegelsesfrihet, stemmerett, organisasjonsfrihet, arverett, eiendomsrett og næringsfrihet. Kvinner burde kort og godt få de samme rettighetene som menn.” (16)

³⁷ “Kvinnepolitikkenes rolle i konservatismen og den borgerlige feminismen er å sørge for at også kvinner får utfolde seg og bruke sine muligheter, uten begrensninger.” (12)

³⁸ “Borgerlige feminister er opptatt av at det skal være opp til familien selv hvordan de ønsker å organisere seg.” (34)

³⁹ “Det farlige ved den radikale feminismen er at den statliggjøres.” (27)

⁴⁰ “For borgerlige feminister på denne tiden ble økonomisk vekst sett på som et redskap for likestilling.” (15)

⁴¹ “Det var erkjennelsen av økonomisk vekst som virkemiddel for å utjevne forskjeller, også mellom kvinner og menn, om var utgangspunktet for de første borgerlige feministene på begynnelsen av 1800-tallet. De borgerlige feministene la også vekt på ønsket om å unngå et samfunn preget av opprivende konflikter.” (16)

⁴² “Det var kun Høyre som sendte kvinner til Stortinget før 1925. Som det første parti tok Høyre allerede i 1924 inn denne programformuleringen: 'Høyre vil arbeide for at sikre kvinders rettslige og økonomiske stilling.’” (20)

being able to join together and the power and efficiency of joining together on the streets in protest over shared issues, and its applicability for today's issues^{43 44 45} (22; 45; 67). She also writes how the majority of women on the conservative spectrum of parties have identified as bourgeois feminists⁴⁶ (13). Being conservative, Brodtkorb prefers tradition to abrupt change, and highlighting the endurance and commonality of bourgeois feminism could be a way to reduce the “radical” connotation associated with the label. Bourgeois feminists want to avoid creating a society stricken with conflicts between classes and genders, to them, unity and equality go hand in hand⁴⁷ (16).

Lysbakken combines politics and feminism through describing feminism's impact on social change. Feminists worked to achieve modern rights and are active in addressing social problems, such as forced gender roles in children's toys and patriarchal family structures^{48 49} (18; 71; 114). As previously mentioned, he critiques feminists in general for being ambivalent about men's issues⁵¹ (120). His dissatisfaction in this way can be interpreted as him seeing feminists as being able to help men in their areas of struggle but unwilling to listen. This could be an instance of constructive criticism, showing issues feminist movements can improve upon.

⁴³ “70-tallsfeministene var også flinke til å finne noen kampsaker det jobbet sammen om på tvers av politiske skillelinjer. Et eksempel var den første stortingsmeldingen om familiepolitikk, som ble lagt frem i 1974. Den ble utarbeidet fordi Brattelis regjering så at med mange utarbeidende kvinner trengtes det en familiepolitikk.” (22)

⁴⁴ “Jeg er ganske sikker på at om det var jenta som til de grader ble understimulert i skolen, ville alle feminister samlet seg i tog.” (45)

⁴⁵ “Kampen for økt satsing på kvinnehelse burde samle alle feminister i alle partier! Det kan sammenlignes med 1970-årenes feminister, som klarte å skap en upolitisk allianse mellom partiene på Stortinget, slik at vi blant annet fikk den abortlovgivningen vi har i dag.” (67)

⁴⁶ “Selv om liberalister, konservative og verdikonservative kan være uenige i enkelte saker, har de fleste kvinner på den blå siden definert seg som borgerlige feminister.” (13)

⁴⁷ “De borgerlige feministene la også vekt på ønsket om å unngå et samfunn preget av opprivende konflikter. Store forskjeller bidrar til større motsetninger og mindre forståelse for felles interesser, også mellom menn og kvinner.” (16)

⁴⁸ “For feministene som hadde kjempet fram de rause permisjonsordninger, var det et stort tankekors.” (18)

⁴⁹ “Når lekebutikkene selger våpen til gutter og dukker til jenter, er det ikke sikkert det bare er et resultat av sosial indoktrinering. Det er veldig mange eksempler på feministiske familier som har prøvd å få sønnene til å trille dukkevogn, og døtrene til å like lekebiler, med svært dårlige resultater.” (71)

⁵⁰ “Det der de tradisjonelle familiestrukturene som har gjort århundrer av kvinneundertrykking mulig.” (114)

⁵¹ “Blant feminister merker jeg iblant en ambivalens til alt snakket om pappaperm og mannspanel og nye mansroller.” (120)

He also, through the use of metaphor, shows feminism being used as a political weapon against him. Metaphors provide a way to understand one item by explaining it in terms of another (Burnes 2011: 2161). Conflict metaphors are metaphors that use conflict or war to explain the subject as hand (Burnes 2011: 2161). They are frequently used in politics to frame arguments, and construct group identities by placing them into in-groups and out-groups (Burnes 2011: 2161; 2168). This placement can be seen as placing one group as having dominance over another through the out-group “losing the battle.”

When discussing his and Heikki Holmås' initiative for a three-part division of parental leave, Lysbakken wrote of his opponents, saying, “a peculiar alliance of breastfeeding advocates, conservatives, feminists and male chauvinists directed their cannons our way⁵²” (23). We can all agree that this alliance did not literally fire cannonballs at Holmås and Lysbakken, but the use of that the use of the conflict metaphor constructs Lysbakken in an interesting way. Through having one-sided military power, the “peculiar alliance” is constructed as the in-group, with Lysbakken and Holmås the defenseless out-group.

In the paragraphs that follow, paternity leave proponents are critiqued in a variety of ways. These critiques, ranging from “more men at home will lead to an increase in violence” to comically describing a man trying to breastfeed, shows both the wide scale of “the attack” and to construct the in-group as unsympathetic to men who want to expand their care role^{53 54} (24; 23). After five paragraphs of the various critiques, Lysbakken writes of how supportive parents and young men were to his three-part parental leave system (26). Men in large numbers signed his petition, and women wrote in wishing they were allowed to sign as well. To Lysbakken, the antagonistic reactions to his proposal came only from the politically involved. The people - the voters - supported him and three-part parental leave.

In the next paragraph, he addresses critiques received in 2004 from Kristin Mile and Ingunn Yssen. Mile had previously worried that three-part leave would negatively affect the

⁵² “En forunderlig allianse av ammehjelp, høyrefolk, feminister og mannssjåvinister rettet kanonene sine vår vei.” (23)

⁵³ “Bjørn Vassnes, vitenskapsjournalist i Klassekampen fryktet at mer pappaperm ville føre til mer vold mot barn.” (24)

⁵⁴ “Disse mennene som har så lyst til å være mer hjemme med sine barn – så røde i kinnene og så søte når de holder barna sine opp mot sine hårete bryst.’ Slik ironiserte ammesjef Gro Nylander over mannskrav om tredeling på P2s ‘Sånn er livet’ ifølge en kommentar i Bergens Tidende.” (24)

⁵⁵ “Men blant småbarnsforeldre utenfor stortingssalen og avisspaltene, og særlig blant unge menn, var stemning en en annen. Vi opplevde fantastisk respons på oppropet.” (26)

children, through the children being forced to be cared for by a nanny for 14 weeks due to fathers not taking their assigned weeks⁵⁶ (25). Yssen criticized SV for not considering the physical toll that childbirth has on mothers, necessitating a longer quota than fathers⁵⁷ (25). But after a few years, Lysbakken writes that they now are enthusiastic supporters of three-part leave, although they now criticize him for not having recommended a “minimum” three-part leave after four months as Minister⁵⁸ (26). After this long exchange, Lysbakken constructs himself from being a powerless victim, to now being unfairly ridiculed. Their continued disliking of him is portrayed as irrational, unwarranted and unnecessary.

In combining politics and feminism, both Brodtkorb and Lysbakken write of success and failure. Both authors write as though they have to defend themselves against criticism of their political perspectives. Brodtkorb defends the combination of conservatism and feminism through showing capitalism as a way to create equality, an idea that leftist feminists would likely have difficulty accepting. Lysbakken defends his paternal leave platform in light of feminist critique and exclusion. The authors experience the collision of different feminist directions and how this can make things complicated, as political actors will understand ideas differently based on the theory they follow. However, they still see feminism as an ideology of promise in its ability to foster positive social change in the political realm. Even in light of criticism, the potential of their “new” forms of feminist politics shine through.

4.4 **As a personal affiliation**

Use of feminism as a personal affiliation is when the author makes a direct statement aligning themselves with feminism, such as “I am a feminist.” In this category, Brodtkorb declares herself as a feminist twelve times, while Lysbakken does not directly call himself a feminist.

Declaring “I am a feminist” can result in a variety of consequences. Depending on the culture, feminists can be accepted, tolerated, disliked, or even live under the fear of violence

⁵⁶ “Kristin Mile fryktet at tredeling ville gå ut over barna. Mange menn kunne nekte å ta ut sin tredel, slik at spedbarn måtte til dagmamma i 14 uker. Mile fryktet dessuten at en lovendring ville skape en vanskelig situasjon i mange norske familier, hvor mor hadde belaget seg på å kunne ta ut elleve måneders permisjon.” (25)

⁵⁷ “Også tidligere likestillingsdirektør Ingunn Yssen angrep oss i Dagbladet: 'SV politikernes forslag tar ikke høyde for at det faktisk er en fysisk belastning å føde, og at det er en av grunnene til at kvinnen i dag har mer permisjon enn mannen.’” (25)

⁵⁸ “Kristin Miles motstand er i dag erstattet av et Likestillings- og diskrimineringsombud som kjefter på regjeringen for ikke å innføre tredeling fort nok. Og Ingunn Yssen? Litt over fem år senere gav hun ut boken Bråk sammen med Marie Simonsen, politisk redaktør i Dagbladet. Der erklærte de i krasse ordelag at jeg var en 'pingle' som etter fire måneder i statsrådstolen ennå ikke hadde kommet med forslag om 'minimum' tredeling av permisjon.” (26)

(Holst 2009: 11). Political engagement can also vary. While Yoder et. al.'s study showed that labeling oneself as a feminist is closely linked to activism even across standardized feminist definitions or criteria, Erchull et. al. and Yoder, Tobias, and Snell assert that the construction of a feminist identity must complete a sequence of cognitive benchmarks before it becomes an integrated part of one's perspective (2009: 839; 2010: 16). Further, Liss and Erchull state that "self-labeled feminists are more likely to see the need for continued social change," indicating a possible ideological conflict between feminism and conservative politics that seek to maintain traditions (2010: 94).

Brodtkorb, however, does not see a conflict between conservative and feminist ideologies, although she does acknowledge a tension between them. While she describes feminists as supporters of large scale and sudden changes to society, she also writes that she is skeptical to such changes^{59 60} (5; 11). But "sudden" and "large-scale" do not necessarily negate "continued." Brodtkorb is definitely open to change, but primarily on the individual level through personal initiative, not government intervention. She combines her messages of individual freedom with encouraging men and women to try to be more equal in their relationships and to not be afraid to share power⁶¹(81). Brodtkorb sees areas of society where change can be a benefit, but leaves the individual in charge of enacting the change. Her role as a politician is, then, to encourage but not mandate. This is in line with the liberal feminist perspective in that the private sphere is to remain autonomous and not regulated by laws and legislation unless necessary (Halsaa 1966: 154). Overall, given that she frequently discusses feminism, and combined with her work as the leader of Høyre's Women's Forum indicates that she is active as a feminist, secure in that identity, and accepted by her peers.

One interesting aspect of Brodtkorb's feminist identification is that she describes herself as a feminist at different ages: during her youth and as an adult^{62 63 64 65 66}. This further shows

⁵⁹ "Jeg er skeptisk til brå endringer, mens feminister som regel oppfattes som tilhengere av brå forandringer." (5)

⁶⁰ "Mange har ment at det er en direkte motsetning mellom å si a man sverger til konservatismen og å være feminist. Begrunnelsen er gjerne at feminismen mener at samfunnet må gjennomgå kraftige endringer for å gi likeverd mellom menn og kvinner, mens konservatismen ikke vil ha store forandringer." (11)

⁶¹ "Jeg mener at mye av likestillingskampen i dag dreier seg om at vi kvinner må gi menn mer makt hjemme." (81)

⁶² "Ved å fortelle med om store kvinneskikkelser som kjempet for likestilling, tente hun likevel et feministisk engasjement i en ung kvinne." (11)

⁶³ "For de konservative katolikkene var det nok like skremmende at deres døtre skulle gå med en lyshåret, løssluppen feminist på skolen." (74)

how important this aspect of herself it is. This is an identity she has carried with her for a long time, something that has become an integrated aspect of herself. This echoes Erchull et al.'s cognitive benchmark theory in feminist identity development. What is interesting, is that Generation X-ers, those like Brodtkorb who were born between 1961 and 1975, are less likely to identify as strong-feminists (Duncan 2010: 504). This maintenance and assertion of feminist identity can be interpreted as feminism being something very important to her.

Lysbakken's lack of declaration is not as straightforward. Research on men and feminism is significantly less than that on women and feminism, and none of the studies connected to the interpretation of Brodtkorb's feminist identity include men in their study groups. Based on my interpretations and the research provided below on men and feminism, I have considered four possibilities for Lysbakken's lack of declaration.

Possibility 1: He does not identify as a feminist, but rather as a male feminist or a pro-feminist, because of his leftist ideological basis.

Some men and women, especially those inspired by a radical feminist perspective, view “feminist” as an identity exclusively for women. Men who agree with a feminist message would then label themselves as “male feminists,” or “pro-feminists” (Kulpa 2009: 501). While this is not described in his book, it is possible that Lysbakken prefers these nuanced uses of “feminist” as an identity for men. However, as this term is still not quite mainstream, it would behoove him to include a mention of male/pro-feminists in order to spread the word. Additionally, Lysbakken does not seem to be closely aligned with radical feminism, so this justification seems unlikely.

Possibility 2: Lysbakken assumes that he is publicly considered a feminist. But does being a member of a “feminist party” means that he definitely identifies as a feminist?

SV's platform declares themselves as a feminist party three times, and includes improving women's status in the labor market and men's right to paternity leave in their central areas of

⁶⁴ “Jeg er verdikonservativ, og jeg er feminist.” (5)

⁶⁵ “Borgerlig feminisme, my way. ... De ideologiske prinsippene for vår feminisme var likevel de samme for borgerlige feminister før oss, og vi ønsker ikke en feminisme som med lover og reguleringer standardiserer våre liv.” (29)

⁶⁶ “På Høyres kommunalkonferanse i 2010 hadde jeg sittet som leder av Høyres Kvinneforum i et halvt år. Jeg hadde merket med som borgerlig feminist.” (141)

focus^{67 68 69 70 71} (SV 2011: 3; 14; 21). Their reasoning behind identifying as a feminist party include the political, social, and economic oppression of women and that Norwegian society has a long way to go before achieving full liberation^{72 73} (SV 2011: 14; 3). In addition, they write of how important it is for them as a party to maintain strong connections with women's movement groups, as their fight for social change concerning gender will also bring social change toward socialism. The women's struggle is still closely connected to the greater class struggle, theorized in much of the same way as the Marxist feminists. It can thus be logically assumed that Lysbakken, a long-term member and representative of the party would identify the same way as his party – as a feminist.

Lysbakken also frequently blurs the lines between feminism and gender equality. While the two terms are not necessarily interchangeable, Lysbakken's descriptions of gender equality use much of the same terminology as Marxist and radical feminist theory. He writes, “Gender equality is a social revolution,” and women's rights and autonomy as being the result of a “goal-oriented fight for gender equality”^{74 75} (12; 9). It seems gender equality and feminism are one and the same to Lysbakken. He sees gender equality as having been measured by women's increased agency in society and through women's movements. Thus, it is possible that Lysbakken is a self-identified feminist; he just forgot to write it down. However, online searches reveal no articles or interviews in which he directly identifies himself as a feminist, and only one in which the journalist describes Lysbakken as a self-proclaimed feminist (Melgård, 2014: online).

⁶⁷ “Derfor er SV et feministisk parti.” (SV 2011: 3)

⁶⁸ “SV er et feministisk parti.” (SV 2011: 14)

⁶⁹ “SV er et feministisk parti, og en av våre viktigste allierte er derfor kvinnebevegelsen.” (SV 2011: 21)

⁷⁰ “Kampen for likelønn og lovfestet rett til heltidsarbeid må derfor være en bærebjelke i det feministiske arbeidet.” (SV 2011: 14).

⁷¹ “Menns rett til permisjon må styrkes, og samfunn og arbeidsliv må endres slik at både menn og kvinner tar del i omsorgen for barn” (SV 2011: 14)

⁷² “Det betyr at vi erkjenner at kvinner undertrykkes politisk, sosialt og økonomisk – og at vi vil gjøre noe med det.” (14)

⁷³ “Vi har kommet langt i kampen for likestilling, men fortsatt har en vei å gå for å oppnå full frigjøring, uavhengig av kjønn” (SV 2011: 3)

⁷⁴ “Likestilling er en sosial revolusjon.” (12)

⁷⁵ “... en målrettet kamp for likestilling i Norge.” (9)

Possibility 3: He does not see paternal leave as a feminist topic.

Paternal leave as a mechanism to increase gender equality is a central message to his book, but that does not necessarily make it a message based from a feminist perspective. Although women used to be the sole focus, feminist research has expanded to include studies of sexuality, ethnicity, gender identity, and masculinity. However, that does not necessarily translate to feminism outside of academia. Social perceptions of feminism still vary, and some could think that feminism is still only about women. The men's rights and masculinist movements tend to focus around two main topics: men's rights and responsibilities as fathers and modern expressions of masculinities in response to hegemonic masculinities (Christensen and Larsen 2003: 126). In light of his focus on paternal leave and his discussion of hegemonic masculinity, it is very possible that Lysbakken sees his message as fitting in more with these groups than in feminist circles. This could imply identification as a masculinist, but as mentioned in Possibility 1, the lack of identification combined with less knowledge about it as a movement makes this seem unlikely.

Possibility 4: His lack of personal identification shows a form of disenchantment or detachment from feminism as a whole.

Lysbakken mentions that he perceives ambivalence among feminists regarding anything involving paternal leave or men's roles (120). This could have led to him feeling excluded from feminist circles because of his interest in the intersection of men and gender equality. Feelings of unimportance or exclusion within a community can lead to someone severing ties with that community.

This idea is also supported through comparing his book and the SV party platform. As mentioned, the platform includes the words feminism and feminist a total of seven times, with three of those mentions a direct statement of SV being a feminist party. This implies a purposeful identification, one that all members would be aware of. So while Lysbakken undoubtedly supports SV's gender equality policies, his lack of personal identification could be a way to break with the hegemonic woman-centered feminism that he experiences within his party. While this may seem similar to identifying as a male or pro-feminist, this possibility is one where Lysbakken makes a conscious choice to distance himself from hegemonic feminists as a whole.

4.4.1 Section Summary

Brodtkorb's identification as a feminist is all encompassing – it has been with her since her youth, it is not an identity she conceals from others, and her involvement in women's politics has provided an arena for her to play a part in activism. The significance of feminist identification in Brodtkorb's life may be surprising for external audiences, those not familiar with the nuances of gender equality politics in Norway or the increasing intersection of conservatism and feminism. Lysbakken's silence, on the other hand, is even more surprising. Through his membership, and now leadership of the self-identified feminist party, SV, an identification or alignment with feminist ideology should be expected. While the reasons behind it are unknown, his silence seems to indicate that membership in a feminist organization does not necessarily require personal identification as well.

4.5 Consciousness raising

Consciousness raising is known as a hallmark of the second feminist wave. Brodtkorb and Lysbakken continue the method of sharing their personal stories to connect to the reader in two ways. First, they present it as a feminist project, telling stories to make them known and share what they have learned. Second, they use the same way of telling stories as a rhetorical tool to present and gain support for their messages.

4.5.1 As a feminist project

Bourgeois feminism's definition and application is one of Brodtkorb's main goals with her book. As mentioned, bourgeois feminism still has a novel aspect in Norway, as she writes that some see it impossible to be both a conservative and a feminist (5). We have seen that Brodtkorb is comfortable in her personal identification as a bourgeois feminist, and active in activism through Høyre's Women's Forum. She wants to explain and spread the bourgeois feminist message, and does this through political and personal examples. Bourgeois feminism is a strategy to solving gender inequality because it highlights the individual over the gendered person. Although bourgeois feminism does not disregard the significance of gender, there is an emphasis on seeing past one's gender and focusing on the individual. In this way, skills and personality are emphasized over group membership, percentages, and proportions, for example in the bourgeois feminist rejection of gender-based quotas.

Another aspect is dispelling the myth of the "Super Woman." Instead, her stories and advice serve to encourage women to prioritize their life's activities, to not be afraid to say no, but also to not be afraid to say yes to new challenges. This message of balance makes it seem possible for women to have families and careers, while not feeling overworked or heavily burdened. In telling women this, Brodtkorb challenges traditional gender roles. These gender roles expect women to both have a career and complete the lion's share of the housework. Instead, her solution lies in sharing housework between partners and finding outside assistance with certain tasks if needed. By knocking the "Super Woman" down from her pedestal, Brodtkorb presents a new gender role for women: the woman who has a healthy balance between home and career.

Providing a male perspective of parental leave is one of Lysbakken's main messages. Through his personal stories we see how important it is to him, both as an activist and as a father. We read stories about his difficulties and happy moments, all infused with his desire to be present for his daughter and family and to feel more and more confident as a caregiver. Lysbakken's message in this subject seems directed at men, and he is undoubtedly hoping to inspire other men to invest their time in caring for their children. He sees increased male participation in care work and parental leave as a way to make the labor market more gender equal. In showing the fun and meaningful aspects of his experience, Lysbakken seeks to encourage men to take advantage of their quota, thus allowing women a more equal presence in the labor market.

Sharing his perspective could also be seen as his personal feminist project. In his writing about the ambivalence among feminists about men's issues (19), he is saying that an increased look at men's issues and seeking male perspectives is necessary for further gender equality. In this statement, he is raising the issue and seeking others to assist and further develop the knowledge in this area, much in the same way consciousness raising groups helped realize that issues such as gender-based violence and discrimination were more prevalent than previously thought.

Consciousness raising is used by both authors to provide their unique perspectives. Both authors see feminism as a tool in fostering gender equality. Although they see feminism as having different definitions, they undoubtedly agree in its power and relevance for today. Additionally, sharing their stories provides a way to show the reader how their ideal gender equal society would be, through the way they share how they have been able to live out their

own messages. In the next section, the authors use their stories in a similar, but more directly political way, through the use of rhetoric as an additional support for their arguments.

4.5.2 As a rhetorical tool

Being that the authors are politicians, it is expected that they would discuss politics. What is interesting is the way in which they use stories from their personal lives either as a way to present or support their political positions. This section explores these personal stories and the ways in which they are used. As mentioned in the method chapter, rhetoric consists of the three rhetorical arguments: *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*. *Ethos* is an appeal to authority, *pathos* uses emotions to persuade, and *logos* is a logic-based argument. The authors use these rhetorical arguments across three themes: stories that show support for their political party, show independence from their party, and stories designed to entertain and connect to the reader.

Political support

In this section, the arguments of *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos* will show how the authors used their personal histories to support their political parties. These messages are in agreement with the political platforms of their parties and the majority of the topics discussed are related to the topic of gender inequalities.

Brodtkorb's political stories tend to follow a formula: first, she provides her personal connection to a subject, then, she acknowledges the debate surrounding it, and closes with her political platform. Because of this formula, *logos* is often the primary rhetorical argument used here, as her political platform develops from a carefully planned logical process and presentation. One typical example is her story about her divorce. She begins by telling us of her shock in suddenly going from “glamorous finance-wife” to single mother (37). This story, however, does not delve into her emotions in coming to terms with her new life, but talks about employment. In section 5.3.1, “The Mother's Role,” we will read about the criticism Brodtkorb received in choosing to work over staying at home with her children. Here, she defends her choice, writing that part time work not only provides less income in the present, but also leads to smaller pensions after retirement (38). She further problematizes part time employment by looking at it through a gender perspective. Women work part time more frequently than men, often influenced by their care work obligations (38). Additionally,

she critiques the labor union, *Landsorganisasjonen*, for advocating against alternative forms of shift work that would enable women to both determine their own schedules and continue to work full time (39-41). This story primarily uses *logos* to encourage women to avoid part time work through showing how individualized alternatives will help women to be equal financial providers. Additionally, beginning the formula with her personal story brings *ethos* into the picture. Since she has personal experience in the subject and is well-informed about the debate, she can be viewed as a person of authority and can be trusted to tell the truth. Finally, the inclusion of some personal information, her divorce, helps us to sympathize and/or relate to her difficulties via *pathos*.

Lysbakken's stories tend to use the rhetorical arguments in different ways than Brodtkorb to make his point. In one story, he describes the five-year process of working with Holmås toward three-part leave through online petitions, media criticism, and meetings with other gender equality ministers. The story continues to Lysbakken's last day of work before he begins paternal leave. On that day they held a conference about the Storting's White Paper, "Gender equality for equal pay," the message being that gender equality at home and gender equality in the workplace were connected (30). Because of that connection, it was up to men to take an equal initiative and responsibility at home, and that the government would take the initiative to introduce three-part leave to make women's presence in the workplace stronger (30). They were met with wide-spread support, except from the bourgeois side (30).

Lysbakken applies all three rhetorical arguments in this story. *Logos* is used in providing successful examples of three-part leave in Iceland. He uses *pathos* in two ways. The first way is in mentioning his critics, especially those who "directed their cannons" his way (23). As previously mentioned, this excerpt portrays Lysbakken as a defenseless victim that we should sympathize with. The second use of *pathos* is in an inspirational way. Lysbakken plays up the role of victorious underdog in the way he and Holmås began with an online petition for support and eventually came into the minister seat with the power to change the policy. It is also this central role and eventual victory that Lysbakken has that includes the argument of *ethos*. Seeing that he was directly involved in the process, and came to succeed in his goal, we see that his perspective is one of authority and worth paying attention to.

In the two stories presented, Brodtkorb and Lysbakken employed *ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos* but to varying degrees and in different ways. Throughout the six stories in her book, Brodtkorb used a *logos* argument seven times, *ethos* five times, and *pathos* three times. Lysbakken was

the opposite, using *logos* once, *ethos* twice, and *pathos* four times throughout his four stories. It seems that Brodtkorb is a skilled rhetor, using all three arguments tactfully and appropriately, which is frankly not surprising as much of her professional career has centered on communication and politics. In the political context, *pathos* is Lysbakken's argument of choice, with additional support from *ethos* and *logos*. This, however, is not surprising as his writing style is more narrative than informative.

Political independence

Political alignment does not necessarily require complete and total agreement with every aspect of their parties. In the same way that the previous section showed how the rhetorical methods of *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos* were used to show support for their parties, the authors use the same three methods to assert independence from their parties. These messages are ultimately not in full, traditional agreement with their parties.

Brodtkorb takes an interesting approach in asserting independence from Høyre. She does so in a way that still supports them through the rhetorical argument of *logos*. A story in her book describes the formation of her political perspectives, both the conservative and the feminist. She writes, “(Mary) Wollstonecraft was anything but conservative, and someone Edmund Burke, the father of conservatism, liked to critique. That was also one of the reasons that I read about her during my time in the youth division of Høyre⁷⁶” (11). She goes on to discuss how she is able to combine feminism with conservatism. As mentioned in section 4.2, she defines bourgeois feminism as compatible with conservatism in that both are individual-based perspectives, even though feminism has a reputation of being incompatible with conservatism. Likewise, Brodtkorb says that it's completely possible, and even traditional for bourgeois women to disagree with their parties on women's issues. She writes,

“Conservative women and other bourgeois women's organizations have generally been more progressive than their own parties when it comes to women's issues, and they have much more often made their opposition against the party's position known. When someone has perceived that I, as leader of Høyre's Women's Forum, have expressed myself radically, I direct them to this; it is in line with the tradition of the women's movement within my party⁷⁷” (25).

⁷⁶ “Wollstonecraft var alt annet enn konservativ, og en av dem Edmund Burke, konservatismens far, likte å kritisere. Det var også noen av grunnen til at hun ble lest av meg i min Unge Høyre-tid.” (11)

⁷⁷ “Høyrekvinnene og andre borgerlige kvinneorganisasjoner har som regel gått foran egne partier i kvinnespørsmål, og de har langt oftere tilkjennegitt sin opposisjon mot partistandspunkter. Når noen har ment at jeg som leder av Høyres

Brodtkorb uses *logos* to show how she asserts and justifies independence from Høyre. Additionally, her independence from Høyre, while also remaining a member of the party, provides her with extra support from *ethos*. The women of Høyre and other bourgeois parties are not forced into agreement, but have the freedom to decide their own beliefs when it comes to women's politics. They are allowed to disagree, even radically, and will still feel welcomed in their party.

One surprising aspect of Lysbakken's book is that there are no direct examples of him asserting independence from his party. The story of his and Holmås' fight for three-part leave was at first a form of independence, as the proposal was controversial within SV. This story, however, does not fit as an expression of political independence, as he viewed the proposal as ultimately in line with SV's other political stances. Looking back at section 4.4, personal identification of feminism, we see that Lysbakken does not identify himself as a feminist at any point in the book. Seeing as SV is an openly feminist party, this lack of identification is the only instance in which Lysbakken seems to distance himself from his party.

Brodtkorb combination of *logos* and *ethos* shows the necessity of independence. While there is no set percentage of agreement versus independence one cannot cross in being a member of an organization, Brodtkorb encourages women to remain critical to organizational policies without giving up on the group. Her ability to balance both agreement and independence gives her authority to speak on the subject, allowing her to incorporate an underlying argument of *ethos*. Lysbakken's lack of example leads to two interpretations. First, it is possible that his politics always happens to fall in line with SV's politics. Second, he does have some disagreements but is not open about it. This lack of openness could be because he does not see this book as the appropriate venue to critique SV or it did not fit thematically. In this case, disagreements could have been made known through other media outlets. Additionally, Lysbakken was elected as party leader only a few months after the book was released. This could mean that he did not air any personal disagreements, as they could have jeopardized his chance of being elected. Instead, it seems he prioritized relatability over political independence, as we will see in the next section.

Comedy, authority, and relateability

Some of their personal stories seem to have no direct connection to politics. These stories were entertaining, comical stories about living one's life day by day. While this surprised me at first, I came to see these stories as providing legitimacy for Brodtkorb and Lysbakken as authors and politicians. In this section, their seeming apolitical, entertaining stories are discussed to show how the authors try to connect to their readers, and how these stories legitimate their authority as politicians.

There were three stories in Brodtkorb's book that fall under this category. In one story, she tells of her mother running out of the hospital shortly after giving birth to buy a dental practice (9-10). In another, she tells of pronouncing a word incorrectly during a speech (72). In the story presented here, Brodtkorb writes of trying to balance motherhood and career for the first time. Before the birth of her first child, she decided she would still maintain the life she had before, balancing work, baby, exercise, and travel (29). And while NAV created difficulties for her employer to allow her to combine maternity leave and the occasional work activity, she had already confirmed her presence at a board meeting scheduled for five days after the birth of her daughter (30). But it wouldn't be that easy for her to combine work with an infant. "While I was studying the office's results for the summer (while in the hospital), there was only one thought echoing in my head: Why hasn't my baby pooped today⁷⁸?" (30) A little constipation in babies is normal, so Brodtkorb and her daughter leave the hospital and head toward the meeting. She sleeps soundly until a colleague tells her her baby is awake and crying. She leaves the meeting and cradles her baby in her arms. "Suddenly, I hear a long fart, and (the baby) gets a peaceful look on her face. She has finally pooped! The problem is that there was so much backed up, her diaper had overflowed, and I was affected by the event⁷⁹" (30). Brodtkorb quietly leaves and goes home to clean up. She concludes the story with a bit of advice, writing about how she knew her life would never be the same as before. "A child changes your life by moving your attention from yourself to a 24/7 focus on their little life. I can say that, luckily, I got a more structured life and a new meaning for life. A

⁷⁸ "Men mens jeg studerer bedriftens resultater for sommeren, er det bare én tanke som surrer i hodet mitt: Hvorfor har ikke babyen min bæsjet i dag?" (30)

⁷⁹ "Plutselig hører jeg en lang promp og så får hun et fredelig uttrykk i ansiktet. Hun har endelig bæsjet! Problemet er bare at det var så mye oppsamlet, bleien var oversvømt, og hele jeg ble preget av hendelsen." (31)

cliché, but a cliché I think the majority of parents can agree with⁸⁰” (31). This story once again uses *ethos* to develop Brodtkorb into an authority. She uses her personal experience to say that she has been able to have it all through her “more structured life.” She has experienced the trials of motherhood, and it is worth listening to her advice. *Pathos* is also present in two ways: through in her not being able to accomplish the balance she wanted, and through her now soiled clothes and final statement, she reminds the reader of the emotions connected to motherhood.

While he did not have much data in the previous section, Lysbakken takes an entertainment-mainstreaming approach by trying to make all of his stories enjoyable. Seeing as his book is based off of his journals from his time on paternal leave, this is not surprising. Journals and diaries are obviously a much more casual medium as the content is decided day by day and not planned in advance, as is the case with most books. Most of his comical stories involve his daughter, Aurora. In stories 7, 9, 10, 12, and 14, Aurora is center stage, being a precocious baby who eats wet wipes and newspapers, charms flight attendants, loves to dance, and says “papa” before “mama” after plenty of coaching (34; 65; 83; 111; 125). It's pretty safe to say that a baby doing cute and funny things is enjoyed by everyone. This widespread enjoyment helps to bring Lysbakken down from elite politician to an average proud father through the argument of *pathos*. He is now relatable to the average person. *Pathos* is the primary rhetorical method used, as the emotions of happiness, sadness, and adventure are used to create a connection between author and reader. He additionally uses *ethos* to show other men what it is like to be on paternal leave, making him into a trustable authority.

Pathos arguments are the dominant method used for both Brodtkorb and Lysbakken, with some additional assistance from *logos* and *ethos*. Brodtkorb used *pathos* and *ethos* equally, with three instances, and used *logos* in the story about her mother, while Lysbakken only used *pathos*. Sharing funny stories helps build a connection between author and reader. By telling these stories, the author turns from being a serious authority figure to becoming an average person with faults and errors. This change in power dynamic can make it easier for the reader to accept the authors' positions, making it possible for the author to sway the reader. Through these stories both Brodtkorb and Lysbakken seem more human and less like politicians.

⁸⁰ “Et barn endrer livet ved å flytte oppmerksomheten fra deg selv til en døgnåpen oppmerksomheten om sitt lille liv. Heldigvis vil jeg si - jeg fikk et mer strukturert liv og en ny mening med å leve. En klisjé, men en klisjé jeg tror de aller fleste foreldre kan være enig i” (31)

4.5.3 Section summary

In using rhetoric, Brodtkorb and Lysbakken employed *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos* in very different ways. Brodtkorb's primary argument was *logos*, with *ethos* in second place. Lysbakken's use of *pathos* dominated over the others, with 12 instances against two for *logos* and one for *ethos*. These differences show how both authors used their books in different ways.

Brodtkorb typically used a format in presenting her stories. Formats lend themselves well to arguments of *logos*, because both employ step-by-step processes in telling the story.

Lysbakken, however, weaves little bits of rhetoric into his narrative. Telling the overarching story of his time on leave often trumps his direct mentions of politics. This is most likely due to him viewing paternal leave as his political project, leading him to tell his political message through the story and necessitating less direct political argumentation.

The difference in approach between Brodtkorb and Lysbakken is interesting, but its symbolism is difficult to interpret. I assume that their backgrounds have inspired the way in which they write. Brodtkorb, being an economist, may be more used to writing concise, matter-of-fact statements. Lysbakken, however, studied French and comparative politics, areas where writing expressively is more accepted.

4.6 Chapter summary

In the way they write about feminism, both Brodtkorb and Lysbakken seek to challenge the rigid expectations and criteria of feminism.

For Brodtkorb, feminism may still be considered a leftist concept, but as we have also seen in the background chapter, bourgeois parties have regularly been involved in feminist discussions. She writes to return feminism to being an ideology with a visible presence on both sides of the political axis, a wish that has been granted, as “blue feminism” has in recent months become more visible, researched, and accepted in feminist circles. Lysbakken seeks to change the gendered focus of feminism. In confronting hegemonic feminism, he also works to challenge the perceptions of who gets to define feminism. The role of men in gender equality is changing and becoming more prevalent, but his unspoken message is to make it

more prominent. While his silence in many areas is initially perplexing, it is understandable in light of his focus on men and not women.

Additionally, both Brodtkorb and Lysbakken have similar positions as members of in-groups and out-groups. Both have been “in” politically: through Brodtkorb's presence in the current government, while Lysbakken was “in” as a member of the previous red-green government. But Brodtkorb, as a conservative, and Lysbakken, as a man, are both outside of the stereotypical definition of feminism as a leftist, female-centric ideology. They critique this hegemonic form of feminism for being closed-minded and exclusionary. Brodtkorb's writing of Høyre's participation in suffrage campaigns seeks to remind hegemonic leftist feminists that a bourgeois presence has existed in feminist debates. Lysbakken writes that obtaining gender equality requires including and considering the role of men in relation to and in conjunction with women. Through both authors providing their stories as a form of consciousness raising, they shed light on their experiences and make them politically and personally relevant. These shared in/out positions allow Brodtkorb and Lysbakken to at once commiserate with each other and provide information from the other side. Taken together, the information they provide about feminism gives a holistic critique of its victories and defeats.

Feminism has a history of being challenged from within. Sojourner Truth told suffragettes that she was also a woman who deserved equal rights (Halsall 1997b). Radical feminism split from the Marxist-socialist movements to establish a more woman-focused feminism. Black, Latina, and indigenous feminists brought feminism out of the perspective of the white woman and developed the theory of intersectionality. Third world feminists critiqued feminism for basing their theories in the western world. Brodtkorb's bourgeois feminism and Lysbakken's silently feminist project of three-part leave challenge the established hegemonic feminism found in leftist politics. Additionally, current Minister of Gender Equality and FrP representative Solveig Horne's recent identification as an “everyday feminist” keeps feminism in the news. She bases her feminism on “the everyday things Norwegian women are focused on today” instead of the legislative aspects of gender equality, quotas in jobs and parental leave, for example⁸¹ (Løkeland-Stai 2013). In light of these ongoing discussions, feminism shows that it is not an archaic or dead concept. Brodtkorb, Lysbakken, and Horne's different

⁸¹ “Jeg er en hverdagsfeminist. Jeg er opptatt av de hverdagslige tingene jeg tror norske kvinner er opptatt av i dag. Og det er ikke bare fedrekvote, kontantstøtte og kvotering.” (Løkeland-Stai 2013)

perspectives, all presented within a two year period, keep feminism in the news and makes it possible for more men and women to reevaluate their perceptions of what a feminist identity entails.

Feminism, like any ideology, is a nuanced collection of perspectives with both positive and negative aspects. Critiquing other feminist directions has a two-fold result. First, it can provide support for the author's perspective, through indicating where other directions fail and the author's direction succeeds. Second, it can help the critiqued movement to reevaluate their platform and address their critics, helping the perspective to improve. Through Brodtkorb's and Lysbakken's writing, the reader receives information from (re)emerging perspectives that can only benefit feminism as a whole, allowing more men and women to identify as feminists and assist in feminist campaigns for gender equality. But in what areas do feminists need to continue to fight? Through taking a problem-based approach, Brodtkorb and Lysbakken show their conceptualizations of what gender equality entails and what needs to be done for Norway to become an equal society.

5 What is the problem?

Now that we have seen how the concept of feminism has been understood and applied by the authors, I will now look at how they bring those conceptualizations into practical application. One way of understanding gender inequalities is through a feminist lens, a lens which both authors use to varying degrees, as seen in the previous chapter. In this chapter, I will look at how they begin the process of solving gender inequalities through the way they problematize gender roles. I begin with a contextual look at how the authors look to history to critique gender roles. From there, how the authors show how gender roles are taught in childhood and enforced in adulthood.

5.1 The problem of gender roles

The authors see the most significant barrier to full gender equality is the enforcement of rigid gender roles. These roles force onto men and women into different expectations and activities both in their careers and at home. The authors first provide support for problematizing gender roles through history. Then, they show how children learn their gender roles through clothing and games. Lastly, the authors explain that the roles learned in childhood become enforced by political and social structures in adulthood by looking at the way they perceive the roles of "mother" and "father."

5.1.1 Historical gender roles

To provide a context for current parenting roles, both Brodtkorb and Lysbakken began with a look at historical standards. Here, they describe the roles of mothers and fathers in the past through their expected care roles.

Brodtkorb begins with the rural, farm-based society, where work, home, and play happened at the same place. Fathers interacted with their children throughout the day due to proximity and occasionally involved children in the daily tasks⁸² (90). Women usually helped with the farm work, but once men began to work outside of the home, often moving to distant cities to find employment, women's responsibilities became centered around the home. Men came

⁸² "I bondesamfunnet deltok mannen barnas liv ved at alle befant seg på samme sted. Arbeid, hus og lek skjedde på gården, og man kunne ikke unngå hverandre. Far befant seg i det daglige livet til barna og deltok i oppdragelsen." (90)

home at the end of the day for rest, food, clean clothes, and especially peace and quiet, since their jobs typically had long hours and were physically demanding^{83 84}(90; 88). The women's labor at home ensured these for her husband, and coupled with the housewife becoming "fashionable" in the 1950s, a socio-cultural valuing of these distinct roles emerged to turn the housewife into the normative role for women⁸⁵ (90).

Lysbakken frames traditional gender roles through his own history, in looking at his grandparents. He writes of isolation and repression experienced by past generations of women and the freedom of men to pursue their interests.

"Grandmother was always a housewife. She was never allowed to live out all of her talents and dreams, and she often thought about that once her children grew up and didn't need her all of the time. Grandfather committed himself to his work in schools and his large social engagements for everything, starting with language issues, to the temperance movement, and local politics as a member of the Liberal party⁸⁶" (14).

Comparing the different activities his grandparents participated in shows how gender permeated their roles, social rights and access. He brings the concept of patriarchy into the discussion, writing that men were the ones with the majority of power and freedom⁸⁷ (14). But this structure had an opposite and equally strict structure in place, one regarding caring for children. He writes, "men were also held prisoner in narrow roles that stole away what many today consider to be the most important things in life: caring for and closeness to one's own children⁸⁸" (48). While many think that men had more freedom than women, Lysbakken's writing of men's lack of permission to care for their children brings an additional dimension to the historical father role.

⁸³ "Pappaer begynte å jobbe borte fra hjemmet, gjerne langt borte. De kom hjem for å spise og hvile." (90)

⁸⁴ "Mannen har i det vesentlige vist sin dugelighet gjennom jobb. For ham har hjemmet i det vesentlige vært hvile. Når menn har kommet hjem fra jobb, har de villet ha ro. Hvorfor? Vi må tilbake til tiden da industriarbeid var svært tungt, og arbeidsdagene var adskillig lengre enn nå." (88)

⁸⁵ "I 1950-årene oppstod det store skillet mellom morsrollen og farsrollen. Husmødre ble på moten." (90)

⁸⁶ "Mormor var hjemmeværende hele livet. Hun fikk aldri levd ut alle sine talenter og drømmer, og tenkte not mye om det etter hvert som barna vokste til og ikke trengte henne hele tiden. Morfar viet seg til sitt arbeid i skolen og sitt store samfunnsengasjement for alt fra målsak, bia avholdsbevegelse til lokalpolitikk for Venstre" (14)

⁸⁷ "I dette stramme systemet hadde menn som regel mest makt, og kvinner minst frihet." (14)

⁸⁸ "Men også menn var fanget i trange roller som frarøvet dem viktige deler av det som for mange i dag står som viktigste i livet: omsorgen og nærheten til egne barn." (48)

Both Brodtkorb and Lysbakken see an historical imbalance of power relations between men and women that expresses itself through the establishment of rigid gender roles. In framing these discussions through the lens of care work, they explain how they perceive the historical roles as not only being detrimental to women's freedom, but also to men's lack of permission to be active fathers.

5.2 Gender roles in youth

The problem of gender roles does not simply emerge once someone gets married or has children. Both authors notice the assignment of adult gender roles beginning in childhood, and their understandings of the roles children are being taught creates a context for their discussion about adult gender roles. Children are typically simply seen as children, living their lives with little care as to what their future obligations to society will entail. As such, children's gender roles are not usually politicized in the same way that adult gender roles are politicized through cultural analysis and gender equality politics. However, both authors notice that children are taught and encouraged to dress, act, and play in gender-based ways. In this section, the authors' discussion of clothing and activities will be presented as the ways in which they look at the social construction of gender in childhood.

5.2.1 From pink and blue to skinny jeans: clothing and interpersonal interactions

It is standard practice in the Western world that newborn babies are dressed in clothing that coordinates to their sex: pink for girls and blue for boys (Frassanito and Pettorini 2008: 881). What is interesting is that this is a fairly recent practice, as infants typically wore white, and pink was a masculine color and blue was feminine through the 1940s (Frassanito and Pettorini 2008: 881). This section is divided into two parts. First, both authors present their observations of instances where gender and clothing were linked. Second, they look at how the assignment of gender to infants shapes adult behavior and gender roles.

Brodtkorb begins with the story of her daughter receiving a pink blanket from the hospital immediately after her birth, while the other new mother she shared a room with demanded a

yellow one⁸⁹ (84). When a new nurse came to assist with the baby, she became confused, with Brodtkorb reading her face as trying to remind herself that a baby is just a baby⁹⁰ (84). In Lysbakken's case, the baby confused was his daughter. While on a flight to Bergen, he dressed Aurora in her older brother's blue snow suit⁹¹ (65). This led to the flight attendant greeting Lysbakken by saying, "What a cute little boy ... yes, I can tell it's a boy since he is wearing blue and green⁹²" (65). After he corrects her, she comfortingly replies, "Oh well. She will get some pink clothes eventually⁹³" (66). In both of these stories, adults become emotional over the gender neutrality of the baby – the nurse becomes confused while the flight attendant feels the need to comfort Aurora. Additionally, the stories show that adults seek to identify and relate to children in certain gendered ways

The intersection of clothing and gender also goes beyond just pink and blue, but also encourages the development of certain characteristics. Brodtkorb critiques the focus on fashion – bikinis, skinny jeans, and high heels - as parents training young girls to fulfill a decorative role, not one of an individual⁹⁴ (85). Likewise, Lysbakken sees the increasing commercialization of childhood, through gender specific toys and clothing, as possibly creating "even more unobtainable ideals for even younger children⁹⁵" (73). Both authors agree that the overemphasis on appearance can lead to the development and reproduction of rigid gender roles that can impair one's future.

⁸⁹ "Min datter fikk et rosa teppe tullet rundt seg og en rosa lue på hodet av jordmor. Ingen var i tvil om at jeg hadde fått en liten prinsesse. En av damene jeg delte rom med, irriterte seg så mye over dette at hun insisterte på å få et gult helseteppe til ungen sin." (84)

⁹⁰ "En dag kom en ny barnepleier inn til henne og skulle ta vare på babyen slik at hun kunne sove. Jeg merket at pleieren ble litt usikker på hvordan hun skulle snakke til barnet da hun ikke visste om det var en gutt eller jente. Jeg så at barnepleieren prøvde å si til seg selv: 'Det er jo et like barn, det er jo et lite barn.'" (84)

⁹¹ "Det skjer hver gang vi går ut med den blå bobledress Aurora har arvet fra storebror.

⁹² "For en søt liten gutt, ' sier hun, 'ja, for jeg ser jo at det er en gutt siden han har på seg blått og grønt.'" (65)

⁹³ "Ja, ja. Hun får vel rosa klær etter hvert da, ' sier flyvertinnen trøstende." (66)

⁹⁴ "Jeg er bekymret for en utvikling der samfunnet blir mer og mer kjønnsinndelt - også for små babyer. Jeg er ikke i tvil om at jenter som oppdras som prinsesser i rosa, hemmes i sin utvikling som selvstendige individer. Da er det ikke fargen jeg er så bekymret for, men motefokuset, allerede på spedbarnsstadiet. På H&M finner vi trange slengbukser til jentebabyer, badedrakter med skjæringer som minner om noe man ser i Saint Tropez, og høye hæler til jentunger fra fireårsalderen. Barna aner jo ikke hva de har på seg som babyer, så dette handler om foreldrenes behov for å pynte dem opp. De oppdras inn i en rolle som pyntegenstand." (85)

⁹⁵ "I lekebutikker og kleskjeder er markeringen av kjønn sterkere i dag enn da jeg var liten. Er det et stort tilbakeslag? Den tiltakende kommersialiseringen av barndommen innebærer en fare for å skape enda mer uoppnåelige idealer for enda yngre barn." (73)

Adults use children's fashion as a clue to determining the gender of the child. After making a decision, Brodtkorb notices that babies are communicated to and handled differently based on gender. She writes that “age, class, even skin color are secondary” to gender⁹⁶ (85). She then mentions an acquaintance who met her baby for the first time. He picked up her daughter, threw her in the air and said, “He will be a real strong guy just like his father⁹⁷” (86). When Brodtkorb mentions her name is Nora, he quickly lays her gently on his arm and replies, “she is so sweet”⁹⁸ (86). In providing this story, Brodtkorb shows her understanding of the implications of gendered communication toward babies. In the section that follows, this same situation is interpreted that by calling baby girls “sweet” only serves to reproduce her caring and mothering instincts.

While Brodtkorb and Lysbakken don't repeat each other's' positions verbatim, both are in agreement on three things: First, clothing, especially color, is critical in determining the gender of infants who do not possess the same visible sexual phenotypes as adults. Second, combined with color, the over-commercialization of fashion, and as we will see in the next section, toys, may be detrimental to children's development. Third, the intersection of color and over-commercialization leads adults to handle boy and girl babies differently. In repeatedly emphasizing toughness over sweetness, the saying “boys don't cry” is perpetuated. Similarly, emphasizing beauty over physical prowess for girls leads to a focus on appearance and not intelligence. In this section, I explore how Brodtkorb and Lysbakken show how children are taught by adults to fit into certain roles. This perpetuates the problem of gender roles because it is a repeating cycle. In the next section, we will see how these ideals are put into practice through toys and games in childhood.

5.2.2 Toys and games: the reproduction of mothering

Here, the next stage in gender role development is explored through the use of gendered toys and games. Both authors look at ways in which social structures influence children's' gender development as well as providing stories about how they and others have attempted to get their children to play with the opposite gender's toys. In looking at toys and games as

⁹⁶ “Kjønn er den viktigste faktoren for å bestemme hvordan vi kommuniserer med personen vi har foran oss. Alder, klasse, ja til og med hudfarge er underordnet.” (85)

⁹⁷ “‘Dette blir en skikkelig tøffing som sin far’, sa han.” (86)

⁹⁸ “‘Hun heter Nora,’ repliserte jeg. Så la han henne raskt på armen og sa: ‘Så søt hun er.’” (86)

contributors to the problem of gender roles, Brodtkorb and Lysbakken show how deeply entrenched gender roles are in childhood.

Brodtkorb begins by discussing Nancy Chodorow's theory about "the reproduction of mothering"⁹⁹ (105). According to Brodtkorb, this theory says that young girls are taught and encouraged to mother through playing with dolls and other activities that depend on emotional expression, like dance and music¹⁰⁰ (105). But she does not see learning to care for others as a problem in and of itself. It is the overemphasis on emotions that leads to women putting others' needs before their own, which Brodtkorb sees as a major factor in women choosing to work part time¹⁰¹ (106). Additionally, because girls have been encouraged to play with dolls, she thinks that this is one of the reasons why women continue to take longer parental leave than men¹⁰² (86). This encouragement to mother is also expressed when girls thrive at more masculine activities. In these instances, "eyebrows are raised"¹⁰³ (105).

Brodtkorb attempts to change this by sending all of her children to open-air kindergartens¹⁰⁴ (87). Gender-segregated activities are rare in these kindergartens, because "here, we don't find any pink shelves and boy's shelves. One day, a stick is a doll and another day a sword. Boys and girls participate in the same ski trips and find the same ant trails"¹⁰⁵ (87). Inspired

⁹⁹ "Noen hevder at dette mønsteret er innrettet mot å trene oss opp som mødre. Nancy Chodorow, kjent amerikansk sosiolog og psykoanalytiker, kaller det 'The reproduction of mothering'." (105)

¹⁰⁰ "Hva er typisk feminine egenskaper som jenter trenes i? Lydhørhet har vært et viktig feminint trekk – jenter har blitt trent i å forsøke å lese andres behov. Små jenter får dukker de steller med, bader, skifter bleie på og koser med. De små jentene er rørende opptatt av om dukken er varm, kald eller sulten. Gjennom leken trenes jenter i et språk som omhandler følelser. Jenters finmotorikk trenes tidlig og konstant med perling og annet håndarbeid. Relasjonskompetanse øves hos jenter i de fleste sammenhenger. På dansen skal de uttrykke følelser når de beveger seg, i koret skal de synge sanger om følelser og kjærlighet." (105)

¹⁰¹ "I så fall er det ikke rart at jenter trenes til å la sine egne behov bli mindre viktige enn andres. Og det er sannsynligvis grunnen til at 8 av 10 som arbeider deltid, er kvinner. Skal vi komme vekk fra dette, må jenter trenes i å sette egne behov, ikke foran barnas, men likt med mannens." (106)

¹⁰² "Vi behandler jentebabyer og guttebabyer ulikt, og tillegger dem forskjellige egenskaper. Jenter opplever fra de er babyer å bli dullet med og får høre at de er søte. De får gjerne dukker i gave, og triller på dem fra de kan gå. Det er sannsynligvis noe av det som gjør det naturlig for mange av oss å tviholde på vår fødselspermisjon. Vi har blitt oppdratt i omsorgsrollen siden vi selv kom ut av mors mage. Det håper jeg vi kommer oss bort fra, slik at barneomsorg fra far og mor kan bli likestilt." (86)

¹⁰³ "På langrennstrening er det helt normalt at guttene tøffer seg og ikke lytter til treneren, men gjør en jente det samme, hever vi alle øyebrynene litt." (105)

¹⁰⁴ "Vi har hatt alle barna våre i friluftsbarnehage - vi ønsket et miljø der friluftsliv og lek i naturen ble en del av hverdagen." (87)

¹⁰⁵ "Her finnes det ikke noe rosahjørne og guttehjørne. En dag er en pinne en dukke og en annen dag et sverd. Guttene og jentene er med på de samme skiturene, finner de samme maurturene" (87)

by this, she tried to challenge the gendered ordering of toys by switching things up by giving dolls to her son and cars to her daughters. However, she found that both children played with these toys in gender-traditional ways. The doll she gave her son became *Kaptein Sabeltann*, and her daughter's trucks became a stroller¹⁰⁶ (103). Brodtkorb also put her son in ballet lessons with his sister, but she thinks the majority of his enjoyment during these lessons was because he was always allowed to play the scary, growling bear when the class played “Sleeping Bear”¹⁰⁷ (87). Even with her intervention, her children still fell into the typical, gendered patterns of play and dress¹⁰⁸ (87). But when giving advice on how to schedule and organize the home, she writes that she keeps a box full of toys to give as gifts for boys age 5-7, girls age 3-5 and 8-10, ages and genders that correspond to her own children¹⁰⁹ (167). Gendering toys in this way is undoubtedly a smart way to streamline the process of gift-giving. But I have to ask – what if a six-year-old girl invited her son to a party? Would a doll be an acceptable gift to a tomboy? What about personal hobbies or interests? This would undoubtedly put a wrench in the streamlining process.

Lysbakken sees the rigid demarcation of gender in toy stores. He writes of shopping for gifts for his children and is overwhelmed by the stark contrast between the toys. He compares the boys' “cars, samurai swords, and bazookas with the girls' dolls and ponies – all in pink¹¹⁰ (73). He sees this segregation as “a result of social indoctrination”¹¹¹ (71). While he does not go into the same theoretical argument as Brodtkorb, he does recognize that the strict gendering of children's' toys has social implications.

¹⁰⁶ “Men dukken til min sønn ble rask malt som kaptein Sabeltann og fikk en kappe på, og lastebilen som min minste datter har fått, blir brukt som en slags barnevogn for hennes minste dukke.” (103)

¹⁰⁷ “Jeg er en av de mammaene som har forsøkt å ha gutten min på samme ballettimer som min eldste datter begynte på da hun var to år. Han fant seg godt til rette, men det var fordi han alltid fikk være den skremmende bjørnen da de lekte 'bjørnen sover'. Han elsket å rope *whaw!* mot de små søte jentene kledd i rosa.” (87)

¹⁰⁸ “Likevel merker jeg spesielt på min yngste datter at hun hver dag når hun kommer hjem og får av seg de praktiske mørkeblå ullklærne, løper ned i skapet og henter en kjole.” (87)

¹⁰⁹ “Ha en gaveskuff både til barnebursdager og 'gi bort'-gaver. Jeg har en skuff der jeg har gaver til gutt 5-7 år, jente 3-5 år og jente 8-10 år. Da har jeg klar gaver og bursdagskort når mine barn blir bedt bort i bursdag.” (167)

¹¹⁰ “På jakt etter gaver til Leon blir jeg sluset inn i den delen av lekebutikken som er preget av kamuflasjefarger. Den tilbyr meg bil, samuraisverd og bazooka. Etter hvert som Aurora blir større, skal jeg også bevege meg over til den andre avdelingen. Der er butikkyllene, alle som en, i ulike sjatteringer av rosa. De vil selge dukker med pene ben, eller ponnier med langt, blondt hår.” (73)

¹¹¹ “Når lekebutikkene selger våpen til gutter og dukker til jenter, er det ikke sikkert det bare er et resultat av sosial indoktrinering.” (71)

Like Brodtkorb, he is also critical of the stereotyping of interests, but he is not very worried about trying to change every detail. He begins by writing of how “feminist families” have tried, and failed, to get their children to be gender neutral in play activities and toys¹¹² (71). So while there is a social structure in place, he does not exclude the possibility of inherent traits. But breaking the social structure is not a priority, as he does not see it as preventing women from becoming individuals. He writes,

“Gender role expectations in toys and children's films from Hollywood assist in telling children a powerful story about the kind of place they have in society. Likewise, it is not pink dresses and tiaras that will prevent Aurora and other girls of her generation to be strong women who demand equal pay and equal power in Norway. She will be allowed to be a princess if she wants to be one¹¹³” (73).

Lysbakken wants the debate on gender equality to “focus on the large differences, not the small. The most important thing is that power, rights, and responsibilities are equally distributed¹¹⁴” (73).

Both authors write about children's toys and activities in a critical way, acknowledging the significant role society has in reproducing gender roles. Children are directed toward certain toys and activities, which in turn develop certain social skills over others. For example, Chodorow explains this as girls learn how to become mothers through playing with dolls over cars. Both Brodtkorb and Lysbakken encourage families to think outside of the gendered boxes when it comes to children's' toys and activities. However, both authors do not prioritize this. Brodtkorb sees that, even after her own intervention, boys will be boys and girls will be girls. And Lysbakken doesn't see princesses as “the enemies” when it comes to gender equality, but a social structure that discourages women from seeking and enjoying their rights. This shows both authors placing an emphasis on individual parental autonomy in determining which toys and activities children play with, and while they are critical about the implications, parents and children are still free to choose.

¹¹² “Det er veldig mange eksempler på feministiske familier som har prøvd å få sønnene til å trille dukkevogn, og døtre til å like lekebiler, med svært dårlige resultater.” (71)

¹¹³ “Kjønnsrollemønsteret i leketøy og barnefilmer fra Hollywood bidrar dessuten til å fortelle barn en kraftfull historie om hva slags plass de har i samfunnet. Likevel er det ikke rosa kjoler og prinsessekroner som kommer til å hindre Aurora og andre jenter av hennes generasjon i å bli tøffe damer som krever halve inntekten og halve makten i Norge. Hun skal få lov til å være prinsesse hvis hun vil det.” (73)

¹¹⁴ “Jeg tror vi gjør det klokt å la likestillingsdebatten handle om de store forskjellene, ikke de små. Det viktigste er at makten, rettighetene og pliktene er jevnt fordelt.” (73)

5.2.3 Section Summary

In the end, the authors view gender as constructed both by social and biological forces and having permeated every aspect of childhood. Both authors have dressed and played with their children in untraditional ways, but the stereotypical gender markers of “boy” and “girl” still manifests themselves. While they see children's clothing and toys as reproducing rigid gender roles and possibly leading to negative gender role development in adults, this does not rate high enough on their agendas to be included in their political platforms. Instead, looking at the gendering of childhood provides a way of looking at the development of adult gender roles. In the next section, these roles, specifically the roles of mothers and fathers in care work, are explored and in later chapters, politicized.

5.3 Gender roles in adulthood

Given the authors' problematization of the social construction of gender in childhood, it follows that they would also see a problem in the consequences and further development of it. Both authors write about the mother's role and the father's role as workers and as parents, while also framing them within a historical context of previous generations' gendered expectations. In this section I will discuss both authors' problematization of parents' roles as caregivers and workers will be discussed.

5.3.1 The mother's role

In this section I will discuss both authors present their perspective of what the role of mother entails. Through telling of the social expectations, they look at the influence of gender roles on gender inequality as well as symbolic implications both for the fathers' role.

Brodtkorb looks at the role of the mother not in what mothers' daily tasks should be, but the role in which society expects her to fulfill. To her, the aftermath of the fashionable-ness of the housewife role results in today's idealization of the woman-who-can-do-it-all – being able to cook, clean, take care of children –all while maintaining a full-time career. She frames her understanding of women's roles as mothers through a game her children play that models the nuclear family. When they play “mommy, daddy, and baby,” she notices that the one playing

“mommy” is the one in charge, “the two others are really just sidekicks¹¹⁵” (88). She interprets this, writing “the mother's role has always been very attractive, and not just for roleplaying, but because mother is such a central person in one's life. Throughout childhood there is only one role with true influence: mother¹¹⁶” (88). The role of mother is not only attractive to girls because of the opportunity to have power, but through the reproduction of mothering, knowledge and confidence in parenting become intertwined with the female identity. After telling a story about the different ways mothers and fathers handle their children, she asks how it is that a parent knows when to put a hat on, or when to take it off¹¹⁷ (93). “Under what temperature, UV- and radiation levels should we use a hat? We women simply *know* when (her emphasis)¹¹⁸” (93). Brodtkorb looks at the learned role of mother through looking at her access to power and control. In including the statement about knowing when to put a hat on, she blurs the lines between the innate and learned aspects of motherhood.

In addition to mothers being prized, mothers are also expected to sacrifice their time and careers to their family. Their husbands, on the other hand, are encouraged to focus on their careers. A mother who wants to focus on her career is labeled as a traitor to her family by others. In writing of her experience in combining her work and family, she tells of being asked why she worked at all when her husband could financially support her (37). One person calls her egoistic for working when she has the opportunity to focus on giving her children “the best start” in life¹¹⁹ (37). Brodtkorb enjoys working, having mentioned that she was satisfied after taking six months of leave before returning to work and employing a nanny or taking her baby to work with her^{120 121} (33; 30). While Brodtkorb sees herself as a fully

¹¹⁵ “Det merkelig med leken er at det er én rolle som overskygger de andre: mor. De to andre er egentlig bare statister.” (88)

¹¹⁶ “Mammarollen har alltid vært svært attraktiv, og da ikke bare for leken, men fordi mor er en så sentral person i ens liv. I barneoppdragelsen finnes det bare en eneste rolle med virkelig innflytelse: mor. Far har i hele industrialismens epoke vært fraværende.” (88)

¹¹⁷ “Som regel holder fedre da barnet slik at ansiktet vender utover. Jeg har lurt på om det kommer av at menn fremdeles ser det som sin oppgave at de skal vise barna verden. Mammaen går ved siden av. Når solen er sterk, skal små barn ha en liten lue på hodet. Det merkelige er at det er hun som setter på og tar av luen. Men tenk etter: Hvordan vet man egentlig når luen skal på og av?” (93)

¹¹⁸ “Ved hvilken temperatur, UV-stråling og strålingsvarme endres lueforholdene? Vi kvinner bare *vet* det.” [her emphasis] (93)

¹¹⁹ “Eller: 'Så egoistisk av det å jobbe, du som har mulighet til kun å ta deg av barna og gi dem den beste starten.’” (37)

¹²⁰ “Jeg var en av dem som syntes det var deilig å begynne å jobbe igjen etter seks måneders permisjon, selv om det betød at jeg pumpet melk som ble levert til barnevakten hjemme.” (33)

capable and good mother, these comments showed her that not only are traditional gender roles alive and well, but that “the picture of the good mother is still portrayed as a woman who devotes all of her time to her family¹²²” (37). In refuting the ideal of the sacrificial mother, it seems Brodtkorb aims to comfort mothers who may feel selfish or incapable of balance because they enjoy their work.

It may be fairly obvious, but writing about mothers' roles in parenting is not a main focus for Lysbakken. Instead, his role as a father is looked at through the mother's role and societal expectations of her care work.

In his view, mothers are perceived by society as the natural caregiver¹²³ (22). Mothers are expected to have the main responsibility because she is the one who births and breastfeeds the baby. But due to her presence in the early months, the mother becomes the one associated with control¹²⁴ (48). He provides a story of taking Aurora to a well-baby checkup for the first time, a time to ask questions and check on the development of his daughter. When he makes a mess of his daughter's clothes when undressing her, the nurse says, “Mothers have more control over that¹²⁵” (84). When he asks whether Aurora has cradle cap or eczema on her head, the nurse says, “it's because their mothers don't bother washing them well enough on the soft spot of the head¹²⁶” (84). But rather than showing hurt feelings, he makes a joke. He writes, “if fathers have ever washed a baby's head, we will never know¹²⁷” (84). But it is clear to him that when it comes to caring for babies, mothers are regarded as the primary caregiver, father is an “exception¹²⁸” (84).

¹²¹ “Jeg kommer meg likevel fra Bærum sykehus til styremøte på dag fem med babyen i en bag.” (30)

¹²² “Uttalelsen viser at gamle kjønnsrollemønstre eksisterer, og at bildet av den gode mor fremdeles gjerne forbindes med henne som vier all sin tid til familien.” (37)

¹²³ “I vårt samfunn er det fortsatt nesten automatikk i at mor har en 'naturlig' hovedomsorg for barn.” (22)

¹²⁴ “Permisjonen bryter mønsteret som umerkelig legges i de fleste familier når et barn blir født – mor har hovedansvaret fordi det er hun som er der, hun som har oversikt og kontroll.” (48)

¹²⁵ “Mødrene har mer kontroll på det.” (84)

¹²⁶ “Mødrene deres ikke tør å vaske dem bestemt nok på den bløte delen av hodet.” (84)

¹²⁷ “Om fedre noen gang vasker babyhoder vites ikke.” (84)

¹²⁸ “Her er det tydeligvis mor som er regelen og far som er unntaket.” (84)

The exception is also felt in his attempts to socialize during his leave. Mothers are “well organized” in their socialization – filling the streets and cafes with strollers, and meeting in groups¹²⁹ (85). Men, on the other hand, are nowhere near as structured in their attempts for socialization during leave¹³⁰ (85). Lysbakken is very thankful to have a colleague on paternal leave at the same time, Knut Storberget from AP and his daughter, Ingrid. They spend most of their conversations jokingly debating the future political alliances of their daughters, but not about fatherhood or care work.

Both Brodtkorb and Lysbakken view the mother's role as one with high social expectations. Mothers are idealized as more competent caregivers, and this in turn gives them more social power as the primary care giver. Brodtkorb also discusses how the mother's role is also reproduced politically, creating a type of standardization in terms of care roles. Additionally, women's sacrificing their careers for their family creates a problem not only for the gendered relations between parents, but also perpetuates the 1950s housewife ideal and prevents women from being seen as equal to men. This problem is further discussed in the next section, by showing how the overemphasis of women's caregiving becomes detrimental to men's opportunities to be caregivers.

5.3.2 The father's role

After writing about the mother's role, it follows to write about the roles of fathers as well. Here, the authors present their interpretations of what it means to be a father today.

The first aspect of the father's role is recognizing the difference between the roles. The connection between the social and the biological is relevant to Brodtkorb. She writes, “Daddy is not the same as mommy. Daddy doesn't breastfeed the baby, daddy doesn't deliver it. A girl uses large portions of her childhood in training for her role as mother. At risk of over-exaggeration, I will say that boys do not train themselves at all in the role of a father¹³¹” (95). Likewise, a father has a special role to fulfill that a mother cannot, that of being a role model

¹²⁹ “Mødre er godt organisert når de har permisjon og møtes i barselgrupper og til massemønstringer med barnevogn som skviser alle andre ut av fortauene, og fyller kafeene i områder hvor befolkningen er ung og fruktbarheten høy.” (85)

¹³⁰ “Vi menn er mer som ensomme ryttere når vi er på trilletur. Selv om pappagruppene blir flere, har vi litt å gå på når det gjelder å bygge mannsfellesskap.” (85)

¹³¹ “Pappa er ikke det samme som mamma. Pappa ammer ikke barnet, pappa bærer det ikke frem. En jente bruker store deler av sin oppvekt på å trene seg til morsrollen. Med fare for å overdrive vil jeg påstå at gutter derimot overhodet ikke trener på farsrollen.” (95)

for sons. In asking her son what the difference is between boys and girls, he answers, “to be a boy is to not be a girl¹³²” (82). In his straightforward statement, Brodtkorb did not see that acknowledgement of gender differences were already widespread among five-year-olds, but that the obvious differences between men and women necessitated appropriate role models for boys and girls. She writes, “The answer my son gave shows how important it is that boys have a corresponding person to look up to. As a mother I can never be a role model for my son. I can be his inspiration, but not according to his role. He will never be mommy but maybe a daddy¹³³” (82).

The role of the father is to inspire his sons, to show him what masculinity is, and most importantly, how to be a father. The biological differences are important and must be recognized, but only in combination with the social. Traditional forms of masculinity, for example wanting a quiet home and watching sports are still prevalent in many homes, but there are of course individual nuances, but one criteria not as nuanced is that of being a financial provider¹³⁴ (89). Being a good provider is still central to men's role at home, although sharing in housework and childcare is becoming more prevalent. “Norwegian men participate in their children's lives in a way that was completely unthinkable to my grandfather” she writes, and it's quickly becoming the norm for fathers to be closer and more involved¹³⁵ (92). But how do fathers become more involved in a society that still considers the mother the primary caregiver?

Lysbakken does not look at the father's role model aspect, but instead focuses on the desire of fathers to be more active caregivers. He writes, “Norway is in the middle of a basic social change: Father has come home. There are more and more of us, and we will be at home longer and longer ... Many men had previously dreamed about skiing over the ice of Greenland, but now more and more push strollers through the Oslo neighborhood of

¹³² “Å være gutt er å ikke være jente,” svarte femåringen enkelt.” (82)

¹³³ “Svaret til min sønn på hva en gutt er, viser hvor viktig det er at gutter har en tilsvarende person å se opp til. Som mor kan jeg aldri bli noen rollemodell for sønnen min. Jeg kan være hans forbilde, men ikke som rolle. Han skal aldri bli mamma, men kanskje pappa.” (82)

¹³⁴ “Den gang var det viktig for hele familiens livsgrunnlag at mannen fikk ro og fred når han kom hjem. Er det noe menn har overført til sine sønner, noe de har vært tydelig på, så er det søken etter to i hjemmet. Hvetebakst og kaffe servert til sportsnyhetene er mandigheten i mange hjem.” (89)

¹³⁵ “Norske menn deltar i sine barns liv på en måte som var fullstendig utenkelig for min bestefar.” (92)

Greenland¹³⁶ (8). Much of his discussion about the modern role of the father is indirect. He writes about his daily activities with his daughter, about how he adapts to the role of primary caregiver. He writes in a positive way, providing encouragement to male readers.

One dimension that Lysbakken mentions is men's selection of housekeeping roles. He writes that more and more men are participating through taking responsibility for cooking meals. While on the surface this may seem to be simply selecting a role, Lysbakken sees a power structure in place. He writes, "Could others possibly think that we have picked the most prestigious activity when we first start to take responsibility at home? Guests always praise the dinner, but very few notice that the floors have been washed¹³⁷" (72). While it is possible label this statement as comedic effect, it seems he is serious because he lets the statement stand without a subsequent clarification. Another dimension is that he previously wrote of his father washing floors. He contrasts the mundane necessity of floor washing with the glamour of vocal praise for the dinner. Providing the real life application of a male completing the task further brings home his encouragement for men to take an additional step outside of their comfort zones of traditional masculinity.

Although they emphasize different aspects of the father's role, both authors agree that the problem with their role is one that prevents them from being seen as competent caregivers. Brodtkorb writes of the expectations of a father: to not only provide financially for their children, but teach their sons how to be men. Interestingly, she does not write of the father's role in relation to daughters. Additionally, she sees fathers as still being distant, albeit much less so than fifty years ago. This is not the same perspective as Lysbakken, as he sees fathers as wanting to take a larger role, but not always going about it in the best way.

5.4 Chapter summary

In this chapter, Brodtkorb and Lysbakken are shown to agree that the maintenance of rigid gender roles is a significant barrier to gender equality in Norway. Because gender roles are

¹³⁶ "Norge står midt i en grunnleggende sosial forandring: Pappa har kommet hjem. Vi blir stadig flere, og vil bli værende stadig lengre. Før var norske menns drøm gjerne å gå på ski over Grønlandsisen. Nå triller langt flere av oss barnevogn nedover Grønland i Oslo." (8)

¹³⁷ "Nå dyrker stadig flere menn en lidenskap for matlaging. En kan kanskje mistenke oss for å ha plukket den mest prestisjetunge oppgaven når vi først skulle begynne å ta ansvar i hjemmet? Gjeste skryter gjerne av middagen, det er sjelden noen bemerker at gulvene er rene." (72)

learned during one's early years, it can be difficult to recognize the ways in which we are taught to act out our genders as adults. Women and men are not on equal ground at work through their careers or at home in their care work. This is significant, because although the average citizen may notice this imbalance of power in both arenas, many accept them as "just the way things are." Additionally, this problem is not completely political. Although gender roles have political applications, they are not in and of themselves as political as legislation, for example. In the next chapter I will show Brodtkorb and Lysbakken's plan to modify the mother's and father's roles in order to create more gender equal families and societies.

6 What are their Goals?

After the problem is identified, the next step is to come up with a solution. In this chapter, I will first present the topics of the equal division of labor, empowerment, and individuality as the authors' solutions for the problem of gender roles and how they will solve these questions politically. After, I discuss how the authors gain support for their messages through addressing their critics, providing their political platform, and the ways they relate to their audience.

6.1 Equal division of labor

Brodtkorb and Lysbakken do not stop at discussing the roles of mothers and fathers. Both authors take the discussion a step further by indicating how these roles can be adapted to increase gender equality in not only the family, but also in Norway. This is through dividing responsibilities equally at home and at work, and advocating the use of assistance when needed.

6.1.1 At home and at work

To foster an equal relationship and society, Brodtkorb calls on women to give up some of their power and preoccupation at home to have time to both focus on their career and allow their husbands to be more active participants. This statement is expressed in three different ways:

“It is time that mothers who will go out must allow fathers to come home. If you want a career and a demanding job, your husband must be allowed to make more decisions at home; otherwise the family unit will dissolve¹³⁸” (97).

“Truly, if father will thrive at home, and mother will have a career outside of the home, the father must fulfill some of his need for power at home. I believe this because the word 'manly' historically goes together with power, with influence, and being a winner¹³⁹” (104).

¹³⁸ “Det er på tide at mammaer som vil ut, må la far komme hjem. Ønsker du karriere og en krevende jobb, må mannen din få bestemme mer hjemme, ellers vil familien som enhet etter en stund oppløses.” (97)

¹³⁹ “Jo, skal far trives hjemme, og skal mor kunne gå ut i karrierejobb, må mannen få sin maktkompetanse hjemme. Det mener jeg fordi ordet mandig historisk henger sammen med makt, med muligheten til å påvirke et utfall og å være en vinner.” (104)

“I believe that much of the battle for gender equality today hinges on that we women must give men more power at home. If we still firmly hold onto all of the power and knowledge about the home and children, we cannot expect gender equality in the outside world. If mom wants out, dad must come home – for real¹⁴⁰” (81).

The repetition of this statement in three ways shows how important it is to her. In each statement, she provides a different rationale behind her argument. In the first, it is to tell women that they are allowed to focus on their careers. In the second, she tells men that being at home can be equally fulfilling as working. In the third, she shows that women and men need to do this in order to achieve gender equality.

It may be difficult for some mothers to relinquish some of their power, but through her encouragement, Brodtkorb believes that men will happily pick up the slack. She writes, “Father has willingly come home, but he is there under the strict regime of rules that mother has established¹⁴¹” (93). The differences she notices between parents in terms of parenting and child awareness will diminish once fathers are given permission to be more involved, and start to care about what happens at the micro-level. “Proper fathers” are willing to do laundry, “thank Aunt Anna for the wonderful outfit, and wisely keep hidden that they already have three of the same. (...) A proper father cares about the details¹⁴²” (99). Currently, the amount of control both parents have is uneven, but once fathers begin to care about the details, she believes the balance of power will start to regulate^{143 144}(92; 94). With the added desire to be involved, the role of the father must receive a new meaning and importance. She brings back the game of “mommy, daddy, baby,” writing that the father's role must become equally attractive as the mothers. But this necessitates that mothers are able to completely trust and depend on the fathers to become fully invested. Until it becomes equally natural for fathers to decide how to organize the baby's clothing or decide that the baby will wear,

¹⁴⁰ “Jeg mener at mye av likestillingskampen i dag dreier seg om at vi kvinner må gi menn mer makt hjemme. Om vi fremdeles tviholder på makten og kunnskapen om hjem og barn, kan vi ikke vente oss likestilling der ute. Skal mor ut, må far få komme hjem – på ordentlig.” (81)

¹⁴¹ “Far har gjerne kommet hjem, men han er under et strengt regime av regler, som mor gjerne har satt opp.” (93)

¹⁴² “En ordentlig pappa skiller på bomull og syntetiske stoffer, og setter to like sokker på barneføttene. En ordentlig pappa takker tante Anna for den fine sparkedrakten, og skjuler behendig at de allerede har tre av den samme. De som oppdrar barn, tar del i både de store og små beslutningene. En ordentlig pappa bryr seg om detaljene.” (99)

¹⁴³ “Far har gjerne kommet hjem, men han er der under et strengt regime av regler, som mor gjerne har satt opp.” (92)

¹⁴⁴ “De aller fleste kvinner jeg snakker med, bekrefter at det er de som har bestemt hvem som skal være hjemme med barnet, og hvor lenge.” (94)

mothers will continue to have difficulty in giving up some of their domination of the home and children¹⁴⁵ (94).

In framing his plan for equality, Lysbakken begins by showing the equality of his own parents' relationship. He writes,

“Mother and father shared the housework. My mother washed clothes while father washed floors. When my grandmother came for a visit to Bergen, she was shocked about being invited to a cafe with her daughter on a Saturday afternoon while her son-in-law mopped up¹⁴⁶” (17).

Providing this background shows that the push for equality isn't a product of recent years, but has been present for quite some time. His father's participation begins his ultimate message through showing it in action.

Lysbakken's plan for fostering increased equality is through the father's quota. In writing of the success of other father quotas in Sweden and Iceland, Lysbakken shows how it has helped their societies. While Norwegian fathers complete 15% of parental leave on average, Icelandic men complete 34%¹⁴⁷ (27). In addition, Iceland's minister for gender equality sees their three part leave as contributing to a decrease in divorces, keeping both parents available to their children at all times¹⁴⁸ (28). Lysbakken also cites a 2010 questionnaire that showed that for every month a father took of leave, the mother's future pay would rise by 7%¹⁴⁹ (50). The father's quota as not only encouraging fathers to spend more time with their children, but also allows women to return to work at an earlier date, earn more money and keep the family together. Men and women taking an equal share at home will also reduce the prevalence of part time employment, discrimination against women based on their gender in employment will also reduce, and "the expectation for absence will include all parents of young children,

¹⁴⁵ “Det må være like naturlig at far bestemmer hvordan sparkebuksene organiseres, at far bestemmer hvilken overtrekksdress Lone skal ha i barnehagen. Hvis ikke, kan ikke mor forvente at far tar et like stort ansvar for å vite hva som må kjøpes inn av mat, lage middagslister og sjekke om det er tomt for bleier i barnehagen.” (94)

¹⁴⁶ “Mor og far delte på oppgavene hjemme. Min mor vasket klær, mens far vasket huset. Når mormor kom på bytur til Bergen, ble hun lettere sjokkert over å bli invitert på kafé av sin datter lørdag formiddag, mens svigersønnen svingte moppen hjemme.” (17)

¹⁴⁷ “Mens norske fedre i 2010 tok ut 15 prosent av permisjonen, var tallet på Island året for 34 prosent.” (27)

¹⁴⁸ “Mine islandske kolleger mener ordningen fører til færre skilsmisser.” (28)

¹⁴⁹ “En undersøkelse gjort i 2010 viser at for hver måned far tar permisjon, øker mors framtidige lønn med om lag syv prosent.” (50)

even if biology adds that women generally will have more¹⁵⁰” (49). So, not only will the father's quota make the citizen worker more gender neutral in their expected absences, but the father's quota can also lead to fathers taking more responsibility at home. He writes that having been the primary caretaker for both house and child is “the most effective way to come out of the role of assistant¹⁵¹” (48). The assignment of leader/assistant roles continues even after leave is over. Through the father's quota, the leader/assistant dichotomy is broken, and a more gender equal family emerges (48).

The father's quota is one step toward gender equality that is viewed as necessary to Lysbakken. Without a legal protection of a father's rights and desires, without a system that views both parents as having equal responsibilities in duration of care work, and without encouraging employers to view male and female applicants as having equal responsibilities, gender equality will stagnate (78).

Sharing work and care responsibilities equally promotes gender equality in many ways. First, by mothers reducing their hold on care work, fathers can take care of their children without feeling like an assistant. Likewise, women will have an easier time to put an effort into their careers. Second, equally shared responsibilities neutralize the gender of the citizen worker. With both parents expected to have equal obligations at home, employment discrimination of women because of their potential for fertility. The necessity for temporary replacement workers will be equally high for male and female employees.

6.1.2 Outsourcing care

The final way gender equality can be helped is through getting help from others. Brodtkorb writes that both she and her mother utilized nannies during their children's early years^{152 153} (9; 33). Families that maybe don't have access to private assistants can still receive help through bringing their children to kindergartens. To have contact with other adults in a

¹⁵⁰ “Jo mer permisjon fedrene tar, desto mindre grunn har arbeidsgivere til å velge bort unge kvinner når nye ansatte skal rekrutteres. Så lenge kvinnelige arbeidstakere knyttes til en forventning om lange permisjonsfravær, vil det være fristende for sjefen å velge den mannlige søkeren. Etter hvert som fedre tar mer pappaperm, blir denne forskjellen mindre viktig. Forventningen om fravær vil gjelde alle småbarnsforeldre, selv om biologien tilsier av kvinner som regel vil ha mest.” (49)

¹⁵¹ “Det å ha ansvaret alene en tid er den mest effektive måten å komme ut av assistentrollen.” (48)

¹⁵² “Jeg kjørte drosje med praktikanten vår - til og fra amming på min mors kontor.” (9)

¹⁵³ “Jeg var en av dem som syntes det var deilig å begynne å jobbe igjen etter seks måneders permisjon, selv om det betød at jeg pumpet melk som ble levert til barnevakten hjemme.” (33)

caregiving role is a positive thing, as it fosters both emotional and academic skills¹⁵⁴ (89). She points to research that shows that children who attended kindergartens have better language skills than those who did not (90). So while her friends may have chided her for not staying at home with her children to give them “the best start”, Brodtkorb shows that kindergartens are beneficial not only for parents who must work, but also develop necessary skills for the children's futures.

Lysbakken's only mention the use of outside help in the raising of children occurs in his support of kindergartens. Not mentioning nannies or cleaning help could have a variety of interpretations. First, he could see these assistants as only being available for wealthier families. Secondly, he could believe that the parents should not outsource care work to others until it is necessary, i.e., when the parental leave period is over.

Outsourcing care work provides the opportunity for both parents to pursue careers while also having a family. This is, however, not a perfect platform, as finances vary enough in Norway to limit the opportunity for families to employ full-time assistants during the child's first year of life. Kindergartens, on the other hand, being a universal benefit in Norway, level this playing field.

6.1.3 Section summary

Here, both Brodtkorb and Lysbakken agree that the power dynamic between mothers and fathers is not equal. Mothers need to give up some of their control, or desire for control, and allow fathers to take charge. Likewise, fathers need to be willing to take on a more involved role and be responsible for mundane tasks. Lysbakken also adds the condition of the father's quota as a governmental protection and encouragement for fathers to become more active in their children's upbringing.

6.2 Empowerment

Both authors write significantly to members of their gender to empower them. This empowerment is gender-based, focusing on encouraging men and women to break from

¹⁵⁴ “Flere hevder at jo flere omsorgspersoner et barn har, jo bedre. Studier har også vist at barn som går i barnehage, klarer seg bedre enn de som ikke går i barnehage – bl.a. når det gjelder språkutviklingen. ... Å ha kontakt med andre voksenpersoner som gir omsorg, er positivt.” (89)

traditional gender roles. Brodtkorb writes about "girl power", while Lysbakken writes to men, encouraging them to be active fathers.

6.2.1 "Girl power"

As a young girl entering my teenage years in the mid-1990s, I was of course familiar with the Spice Girls' message of "girl power." This message said that girls are smart enough and strong enough to do anything they set their mind to. This same message echoes throughout Brodtkorb's storytelling many times in the way she presents her message and addresses her female audience. Through women's groups, female entrepreneurs and business women, and her own advice to obtain balance, Brodtkorb sees women as fully capable of managing their lives, their careers, and their families in positive and encouraging ways.

Brodtkorb begins this by looking toward historical women and groups, especially those connected to Høyre, in showing how conservative women were able to join together to foster change. She begins by telling of Høyre's long history of pioneering the effort for women's rights through voting (19), including electing the first female vice-representative in Parliament, Anna Rogstad (19). While Rogstad did not receive full support immediately in her wanting to change the tax code, she eventually gained a majority vote (20). She goes on to mention two other important women in Høyre, Claudia Olsen and Berte Rognerud, who worked for the kindergarten law and against joint taxation of spouses (25). Through these three women, Brodtkorb compares Høyre's female politicians with those from AP, saying that:

"AP's women have only taken up women's issues that have been approved by their party. Women from Høyre and other bourgeois women's organizations have generally gone ahead of their own parties in women's rights, and they have more often made known their opposition to their party's position¹⁵⁵" (25).

To Brodtkorb, for women to break from the norm, to think and act radically and outside of the way things have traditionally been done is considered normal on the bourgeois side. She continues this tradition by admitting that she has expressed herself radically, and will seemingly continue to do so (25). Women are able to create political change, and it helps to have an environment that supports pushing the boundaries.

¹⁵⁵ "Arbeiderkvinnene har bare tatt opp kvinnesaker som har vært godkjent av partiet. Høyrekvinnene og andre borgerlige kvinneorganisasjoner har som regel gått foran egne partier i kvinnespørsmål, og de har langt oftere tilkjennegitt sin opposisjon mot partistandpunktet." (25)

The next topic is women in business, especially entrepreneurs, through the ability and freedom of women to have demanding careers. Increasing the amount of women in leadership positions is important to Brodtkorb not only personally but also as leader for Høyre's Women's Forum. She brings up the topic of “the glass ceiling,” a metaphor used to describe the situation of women being promoted to middle management but not being able to make it into the top positions. She acknowledges its existence through male-centric work cultures that continue to exist. She writes, “if the majority of the clients are male, and the environment is characterized by a macho culture with harsh language, client tours to car races in Monaco and skiing in the alps with only male clients, it will take quite a bit longer before women thrive there and get top positions¹⁵⁶” (62). But she also believes that change will be best achieved from within. Because of the greater career opportunities in male-dominated branches, women should seek positions there and become role models for the future generations¹⁵⁷ (63). While there are still few women in their workplaces, women's professional networks and mentor programs can help encourage and further develop women's professional competencies in managing and opening up male-dominated workplaces¹⁵⁸ (63). The final example is about Høyre's direct involvement in this area. She writes that Høyre's Women's Forum's support for female entrepreneurs also helps low paid health care assistants in the long run through more women being qualified to be leaders in the health care industry¹⁵⁹ (13). To encourage female entrepreneurs is “girl power” in the way that they are encouraging women to pursue their dreams.

As we have seen, encouraging businesswomen is one of Brodtkorb's main interests, but it does not overshadow her love for her family. Brodtkorb uses the concept of “girl power” to show ways women can balance demanding careers with an involved family life. The first example that comes up is her mother: the dentist who fled from her hospital bed right after

¹⁵⁶ “Er de fleste kunder menn, og miljøet preges av en machokultur med røff språkbruk, kundeturer til billøp i Monaco og skiturer i alpene med kun mannlige kunder, skal det ekstra mye til før kvinner trives der og får toppstillinger.” (62)

¹⁵⁷ “Jeg håper at flere kvinner vil søke seg til mannsdominerte bransjer fordi det vil gi dem flere muligheter yrkesmessig, og det vil gi gode rolleforbilder for generasjonen etter oss.” (63)

¹⁵⁸ “Skal flere kvinner ønske å søke seg til mannsdominerte bransjer og bli der, tror jeg møtesteder og nettverk av typen Kvinner i Telecom og Female Future er nødvendige. Det gir kvinner en egen arena for utvikling, erfaringsutveksling og hyggelige sosiale fellesskap. Et annet viktig tiltak er at bedrifter i mannsdominerte bransjer sørger for gode mentorordninger, der kvinner i mellomlederstillinger kan få en erfaren støttespiller som kan gi råd og veiledning på veien opp karrierestigen.” (63)

¹⁵⁹ “Når Høyres Kvinneforum kjemper for kvinnelige gründere, så skader ikke det underbetalte kvinnelige hjelpepleiere. Tvert imot: Ved å styrke kvinnelige gründernes posisjon, blir også kvinnefellesskapet styrket ved at flere kvinner vil lede bedriftene der hjelpepleiere arbeider. Å kjempe for én sak, hindrer ikke at man også kjemper for en annen.” (13)

giving birth to buy a dental office. Her mother is her biggest role model, as she was able to balance her work and family life, while also managing to invite every one of her children's classmates to every birthday party¹⁶⁰ (10). She writes, “Dearest mom, it's not strange that I often feel that I fall short. But it is also you who have given me the faith that it is possible to get everything done, as long as you are focused on the solution and structured¹⁶¹” (10).

Maintaining a structure and keeping an eye on goals and priorities is how Brodtkorb is able to maintain the demanding life she has. She introduces the theme through the humorous story of her newborn daughter's bowel trouble during a board meeting (5.4.3), with the realization that sometimes not everything can be accomplished, but she eventually learned how to structure her life better¹⁶² (29). She then spends an entire chapter giving “Advice for women who will say YES!”, writing of the varying ways she organized her life through lists, schedules, and advanced preparation in order to help women create more order in their hectic lives.

Organization is a tool for increased “girl power” as it helps streamline the day into something more predictable and manageable, allowing women to maintain their careers and families without feeling guilty.

On the final page of her book, Brodtkorb shares the best piece of advice she had ever received: “There is nothing more wasteful than spending your energy by feeling sorry or offended because someone thought something, said something, or did something you didn't like¹⁶³” (174). This tip attributed to Erna Solberg is one Brodtkorb recommends women apply to both their public and personal lives. The final conclusion of her “girl power” message, after writing of women's power in government, business, and helping them to find balance, is to believe in oneself and not be afraid to go against the grain. Being mentally prepared is an important tool in a woman's ability to assert herself.

¹⁶⁰ “Hun var mammaen som aldri sa nei til å kjøre oss til svømming, langrenn, pianotimer, sang og speidermøter. Hun var mammaen som inviterte hele klassen min til hver bursdag. Ingen skulle utestenges.” (10)

¹⁶¹ “Kjære mamma, det er ikke rart jeg ofte føler at jeg kommer til kort. Det er likevel du som har gitt med troen på at det er mulig på å få til det meste, bare man er løsningsorientert og strukturert.” (10)

¹⁶² “Et barn endrer livet ved å flytte oppmerksomheten fra deg selv til en døgnåpen oppmerksomhet om sitt lille liv. Heldigvis vil jeg si – jeg fikk et mer strukturert liv og en ny mening med å leve.” (31)

¹⁶³ “Det er ingen ting som er så bortkastet som å bruke energi på å være lei seg eller fornærmet fordi noen har ment noe, sagt noe eller gjort noe du ikke likte.” (174)

6.2.2 Competent caregivers

In Lysbakken's case, many of his personal stories are about his individual time with his daughter. What is interesting is that many of the sections are about his small errors and difficulties in his care responsibilities, even comparing himself with his wife's abilities. But beyond the comedy of these stories, the use of these events as a theme provide a frame around one of his central messages – that fatherhood doesn't have to be perfect to be enjoyed.

Lysbakken was very upfront with his confusion and errors in being the primary caregiver for Aurora. While he does not use the term “trial and error,” he acknowledges a learning curve in meeting his daughter’s need. He dresses her incorrectly; putting her stockings on before fastening her bodysuit and coming up with color combinations his wife doesn’t approve of¹⁶⁴ (33; 66). He also learns to keep moist towelettes and newspapers out of Aurora’s reach, since she will gladly eat them and cry when they are taken away^{166 167 168} (34; 35; 7). He tries to amuse her with songs, but realized that his wife is the only one who knows baby songs, and sings songs about workers’ rights and the Brann football team instead¹⁶⁹ (35). He has difficulty juggling toys, clothes, and bottles when on airplanes and at doctor visits^{170 171} (65; 84). He also finds it near impossible to accomplish any personal projects, such as repairing

¹⁶⁴ “Riktignok kommer klærne iblant på vrangen, og første gang jeg kledde strømpebuksen utenpå buksen (det er faktisk fort gjort med babyklær!), var det lattermild overraskelse i mammas øyne. Tredje gang så jeg bare vantro.” (33)

¹⁶⁵ “Mamma er riktignok litt misfornøyd med fars blikk or fargekombinasjoner. Så hvis vi skal vise oss for andre mennesker, legger hun diskret fram et passende babyantrekk før hun går på jobb.” (66)

¹⁶⁶ “Auroras favorittleke er ingen av ranglene eller bamsene som er innkjøpt i store mengder av ivrige slektninger og venner. De to morsomste tingene hun vet, er aviser og våtservietter. ... En kveld har hun nettopp badet i den blå plastbaljen sin, og vi har tatt på ren pyjamas. Jeg skal bare en rask tur inn på soverommet for å hente noen sokker. Når jeg kommer tilbake, ligger hun der og er i full gang med å forsyne seg av engangsklutene.” (34)

¹⁶⁷ “De som trodde papiravisene ikke har en framtid hos en oppvoksende slekt, har ikke møtt min dater. Før den ble evakuert utenfor rekkevidde for små barnehender, hadde vi oppsamling av leste aviser i en gammel brødkurv på gulvet. Så snart hun får sjansen, er Aurora over avisene som et rovdyr, river dem i stykker og putter passende flak med Bergens Tidene i munnen. Hun liker til og med VG. Et uoppmerksomt øyeblikk, så finer jeg barnet mitt med sitt brede tannløse glis, gulpende på papir og med trykksverte i hele fjeset.” (35)

¹⁶⁸ “Hun spiste opp aviser og gjorde fanteri hvis hun ikke fikk det.” (7)

¹⁶⁹ “Siv kan mange barnesanger. Jeg kan ingen. Jeg er veldig dårlig il å huske sangtekster. De få jeg husker, synger jeg for Aurora om kvelden. En salig blanding av Brann- og arbeider sanger. Det går Ove Thues ‘Vi går frem’, via ‘Vi som intet eier’ av Rudolf Nilsen.” (35)

¹⁷⁰ “Litt svett leter jeg meg fram til min plass på flyet som om få minutter skal ta oss til landets vakreste by. ... Damen fra SAS underholder Aurora mens jeg får alle tingene våre opp i bagasjeboksen og leter fram det essensielle for en vellykket flytur: tåteflaske, smokk og en rød rangle med hvite prikker.” (65)

¹⁷¹ “På vei inn på et kontor et sted i vårt utmerkede helsevesen har jeg litt for mye å bære på. Jeg virker nok ikke så rutinert der jeg kommer med Aurora i bare bleien og en haug med både hennes og mine klær som er altfor stor for meg å bære. Jeg skulle vel skjont at jeg måtte kle av ungen og latt klærne ligge igjen på gangen.” (84)

doors or sending an email to the SV office, not to mention getting used to a radically different sleep cycle^{172 173} (7; 83). There is a palpable feeling of exhaustion behind these stories

Yet beyond these difficulties and mistakes, Lysbakken writes a story of achievement. The theme of fumbling doesn't simply sit as it is, but evolves into a message as well. The message is that fatherhood doesn't have to be perfect to be sufficient and enjoyable. He connects his difficult stories with realizations and new skill achievements. While he may not be stylistically inclined or dress Aurora properly, he learns that the only important requirement is that she stays warm during the winter^{174 175} (33; 66). He gets accustomed to being "the boss," and keeping track of Aurora's things, needs, and schedule¹⁷⁶ (33). He writes that he now no longer asks his wife "what Aurora should eat, when she should sleep, if she needs a bath, what she should wear. I know her needs, her rhythms, and her desires¹⁷⁷" (83). He learns how to balance the demands of housekeeping, food preparation, and playing with his daughter¹⁷⁸ (83). He comes to find humor in the frustrating moments, eventually filming Aurora managing to reach the far away moist towelettes and sending the clip full of laughter to his wife¹⁷⁹ (34). Confidence in one's ability to care doesn't come overnight, but Lysbakken ends this theme with a story that seems to make every sleepless night and every difficult situation worthwhile. While out one evening, he hears from his wife that Aurora has

¹⁷² "Aurora likte seg best når hun fikk oppmerksomhet. Aurora gadd ikke sove til faste tider, bare fordi pappa skulle fikse døren på loftet eller sende en e-post til partikontoret." (7)

¹⁷³ "Den totale trøttheten du kjenner på når du må stå opp altfor tidlig med et lite barn som akkurat da har sitt aller mest energiske øyeblikk på hele døgnet." (83)

¹⁷⁴ "Men verken Aurora eller jeg tar det så tungt, så lenge hun ikke fryser. Og slik er det, vi gjør ikke alt helt likt." (33).

¹⁷⁵ "Verken jeg eller Aurora er så fryktelig opptatt av hva slags klær hun har på seg. Vi er begge fornøyd så lenge hun ikke fryser." (66)

¹⁷⁶ "Etter bare noen få dager merket endringen i familien vår. Jeg har gått fra å være assistent til å være sjef. Det gjelder i de store tingene: Jeg skjønner like godt hva Aurora har behov for som mamma gjør, jeg er der med henne første gang hun ler og første gang hun klarer å kravle seg framover på gulvet. Og i de små: Jeg er en racer med tåteflasker og smokk, jeg har bleieavtale på Kiwi og jeg vet sånn noenlunde hvor i klesskapet strømpebukser og luer finner seg." (33)

¹⁷⁷ "Jeg spør ikke lenger Siv om hva Aurora skal spise, når hun skal sove, om hun skal bade, hva hun skal ha på seg. Jeg kjenner behovene hennes, rytmen og ønskene hennes." (83)

¹⁷⁸ "Vi danser. Aurora ler hver gang jeg setter på en bestemt låt med den svenske visesangeren Melissa Horn om tapt kjærlighet. Og vi prøver å ha middagen klar til Siv og Leon kommer hjem, baker rundstykker og vasker hus. Alt gjør vi sammen, mens pappa vasker, øver Aurora seg på å krabbe. Vi snakker sammen, og den lille holder små foredrag på plundrespråket sitt." (83)

¹⁷⁹ "Vi tar fra henne pakken og legger den på andre siden av rommet. Hun ser bestemt opp og skyver fra med de små armene. Hun kravler framover! Vi filmer og sender til mamma, roper og ler." (34)

said her first word, “pappa”¹⁸⁰ (124). While he admits to using some kind of trickery in trying to teach her the word, he uses this story to show that a father has an equal worth as a parent and caregiver, that children need both parents to participate, and a good relationship between the parents will make a happier home.

In writing of his difficulties, errors, and failures as a new father, Lysbakken reaches out to men and encourages them to take a larger care role anyway. Color-coordinating outfits, being organized, and not letting your child eat newspapers are good qualities for a caregiver to have, but lacking in those areas does not mean that the caregiver loves and enjoys their child any less. Active fatherhood is worth experiencing, and by showing the rewards of his involvement, the male reader should feel inspired to spend more time with their children.

6.3 Individuality, autonomy, and flexible services

“The A4 person” is someone who fits into an idealized version of what being a person entails. Services and programs are targeted to certain people over others, and this conceptualization can mean standardizing the qualifications to an extent that the specific ideal person becomes a larger, social ideal. Yet both Brodtkorb and Lysbakken insist that the A4 person does not really exist. In this section I will explore how Brodtkorb and Lysbakken emphasize the freedom of the individual, and that the individual needs of the family need to be met with flexibility from the state.

6.3.1 The A4 person

Brodtkorb looks to the continued existence of liberal-conservative political parties as proof that A4 people do not exist, since the “people want politicians [who recognize] that individuals are different¹⁸¹” (12). Additionally, remembering that all individuals are different must be a priority in forming politics. She writes that “an A4 life that works for everyone” does not exist. “We politicians must remember this when we develop our gender equality and

¹⁸⁰ “Jeg var ute den kvelden Aurora sa sitt første ord. Det var Siv som hørte det, så hun kunne latt det hele forbigå i stillhet. Og de skal sies at siden hun snakket til mamma, og jeg hadde tatt i bruk et og annet triks i opplæringen, var meningen noe uklar. Men hun sa det. En kveld i februar, i god tid før permisjonen var over. 'Pappa!'” (124)

¹⁸¹ “Jeg tror at grunnen til at partiene har overlevd, er at folk ønsker politikere som ser at individer er forskjellige, og at det ikke finnes et statlig A4-menneske.” (12)

family politics¹⁸²” (173). These statements, combined with her definitions of bourgeois feminism, make the individual the center of Brodtkorb's message. Without the recognition of individuality, she sees no freedom.

However, while Brodtkorb's messages seem framed in a way that accuses leftist parties of forgetting individuality, Lysbakken also recognizes the need to remember that A4 people are not the norm, writing that the traditional nuclear family is not the only type present. “Very many children grow up with single parents, and nearly half of the population of Oslo is single. There are also many who have families like ours, with a “bonus child” who has two homes and two sets of parents¹⁸³” (119). Lysbakken's mention of these families, in conjunction with allowing three-part leave to be shared how parents wish, shows a recognition of individuality in family structure.

Because the A4 person does not exist, both Brodtkorb and Lysbakken advocate flexible solutions that can accommodate everyone^{184 185} (12; 124). In showing the commonality of atypical family types and needs, the authors bring individuality to the forefront. They agree that there is no A4 person, but one criterion is still required when it comes to Brodtkorb and Lysbakken's writing about families: they are married, Norwegian, and heterosexual pairings of a man and woman with biological children. This is discussed further in chapter eight.

6.3.2 The importance of family autonomy

It goes without saying that both Brodtkorb and Lysbakken love their families, and the importance of the family is a central message. This is expressed in different ways, with Brodtkorb protecting personal autonomy within the family and Lysbakken indicating the family as a powerful actor for social change.

¹⁸² “Det finnes ikke et A4-liv som passer for alle. Det må vi politikere huske når vi utforme likestillings- og familiepolitikken.” (173)

¹⁸³ “For i dag lever jo svært mange av oss i familier som ikke passer inn i forestillingen om den tradisjonelle kjernefamilien. Svært mange barn vokser opp med aleneforsørgere og nesten halvparten av Oslos befolkningen er single. Dessuten er det mange som lever i familier som vår, med bonusbarn som har to hjem og to sett foreldre.” (119)

¹⁸⁴ “Vi må lage en politikk der systemet skal tilpasses individene, ikke omvendt.” (12)

¹⁸⁵ “Frihet er målet, mer frihet for hver enkelt til å velge hvordan vi vil leve våre liv.” (124)

The freedom for the individual, the woman, and the family to make autonomous choices is, as we have seen, central to Brodtkorb's message, and it continues when it comes to protecting the familial structure. We have seen her write about autonomy and personal freedom, both in society and in feminism, throughout the book^{186 187}. When it comes to the family, Brodtkorb stresses the need for independence in decision making and flexible public services to meet their needs. One example she suggests is for kindergartens to have flexible hours, “providing the family with increased freedom of choice and a more flexible daily schedule¹⁸⁸”. Creating a more flexible system allows the family to make more decisions independent of others' input and assertions.

Likewise, she mentions that the decisions we make have consequences, and urges the reader to think wisely before acting. This is shown in her discussion on women purposefully staying home with children or working part time. She writes that women must be aware that they risk their future security by not actively paying into their pension fund, as well as not being able to financially support their family to the same extent as full-time employment¹⁸⁹. However, she respects the individual woman's choices, writing, “as long as it is you who make that choice, and it is your own choice, then it is the right choice¹⁹⁰”. Through the combination of freedom, flexibility, and critical thinking, Brodtkorb encourages families to make gender equal decisions and improve the conditions surrounding men's and women's participation in parenting while also remaining free to make their own decisions¹⁹¹.

For Lysbakken, the family functions as a central actor for social change, and encouraging a society where parental care responsibilities are equally shared and expected between both

¹⁸⁶ “De borgerlige feministene så kapitalismens friheter og fravær av reguleringer som et redskap til å bli kvitt det som hindret kvinner i å bruke sine evner og utnytte sine muligheter. De så reguleringer og formynderi som noen av de største hindringene for at kvinner og menn ble behandlet ut fra hvem de var, ikke ut fra kjønn. De trodde på frihet fremfor formynderi, og positive incentiver og oppmuntring fremfor lovregulert tvang.” (17)

¹⁸⁷ “Borgerlige feminister er opptatt av at det skal være opp til familien selv hvordan de ønsker å organisere seg.” (34)

¹⁸⁸ “Jeg tror derimot at en fleksibel åpningstid vil gi familiene økt valgfrihet og en mer fleksibel hverdag.” (36)

¹⁸⁹ “Jeg er likevel redd for at de aller fleste kvinner i deltidsstillinger i dag ikke har tenkt på minstepensjonistfellen.” (32)

¹⁹⁰ “Jeg har aldri møtt noen som angrer på at de var for mye sammen med barna sine, så jeg vil ikke moralisere over at man slipper egen karriere for å ta seg av barna og hjemmet. Så lenge det er du som tar valget, og valget er fritt, er det riktig.” (169)

¹⁹¹ “Forutsetningene for at både kvinner og menn kan ha et aktivt og likt ansvar i foreldreskapet, må forbedres uten at man fratrar familien selvråderetten. Da tror jeg at likestillingen i familien blir større, og fedrene vil bli motivert til å ta en større del av permisjonene.” (35)

parents is his main mission in creating a more gender equal society¹⁹² (22). The best way to this is by ensuring women obtain a more equal place in the labor market through men's increased participation at home¹⁹³ (78). He begins by looking at the effect of women taking the entirety of leave themselves, writing that the long absence is a barrier to gender equality in the workplace¹⁹⁴ (95). Access to kindergartens helps significantly, compared to other European countries where women often have to decide between having a career or family, leading to both low birth and female employment rates, a dilemma often experienced in the conservative welfare state¹⁹⁵. This cycle perpetuates, and can result in the “lose-lose situation” of both low female employment and low birth rates (40). Through this example, Lysbakken shows how the choices of the individual family, met with programs and schemes offered by the government, merge to show the importance of gender equality politics through the family, namely paternal leave. He explains this as such:

“Through having a quota for the mother that is equally long as the fathers, we achieve two things. First, many women see it as reasonable that, not only is the mother's right protected with a specific quota in the leave system, but that it is equally long as the fathers. Second, it is emphasized that the third part, the part that is free to be divided between parents, belongs to both parents. Of course we expect that the mother will take a larger share of time than father in the majority of families, but the goal with this change is that the family's division of leave will actually become a topic of discussion at the dinner table. If father wants more than the father's quota, he will have that opportunity. Three-part leave prioritizes this opportunity above employers¹⁹⁶” (106).

¹⁹² “En rettferdig deling av fødselspermisjonen er kanskje det viktigste vi kan gjøre for å endre det. Slik kan vi legge grunnlag for et samfunn hvor begge foreldre ser det som naturlig å ta sitt ansvar for barna. Og det vil fjerne unnskyldninger. Både for å holde fedre på jobb, og for å holde mødre hjemme.” (22)

¹⁹³ “Menns og kvinners ønsker henger sammen. Mer likestilling for kvinner i arbeidslivet er avhengig av mer likestilling i familien, som igjen er avhengig av at menn får større plass og anerkjennelse som omsorgspersoner. Likhet og frihet er ikke motpoler, de er avhengig av hverandre. Mer likestilling gir oss alle mer frihet. Frihet til å leve livet slik vi selv vil. Frihet til å ta egne valg, uavhengig av de gamle kjønnsrollenes trange rammer.” (78)

¹⁹⁴ “Vi vet at mødres lange fravær fra jobb hemmer likestillingen i arbeidslivet, og at vi trenger alles deltakelse i framtiden. Norske småbarnsfamilier har nå rett til barnehageplass, selv om inntaket foretas på et tidspunkt som gjør enkelte må vente noen måneder” (95)

¹⁹⁵ “Norsk familiepolitikk er en av de viktigste grunnene til at vi kan se mer optimistisk på framtiden enn mange andre. Barnehager, pappapermisjon og andre likestillingstiltak gjør det mulig for norske familier å kombinere jobb og barn. I en rekke andre europeiske land ser vi en sterk tendens til at kvinner må velge mellom arbeid og familie. Det gjør at mange arbeidende kvinner får få eller ingen barn, mens de kvinnene som velger å få barn, blir stående utenfor arbeidslivet. Det er en tap-tap situasjon. Produktiviteten blir lavere fordi en stor del av landets ressurser og talenter står på sidelinjen av arbeidslivet. Og fødselstallene blir lave, slik at problemet forsterkes i framtiden.” (40)

¹⁹⁶ “Gjennom å reservere en kvote for mor, som er like lang som fars, oppnår vi to ting. For det første oppfatter mange kvinner det som rimelig at også mors rett er markert med en egen kvote i permisjonsordningen, og at denne er like lang som fars. For det andre understreker det at den tredje delen, den som er til fri fordeling mellom foreldrene, tilhører begge to. Fortsatt vil nok mor ta ut en større del av denne tiden enn far i de fleste familier, men målet med denne endringen er at det skal bli mer naturlig med en reel diskusjon rundt kjøkkenbordet om hvordan denne tiden skal fordeles. Hvis far ønsker mer

In explaining three-part leave in this way, Lysbakken tries to ensure that both birth rates and women's employment are fostered through encouraging fathers to become more active. But although fathers are showing more interest in increasing their parental involvement, he sees that their wishes and rights are not protected as strongly as women's rights. Not only do some women tightly cling to the shared leave weeks as exclusively hers, but the father also has to find acceptance at the workplace to take extra weeks, which has yet to reach widespread acceptance¹⁹⁷. These hurdles prevent men from even considering taking additional weeks without risking his relationships at work and at home.

Additionally, he problematizes the fact that not all fathers have the right to take paternal leave, even if they have been employed. Lysbakken mentions the situations of men having children with students, unemployed, or migrant women. In these circumstances, the father is not entitled to take his quota weeks because the right to paternal leave is connected to the mother's employment level. Extending leave to these families "who do not easily conform to the rules" is in his perspective, another necessary step to increase gender equality through family politics¹⁹⁸ (97).

Interestingly, individual freedom is central to both Brodtkorb and Lysbakken's theorizing about the family. Both write of changing the current kindergarten system to provide more flexibility and both encourage fathers to be more involved in their children's upbringing. Both see women's presence in the labor market and men's presence at home as important and dependent on each other. The difference between them is this: that Brodtkorb views gender equality as being very nearly present in society – that it is simply small steps on the part of both women and men to reach equal levels – and that individual choices that may be perceived as traditional or unequal must be accepted, while Lysbakken sees a little more work

enn fedrekvoten, skal han ha mulighet til det. Tredelingen understreker også denne muligheten overfor arbeidsgiverne." (106)

¹⁹⁷ "En mann som vil ha lang pappapermisjon, er avhengig av aksept på jobben, hvor slikt kanskje er uvanlig. Han risikerer mange hint om hvor vanskelig situasjonene han setter arbeidsplassen i. Dessuten er vår mann avhengig av enighet hjemme. En del kvinner ser fortsatt på permisjonen, utenom fedrekvoten, som sin. Det er ingenting i regelverket som tilsier noe slikt, men en sedvane som fortsatt gjelder i en god del familier. Når det ikke blir noe tema å dele likere, blir tanken ikke engang tenkt av mange menn. Jeg kjenner dessuten kvinner som forteller av deres valg om å dele større deler av permisjonen blir møtt med forundring av andre damer: 'Gir du virkelig ham av din permisjon?'" (91)

¹⁹⁸ "Jeg mener målet må være at alle familier skal ha et valg, at alle fedre som far opptjent rettigheter, skal kunne velge å ta dem ut. Framtidige utvidelser av rettighetene til fedrekvoten bør derfor handle om de familiene som ikke så lett kan tilpasse seg til regelverket." (97)

needed to reach equality. Current legislation does not protect the rights of fathers adequately, and traditional choices are of no benefit to current or future society.

6.4 Responding to critics

One way to gain support from others is to respond to critics. Critics may mention blind spots or weaknesses in arguments, but a skilled rhetor will be able to explain these away and present their platform. In the following examples, we will see how Brodtkorb perceives the Red-Green government, the reasons for her disagreement, and often her political platform. This format becomes a form of mild propaganda, as many of her positions are in agreement with Høyre's platform.

Throughout chapter three of her book, there are five instances of her critiquing the then-current system of government. Four of these five instances are about women and employment, focusing on gender quotas, part time work, and female entrepreneurs, often involving the health and care sectors. In the following excerpt I will discuss how Brodtkorb discusses the topic of gender quotas in business. She begins by acknowledging that it was the minister of business and representative of Høyre, Ansgar Gabrielsen, who wanted to introduce gender quotas in ASA-boards (53). Brodtkorb expressed previously that she has always been against gender quotas, and her position as Høyre's political advisor for business did not make it easier to accept (53). She writes, “The political left in Norwegian politics believes that the quota policy has provided increased gender equality, more equal distribution of power, more democracy, and increased creation of value within the companies and shown the business world that, once the companies acknowledge them, they will see how smart women are¹⁹⁹” (53). Her critique is based around her belief that gender quotas do not actually foster gender equality. She writes quotas are successful at creating an equal gender representation in these boards, but they fail when it comes to the equal division of power between men and women, and between women in business (53). Instead of more women gaining access to board positions, there is instead a small group of women having positions on multiple boards, giving them “more influence than the male board representatives than when Gabrielsen introduced

¹⁹⁹ “Venstresiden i norsk politikk mener at kvoteringsregelen har gitt økt likestilling mellom kjønnene, jevnere maktfordeling, mer demokrati, økt verdiskapningen hos selskapene og vist næringslivet at om selskapene bare vil se dem, så er de flinke kvinnene der.” (53)

his proposal²⁰⁰” (54). And when the discussion about introducing gender quotas in AS-boards, she asks if mandating more equal gender representation is the most important problem facing the business world²⁰¹ (61). She instead encourages the government to consider supporting mentoring programs to encourage women instead through the State-owned companies²⁰² (61).

Seeing that paternal leave has had a controversial history, it makes sense that Lysbakken would use his book as a medium to address his critics. This is woven throughout the book in such a frequent way that the explanation and defense of his position against the critique of others becomes thematic. There are two main groups of critics he addresses here: hegemonic feminists and the bourgeois parties, responding to these groups multiple times and on a variety of topics.

In chapter four, I presented how Lysbakken defines hegemonic feminism based on the way he interacts with feminists as a whole in his book. One of the biggest problems with hegemonic feminism for Lysbakken is their insistence that parental leave remain the benefit of the mothers. One critic, Gro Nylander, uses health-based reasons, for example post-birth recovery and breastfeeding, to not support three-part leave, but Lysbakken responds that the flexibility of three-part leave allows for women to both recover physically and breastfeed their children while sharing the care responsibility with the father (23; 101-103; 105). The other critic viewed maternity leave as emotionally and politically necessary, because it was women who fought for this right, and they will fight to retain this right. For men to come in and try to diminish the mother's reproductive power through a reduction in her maternity leave could have been perceived as a threat from the patriarchy. He cites one critic who wrote in *Klassekampen*, “Divide my days on leave just because you [men] have suddenly set your eyes on the wonderful days with baby? Do you think that you can simply storm into [women's arenas] and take them for yourselves? Steal a benefit we worked hard for? Take the place of

²⁰⁰ “Det skyldes at det har vokst frem en gruppe kvinnelige styregrossister som har større innflytelse enn det de mannlige styrerepresentantene hadde da Gabrielsen lanserte forslaget.” (54)

²⁰¹ “Kontraster stor mellom den offentlige debatten og ledes oppgitte syn på viktigheten av kjønnsfordeling når det må prioriteres foran andre oppgaver. Er synet på andelen kvinnelige ledere noe som toppledere og politikere må flagge ved passende anledninger for å oppnå politisk legitimitet?” (61)

²⁰² “Staten har en god mulighet gjennom sine heleide statlige selskaper å skape konkrete mentorprogrammer med sikte på å få kvinner i disse bedriftene til å ønske å ta toppstillinger.” (61)

mother? Well – I won't let you!²⁰³” (122). Yet even though he is advocating for a benefit for men, he recognizes the deep connection the feminists have to maternity leave. But he addresses their perception that men's increased leave is a threat by writing that three-part leave will not only give men increased equality, but will also help women²⁰⁴” (122). In addressing these critics, it seems he seeks teamwork rather than victory. Yes, he clearly wants men to take a larger role in the care for children, but not in a way that threatens women. The aspect of team work further hits home at the revealing of some personal information, stemming from the previous citation from *Klassekampen*. He writes, “I didn't know the author of the [aforementioned] article, but she got me to think deeply about the challenge. Today we are married to each other²⁰⁵” (122). Teamwork is fully possible, his marriage being symbolic support, and while more and more leftists have come to agree with him, it seems as if his next battleground will have to be the conservatives.

The second group Lysbakken addresses is conservative politicians, and he responds to them regarding two commonly debated issues: family politics and the father's quota. Within family politics, the main issue is the personal autonomy of the family, especially when it comes to the role of women in caring for young children.

When the Red-Green coalition won the election in 2005, they expanded the Department of Children and Family to become the Department of Children and Gender Equality²⁰⁶ (113). This name change signaled a change in the focus of the department. Lysbakken writes that bourgeois politicians talk about family politics more than necessary, and don't look at the family with as critical an eye as the leftist parties²⁰⁷ (113). He continues to write about how

²⁰³ “Dele permisjonsdagene bare fordi dere plutselig har fått opp øyene or de deilige babydagene? Tror dere at dere bare kan trampe inn på våre arenaer og ta for dere? Rappe et hardt tilkjempet gode? Ta plassen til Mor? Vel – jeg vil ikke!” (122)

²⁰⁴ “Foreldrepermisjon er et gode kjempet fram av kvinnebevegelsen. Det er en fare for at menn fremmer sine krav på en måte som får det til å se ut som om det bare er vi som har rettferdige likestillingskrav å kjempe for. Forstår vi ikke det, vil vi tape kampen, ikke bare om fedrekvoten, men om hele retningen på familie- og likestillingspolitikken.” (122)

²⁰⁵ “Jeg kjente ikke forfatteren av artikkelen, men hun fikk meg til å tenke grundig på denne utfordringen. I dag er vi gift.” (121)

²⁰⁶ “Da regjeringsskabelen ble lagt etter den rødgrønne valgseieren i 2005, endret vi navnet på departementet jeg i dag er sjef for. Barne- og familiedepartementet gikk over i historien. Barne- og likestillingsdepartementet ble til.” (113)

²⁰⁷ “Mens borgerlige politikere ustanselig snakker om familiepolitikk, er begrepet nesten ikke i bruk på venstresiden. ... Venstresiden har historisk hatt et sterkt ambivalent forhold til familien.” (113)

the traditional family structure is an oppressive system where we find the majority of men's violence against women, where thousands become victims of child neglect, and women still do the majority of housework (114). Personal autonomy and individual freedom do not solve these problems, writing: "The things that happen within the family cannot be allowed to solely be private; it is to the highest degree a community concern²⁰⁸" (114). Without the intervention of the state as an option, the state cannot adequately fulfill its obligation to protect its citizens. Additionally, he sees the bourgeois parties as looking to go backwards in time. The bourgeois parties, especially Krf and Høyre want to change the child benefit policy, with Krf looking to increase the amount and Høyre looking to allow two-year olds to qualify as well. Lysbakken writes that increases of these kinds are "nothing but a romanticization of the 50's-era families we have left behind²⁰⁹" (117). While some have accused him of being callous towards those who decide to stay at home, he writes:

“...I respect people's right to choose to stay outside of the labor market, but that I don't see any reason to celebrate it. First, because Norway needs everyone's participation in the labor market in the future. Second, because the most important for me is to create a family political platform that works for those who could never afford to make that choice. Third, because I don't think children who attend kindergarten receive a lower standard of care than those who don't²¹⁰” (117).

Near the end of his book, Lysbakken creates his own platform for “family politics.” He writes, “Good family politics combines children's needs for good care with the society's needs (that as many as possible participate in the labor market) and with the needs of gender equality (equal opportunities for both genders)²¹¹” (119).

The father's quota was another controversial measure. He writes that Høyre voted against it because they believed that the father's unused weeks should be able to be transferred to the

²⁰⁸ “Det som skjer innenfor familien, kan ikke få lov til å være bare privat, det er i aller høyeste grad et anliggende for samfunnet.” (114)

²⁰⁹ “For hva er vel kampen for mest mulig kontantstøtte, annet enn en romantisering av femtittallsfamilien vi har forlatt?” (117)

²¹⁰ “... jeg respekterer folks rett til å velge å stå utenfor yrkeslivet, men at jeg ikke ser noen grunn til å juble for det. For det første fordi Norge trenger alles arbeidsinnsats i fremtiden. For det andre fordi det viktigste for meg er å lage en familiepolitikk som fungerer for alle de som aldri vil ha råd til å ta et slikt valg. For det tredje fordi jeg ikke tror barn som går i barnehage, får dårligere omsorg enn de som ikke gjør det.” (117)

²¹¹ “En god familiepolitikk er derimot den som forener barnas behov for god omsorg med samfunnets behov (at flest mulig skal delta i arbeidslivet) og med likestillingens behov (like muligheter for begge kjønn).” (119)

mother²¹² (20). Lysbakken thinks back to a statement made in 1993 by Parliamentary representative, and now Prime Minister, Erna Solberg, stating that “today's greatest challenge is to get men to participate more at home. For many women this is a greater barrier than the clearing the wage gap”²¹³ (21). This change of stance confuses Lysbakken. He writes,

“Erna Solberg has not been very eager to publicly defend Høyre's annual meeting's resolution [to join with Frp] to end the father's quota. It is well known that she voted against that. Maybe she is quiet because she thinks the rhetoric from her own party members is unbearably simplistic. Solberg was, as mentioned, herself a supporter of introducing parental leave exclusively for fathers. Maybe she still thinks that far fewer fathers will get the change to be on leave with their children if Høyre's new position gains influence. We must also assume that it is the majority's vote that matters, not the party leader's²¹⁴” (87).

Lysbakken tries to understand Solberg's situation, and instead of putting the blame on her, he almost sympathizes with her. He doesn't know what her personal position is now, but he seems doubtful that her mind has been changed. He seems sorry for her to be in a situation where she now has to defend her party's position even when it (possibly) goes against her own. His solution to this is to encourage the reader to vote for the Red-green alliance at the 2013 election, hinting that a bourgeois victory will completely remove the father's quota²¹⁵ (86).

In the previous quote about Solberg, Lysbakken also mentioned the simplistic rhetoric of her party members. It seems in this context, one of the party members Lysbakken wants to address is, interestingly, Julie Brodtkorb (under her married name, Julie Voldberg). He writes,

²¹² “Høyre mente at den nye permisjonen måtte kunne overføres til mor hvis pappa ikke ville ha dem. Den gangen kunne Høyre lene seg på både likestillingsombud og barneombud.” (20)

²¹³ “Framsente kvinner i Høyre nedkjempet partiets tradisjonelle skepsis til politiske reguleringer og støttet prinsippet om en fedrekvote. En av damene som sto sentralt i dette, er en ung stortingsrepresentant fra Hordaland. 'Dagens virkelig store utfordring er å få menn til å delta mer hjemme. For mange kvinner er den barrieren høyere enn lønnsbarrieren,' sa Erna Solberg til Aftenposten 12. mai 1993.” (21)

²¹⁴ “Erna Solberg har ikke vært veldig ivrig etter å ta ordet offentlig for å forsvare Høyres landsmøtevedtak om å fjerne fedrekvoten. Det er godt kjent at hun stemte imot det. Kanskje er hun stille fordi hun synes retorikken fra egne partifeller blir uutholdelig enkel? Solberg var jo, som nevnt, selv tilhenger av å innføre en egen permisjonstid for fedre. Hun tenker kanskje fortsatt at langt færre fedre vil få muligheten til å være i permisjon med barna sine hvis Høyres nye standpunkt får gjennomslag. Likevel må vi anta at det er flertallets linje som gjelder, ikke partilederens.” (87)

²¹⁵ “Blir det blå regjering etter neste valg, betyr det slutten for den egne pappapermisjonen og rettighetene landets fedre har gjennom den. Men en arbeidsgiver som Jens Stoltenberg vil ikke det bli noe problem, rødgrønne statsråder oppfordres av sin sjef til å ta en solid permisjon. (86)

“Linda Hofstad Helleland and Julie Voldberg's rhetoric will be transformed into state policy if the bourgeois win the election in 2013. 'The leftists' gender equality politics is nothing but force,' said the leader of Høyre's women's politics, Julie Voldberg, to NRK's evening news on March 8, 2011. Instead Høyre will have freedom of choice, they say²¹⁶” (87).

Using this quote as a frame, Lysbakken writes a long defense of leftist politics over the next eleven pages. While the bourgeois parties seek to limit the government's involvement in order to increase the public's freedom, he sees more hindrances, invisible power structures that negatively affect personal autonomy²¹⁷ (89). He doesn't see Norwegian society as ready to remove the quota, writing that he “would be the first person to recommend the removal of the father's quota the day I am certain that all fathers will have the option to take a lengthy leave without the policy²¹⁸” (90). So Brodtkorb's argument of force is invalid to him, when existing social structures create fewer choices for the population than laws. In addition, he wonders what exact policies she objects to. “Kindergarten reforms? The marriage law that makes everyone's love equal? The powerful expansion of parental leave? Or is it maybe the quotas in business that her own party introduced? The conservatives' freedom of choice is false. In reality it will lead to less freedom for both mothers and fathers²¹⁹” (98). The bourgeois parties, especially Høyre, are portrayed as confused and unable to agree on a message.

Brodtkorb uses her book to express her personal political platform. By directly addressing some of her main political interests, Brodtkorb asserts her identity as a political actor. And in noticing the gender component in the subjects of small businesses, quotas, and child benefit payments, she also asserts her identity as a bourgeois feminist, advocating for women's and men's individual freedom in their interactions with the government through encouraging non-

²¹⁶ “Retorikken til Linda Hofstad Helleland og Julie Voldberg vil bli forvandlet til statens politikk hvis de borgerlige vinner valget i 2013. 'Venstresidens likestillingspolitikk er pisk og tvang, ' sa Høyres kvinnepolitiske leder Julie Voldberg på NRKs Dagsnytt Atten 8. mars 2011. I stedet vil Høyre ha valgfrihet, hevdes det.” (87)

²¹⁷ “Høyresiden vektlegger friheten *fra* politiske inngrep og definerer den som minst mulig føringer fra fellesskapet på den enkeltes liv. Venstresiden er opptatt av at det finnes mange flere begrensninger på den enkeltes frihet enn de som ligger i regler pålagt oss av stat og kommune. Andre maktstrukturer, ofte langt mindre synlige, begrenser mange menneskers frihet til å velge hvordan de vil leve livene sine.” (89)

²¹⁸ “Jeg skal være den første til å foreslå å fjerne fedrekvoten den dagen jeg er overbevist om at alle fedre vil ha mulighet til å ta lang permisjon også uten den. Men ingenting tyder på at vi er der i Norge i dag.” (90)

²¹⁹ “Jeg undrer meg på hva hun egentlig legger i det: Barnehagereformen? Ekteskapsloven som likestiller alles kjærlighet? De kraftige utvidelsene av foreldrepermisjonen? Eller kan det kanskje være kvoteringen til næringsslivsstyrene som hennes eget parti innførte? Høyresidens valgfrihet er falsk. Gjort til virkeligheten vil det føre til mindre valgfrihet, for både mødre og fedre.” (98)

mandatory mentor programs over government-enforced quotas. Lysbakken's critique of hegemonic feminists and the bourgeois parties, Høyre in particular, are themes woven throughout the book. He seeks to not only make the holes in their argument known, but also to use a similar argument to the one that possibly lost John Kerry the 2008 USA presidential election: they are flip-flopers that change their mind far too often, and also don't always agree with each other. In this way he seeks to decrease the credibility of the conservative arguments, and through a structuralist understanding of society, show the necessity of a father's quota.

6.5 Changing gender inequalities through politics

Seeing as both Brodtkorb and Lysbakken have had long careers in politics, it would make sense that they would intend to use the political system to foster gender equality. In this section I will explore how Brodtkorb points out two areas where a political intervention into the public sector could benefit gender equality, a grading system for kindergartens and a restructuring of the Child and Parental Benefits²²⁰.

One topic in Brodtkorb's personal political platform is to ensure that boys and girls receive an equal education. Because of this she writes of the importance of introducing gender equality in the earliest years of life, advocating gender-neutral kindergartens²²¹ (85). She provides the example one such kindergarten in Molde, where they have made an effort to reduce the assignment of male and female roles onto the students.

“They have consciously searched for books with female heroes, have divided the students into boy and girl groups and the employees have observed each other in different situations. Do they treat boys and girls differently? Which words do they use – are girls told they are pretty and sweet, and boys cool and tough? Do they comfort boys differently than girls²²²” (45)

²²⁰ *Barnetrygd and fødselspengene*

²²¹ “Mange jeg snakker med, mener at det først er når barn begynner i barnehagen at de blir seg bevisst om at de er gutter og jenter. Derfor må likestilling mer bevisst inn i barnehagene.” (85)

²²² “De har bevisst lett etter bøker som har jentehelter, de har delt inn i gutte- og jentegrupper og de ansatte har observert hverandre i ulike situasjoner. Behandler de gutter og jenter ulikt? Hvilke ord brukes – blir jentene møtt med at de er fine og søte, og guttene kule og tøffe? Trøster man gutter annerledes enn jenter?” (45)

Being able to select a kindergarten based on its gender equality rating would also make the kindergarten more competitive in the market; a competitive factor Brodtkorb herself wishes had been available when she was looking for a kindergarten²²³. For the teachers to be aware and critical to the gendered ways they interact with children is a positive step toward future gender equality. Because of the time and labor necessary to compile research, create criteria, and assess the over 6000 kindergartens throughout the country, her recommendation seems implausible (SSB, 2014). Although she cites a research study based on gender equality education in schools, individually rating kindergartens would be a much larger feat that seems unlikely to receive the wide political support necessary to receive funding. Thus, this recommendation seems like an empty promise.

She also addresses the insistence that mother be the primary caregiver also has a structural component, namely through public policy. The Norwegian Child Benefit policy, the issuance of a monetary sum to parents at the birth of a child, has been in place since 1946. As of 2014 it is 970 kroner per month, and is automatically issued to the mother of the child. The child benefit has been highly debated, as a large percentage of migrant women are the ones to receive it, leading some to believe that this kind of policy encourages migrant women to stay out of the labor market. To Brodtkorb, it sends a “strong signal” that the mother is the primary caregiver²²⁴ (95). Her political platform consists of two points. First, she advocates an equal division of the Child Benefit between both parents. Second, she will ensure the father's right to Parental Benefits is based on his own employment and not solely on the mother's (34). Her two-part plan seems more plausible than the kindergarten rating system, since it is a small, legislative change compared to scope of the rating system. Additionally, the sharing of the child and parental benefits creates a symbolic equalizing of both parents as financial caregivers. However, this symbol does not seem to directly address the division of care work at home. Because Brodtkorb desires to keep the private sphere autonomous from political interference, house and care tasks could remain unequally divided.

Lysbakken's political platform centers itself around the father's quota. In previous sections I have shown how he explained and defended three-part leave as a necessary tool to foster gender equality in Norway. Beyond this subject, there are no other political platforms in his

²²³ "Hadde en barnehage vært likestillingsmerket, hadde jeg syntes det var et konkurransefortrinn når jeg skulle velge tilbud selv." (46)

²²⁴ "Barna og mamma henger sammen. Det er et sterkt signal fra det offentlige Norge." (95)

book. This could be because he considered three-part leave as significant enough to fully change Norway's future, but it is more likely that due to the thematic content of the book, Lysbakken elected to not include more about other issues SV is occupied with, the environment for example.

Brodtkorb uses legislation to advocate a kindergarten rating system based on its prioritization of gender equality, and to change the issuance of Child and Parental Benefits to symbolically neutralize parenthood. Lysbakken's politics based around the father's quota isolates fatherhood as different from motherhood. This echoes their feminist perspectives. Brodtkorb's identification with bourgeois feminism prioritizes the individual over their gender, while Lysbakken's leftist feminism, as well as more radically-inspired leftists, highlight the differences between men and women and encourage differential treatment when relevant.

6.6 Connecting with the audience

Every storyteller has an audience, and a storytelling politician using rhetorically-based arguments must have a conception of who their audience is even before they fine tune their message to present their ideology (Finlayson 2012: 763). "The audience" is ever changing depending on the context, "and is always in some measure a fictive creation around which rhetorical invention is built", which means that the author tailors their rhetoric to whom they imagine their audience to be (Finlayson 2012: 763). Because the audience informs of the rhetorical arguments and style, it is necessary to ask who the authors are directing their messages toward. Because both authors write of gender equality as requiring the efforts of women and men, this section is organized to look at how they write to both men and women to varying degrees.

6.6.1 How does Brodtkorb relate to women?

Women undoubtedly make up Brodtkorb's main audience. This is evidenced through her frequent use of the reflexive, possessive, and first person plural in her writing: we, us, our, occasionally as "we women." This is significant because she obviously sees women as her audience, meaning that most of her messages are tailored to a female audience. Another way this is shown is through stories and topics that are not explicitly political or feministic. In

these sections, she looks at her family life, her work life, and how she is able balance both of those while also scheduling personal time and social events. The theme of work-life balance is one that many women, regardless of ideology, struggle with, and receiving insight from a woman in a leader position with a family can be valuable. She devotes an entire chapter to communication – from image construction through clothing²²⁵, makeup²²⁶, and vocal warmups to improve one's presentation²²⁷ (131; 130; 122). She also writes about the necessity of finding one's natural speaking style²²⁸, the effect of being engaged and interested in the field²²⁹, eye contact²³⁰, and body language²³¹ (111; 116; 124; 127). All of these citations specifically discuss women's activities, with no similar section for men's clothing or speaking styles. While some of these stories contained examples from her time as Høyre's chief of communication, she highlights the ability for her advice to be individualized applied in different situations.

Additionally, she includes a chapter on master suppression techniques²³². Her interest in master suppression techniques began during her time at the Norwegian School of Economics. A friend recommended she read Berit Ås' book, "*Kvinner i alle land... håndbok i frigjøring*", after saying she felt uncertain and unimportant after finance classes and board meetings (132-133). After reading the book, she created a course in combating these techniques that later became a part of Høyre's Women's Forum's focus (132). And while Høyre's Women's Forum is the one who offered the course, the application is not solely for combating master suppression techniques in politics. Of the twelve types of techniques mentioned, there were twenty personal stories used as examples. While she does write that master suppression techniques are often used in politics, she makes an effort to include ten political examples and

²²⁵ "Mitt råd er å være bevisst på hva klærne uttrykker, og på hva du selv ønsker å kommunisere i ulike situasjoner." (131)

²²⁶ "Sminke er forbundet men det jålete, feminine. Kvinner skal være seg bevisst hva røde negler og rød leppestift kommuniserer." (130)

²²⁷ "Alle kan opparbeide seg en sterk og klar stemme. Det som trengs er tålmodighet og trening." (122)

²²⁸ "Det aller viktigste var at denne kommunikasjon var *naturlig* [her emphasis]." (111), with continuing examples of natural versus unnatural communication through Erna Solberg, Kristin Halvorsen, and Siv Jensen through to page 116.

²²⁹ "En annen viktig forutsetning for å kommunisere godt, er å være *engasjert* i det det du skal kommunisere [her emphasis]." (116)

²³⁰ "Blikket gir viktig tilleggsinformasjon om budskapet senderen formidler til mottakeren." (124)

²³¹ "Noe av det første vi legger merke til når vi ser et annet menneske, er kroppsholdningen; raketten i ryggen." (127)

²³² *hersketeknikker*

ten examples from her non-political jobs. Although her personal examples are directed at helping women, she also writes of applying master suppression techniques in debates on men, as well. This information helps women to take both defensive and offensive positions when encountering difficult situations.

There is also an ideological component to Brodtkorb's writing. She seems to be writing primarily to center-right women, possibly those who have heard of bourgeois feminism but may be afraid to “take the leap” and identify themselves as one. This is shown through comparing the amount of space she uses in describing conservatism versus feminism. Conservatism, while indirectly explained through the majority of her political positions, is given two pages for definition, all the while explaining it in light of bourgeois feminism²³³ (10-12). Feminism, specifically bourgeois feminism, receives 72 pages of explicit definitions and examples. This difference implies that the reader is already fairly aware of conservatism and what it stands for.

Brodtkorb seeks to be an inspiration to other women. She asserts this by addressing women's needs on physical, emotional, and ideological levels. She first relates to the struggles of combining work and family, following with advice about how physical appearance relates to communication and image. In teaching women about master suppression techniques, women obtain advice on how to handle difficult situations that are likely to happen in male-dominated environments. Finally, her encouraging women to identify as bourgeois feminists not only raises visibility of the ideology, but also encourages conservative women to consider feminism's applications in a conservative context, furthering her goals for gender equality.

6.6.2 How does Lysbakken relate to men?

Writing about fatherhood from a male perspective immediately makes one consider that men are a target audience. However, in the section that follows, we will see that the gender of the audience is not a focus, but ideology. But there are two ways that Lysbakken directs his stories toward a male audience.

In one personal story, Lysbakken discusses the topic of hegemonic masculinity told through an evening hunting course he took while on leave. This story shows Lysbakken's understanding of hegemonic masculinity and its connection to fatherhood. This exploration

²³³ Pages 10 to 12: “*Vanedyr med endringsønske*”

of masculinity and its connection to fatherhood is a way to relate to other male readers who have had similar experiences or questions about the intersection of manhood and fatherhood.

The second way he relates to men is through his comical stories of being a father, as previously discussed in section 6.2.2. We have seen how these stories are amusing and help the reader connect with the author. Besides being comical and entertaining, these stories are ones men can specifically relate to. Here, Lysbakken's attempts and occasional failure to meet the standards of wives and society when it comes to parenting. For example, when he visits the nurse for a checkup, the nurse tells him that mothers are better able to control everything, or when he compares his parenting abilities with those of his wife's²³⁴ (35). The feelings of inadequacy can be felt by any parent, mother or father, but as we have seen, the natural ability to care for others is perceived as stronger in women than in men (section 5.3) and encouraged to develop in young girls, but not boys (section 5.2). But Lysbakken's message is that fatherhood does not need to be perfect in order to be enjoyed. This will be further analyzed in section 6.2.3, through its impact as an overarching thematic story. In these two ways, Lysbakken creates a message for men, but as we will see in the next section, he did not quite accomplish it in the best way.

6.6.3 How do their stories relate across gender lines?

Men are not a priority audience for Brodtkorb, but she does call upon men to work together with women to make the work-life balance easier (104). Although she is directing the comment primarily to women (“if *you* want a career”; “*your* husband” [my emphasis]), discussing the roles of men shows that she at least hopes that men would pick up her book in order to ease the burden on women. She does not, however, write to men about feminism. Brodtkorb says that the majority of conservative women would identify as bourgeois feminists, but she does not include men in this concept (13). Given her awareness that she has occasionally spoken in a more radical way, it is possible that Brodtkorb agrees with the radical feminist perspective that only women can be feminists, or at the very least, that only women would be interested in being a feminist (25).

Based on the format, cover, and the majority of the content of his book, it seems that Lysbakken intends for a significant amount of his target audience to be female. Finding

²³⁴ “Siv kan mange barnesanger. Jeg kan ingen.” (35)

statistics on readership, genre, and gender are hard to come by, and many studies of this nature cost anywhere from \$99 to \$3200. Available (and free) statistics from the Romance Writers of America state that 67% of mass market paperback books are bought by women, and that romance novels earned 1.438 billion US dollars in 2012, the highest of any genre. Romance novels are books designed to appeal to the emotions of the reader, similar to the *pathos* argument in rhetoric. While memoirs were not listed in the most popular genres list, memoirs also use emotions and personal experience to appeal to the reader, and Lysbakken employed the *pathos* argument most of all three rhetorical arguments. Writing primarily from an emotional place is not one commonly associated with male readership, leading to this interpretation.

The cover is also different from many Norwegian books aimed at fathers. A short survey of fatherhood and parenting books at a local bookstore produces some interesting results. On the cover of his book, Lysbakken and Aurora are smiling at home, his face directed at Aurora, her face directed at the camera. But other books portray a more typical, active masculinity, occasionally juxtaposed with a tranquil child. One book's cover shows a "cool dad" holding his baby over a Rube Goldberg Machine-style drawing of how to dress a baby in winter clothing²³⁵, another says that "Daddy can do everything" paired with pictures of rockets, dinosaurs, and fishing poles²³⁶. Another shows a father throwing his child high in the air²³⁷, while another shows a tattooed father cradling an infant in his arms²³⁸. These books employ traditional masculine tropes to catch the fathers' eye. The simplicity of Lysbakken's cover does not seem to fit among these other books, leading to a possible broadening of intended audience.

Even though the gender of his audience is difficult to determine, we can see three main audiences for Lysbakken's book based on ideology. The first would be people who support his position on paternal leave. The sections in the book in which he explains his reasons behind three-part leave are based around the success stories of similar orderings in Iceland and Sweden, describing three-part leave as a logical solution to the ongoing debate

²³⁵ "Verdens Beste Pappa" by Per Asbjørn Risnes Jr.

²³⁶ "Pappa Kan Alt" by Per Asbjørn Risnes, Jr.

²³⁷ "God Pappa" by Peder Kjøs

²³⁸ "Daddy Cool" by Kjetil Bergman Olsson

surrounding men and care work. The language is not defensive, merely explanatory. He writes in order to tell about life behind the scenes, writing about meetings and processes in raising awareness. In writing about his time with his daughter, he shows the success of three-part leave in action. This would be especially directed to women who support three-part leave yet want a male perspective. The second target audience is people skeptical to paternal leave. As previously mentioned providing a sense of relatability through stories can be a convincing factor. Lysbakken relies heavily on the relatability and personability through *pathos* in his writing to explain his perspective. By being able to connect to the audience in this way, and showing how much fathers enjoy being on leave with their children, Lysbakken could potentially win some converts over to the side of a three-part leave system. The third audience is hegemonic feminists. As we have seen in previous sections, Lysbakken often uses feminism to describe a group of people who opposed him in his fight for three-part leave, and it is these feminists that he is speaking to²³⁹ (23). Three-part leave is, to Lysbakken, a process to further gender equality and quite possibly a feminist project for him and his allies. His alternative perspective threatened them at first, and in reading the reasons why he supports three-part leave, he seems to be directly speaking to those who had opposed him.

What is interesting is that while Brodtkorb seems to target a specific audience based on gender, Lysbakken seems to target his audience based on ideology. Although Brodtkorb did not spend much time writing to men, Lysbakken does use significant space writing to women, especially the hegemonic feminists he encountered. But although the message seems to be for men, the diary-style memoir is more typical of a feminine medium. As a result, Lysbakken writes across gendered lines much more than Brodtkorb.

6.6.4 Section summary

Targeting specific audiences is a strategy allows the authors to direct their messages in specific ways. Both authors had an intended audience, but used different ways to reach them. Brodtkorb actively writes to women, writing often on women-specific issues and tactics. Lysbakken, however, wrote a book with a message to men, but in a style typically more receptive to women. In basing his audience around ideology, Lysbakken blurred the lines of

²³⁹ “En forunderlig allianse av amnehjelp, høyrefolk, feminister og mannssjåvinister...” (23)

the gendered audience while Brodtkorb retained them. This strategy works to convince these target audiences of their arguments, ultimately gaining support for their platforms.

6.7 Chapter summary

Brodtkorb and Lysbakken share four main goals in obtaining gender equality. First, they want to change traditional gender roles into a gender aware, yet neutral worker-caregiver model in which men and women equally divide their work and care obligations. This is in line with the social democratic welfare state in its effort to outsource care obligations to the state through elder and child care, but the social maintenance of traditional gender roles prevents this from coming to fruition. Their second goal is to empower women and men to take advantage of career and care opportunities, respectively. This not only allows people to develop their own interests, but also works to further the worker-caregiver model. Third, Brodtkorb and Lysbakken seek to renovate the state to accommodate the needs of individual families through an increase in flexible services. This ensures that each family's care and work needs are met and allowed to be balanced in the way the families see fit. Finally, they try to strengthen their messages by gaining support from the reader and responding to critics. In this way, they try to address what others consider to be their “blind spots.” However, as I will show in the next chapter, Brodtkorb and Lysbakken still have some blind spots when it comes to the way they write about the family.

7 Blind Spots

Feminist content analysis asks “what is absent within a representation, what is taken for granted, and what is centrally located versus what is forced to the peripheries?” (Leavy 2007: 230). In this chapter, I explain how both authors construct the family as ethnically Norwegian, fertile, and heterosexual, and that this construction “others” families that call outside of this norm.

7.1 The A4 family

Smashing the image of the A4 person, as we have seen, was of high importance to both Brodtkorb and Lysbakken. Diversity, individuality, and freedom are seemingly a significant part of modern Norwegian society. But the authors' construction of the family as a social unit retains an ideal structure. Here, through their silence on different family structures, Brodtkorb and Lysbakken's ideal family structure comes into view, as well as its ramifications. First, I introduce the theory of compulsory heterosexuality, followed by an analysis of the silence on the part of Brodtkorb and Lysbakken when it comes to the family on issues of sexuality and ethnicity. In this section, I will use the term “atypical families” to describe same-sex parented families, migrant/non-ethnic Norwegian families, and disabled families. While this is not an exhaustive list of families that stray from the heterosexual, fertile, ethnic Norwegian archetype, it is these three types of families that correspond directly to the three ideals. Additionally, I accept the problematic nature of combining three very different groups under one label. It is my hope that this phrasing does not detract from the overall analysis.

We have seen Brodtkorb and Lysbakken write significantly about families. Biopolitics also provides guidelines for what can be considered a family, for example through the regulations of the marriage law, children law, adoption law, and biotechnology law²⁴⁰ (Andersen 2013: 35).

In almost every situation, the family is constructed as ethnically Scandinavian, usually married, and heterosexual with biological children. These criteria are not directly mentioned, but instead they focus on the larger family dynamics of care roles and equal responsibilities

²⁴⁰ “Biopolitikken legger også føringer for hva som kan elle som en familie, blant annet gjennom reguleringer av ekteskapsloven, barneloven, adopsjonsloven og bioteknologiloven.” (Andersen 2013: 35)

through talking about mothers and fathers. There are few mentions of migrant families, and neither author mentions adoption or fertility difficulties. The only mention of homosexuality occurs in Lysbakken's critique of the bourgeois parties for being resistant toward change, specifically gay rights²⁴¹ (116). There are instances where the authors mention other kinds of family structures. Brodtkorb is open about her raising children as a single mother after getting divorced. Lysbakken also recognizes single or remarried parents who share custody of their child²⁴² (119). These mentions do help to downplay the married family ideal, but are brief mentions, do not directly connect to any political message, and are still linked to heterosexual relationships. In the following sections, I will discuss how Brodtkorb and Lysbakken silently promote the ideal family as ethnically Norwegian, heterosexual, fertile, and with no physical or mental disabilities.

7.1.1 Ethnic minorities

Brodtkorb quotes a Swedish friend about having children and migrant families as tending to maintain the traditional family structure (99; 75). Lysbakken, however, is silent in this area. This is surprising as ethnic minorities and immigration are highly politicized topics, not to mention when it comes to children and care.

Thun presents the example of the different discourse surrounding the debate on cash for care²⁴³ when it comes to ethnic majority and ethnic minorities. First, there is a tendency for Norwegian politics to look at immigration and children only when there is a problem to be fixed. In an analysis of political debate on child care and gender equality from 1998, it was shown that ethnic minorities were mentioned only in the discussion on “public childcare services as necessary for vulnerable children” (Thun 2014: 11). Further, there have been discussions to eliminate cash for care because it is perceived as a barrier to immigrant women’s integration into the labor market, and their integration is viewed as “the key to achieving equality between women and men” according to the White Paper on Comprehensive Integration Policy (Thun 2014: 14-15). Thus the government tries to

²⁴¹ “Store deler av høyresiden har strittet imot forandring, enten det har handlet som respekten for aleneforsørgere, homofiles rettigheter eller utviklingen bort fra kadaverdisiplin i oppdragelsen og opplæringen av barn.” (116)

²⁴² “For i dag lever jo svært mange av oss i familier som ikke passer inn i forestillingen om den tradisjonelle kjerne familien. Svært mange barn vokser opp med aleneforsørgere og nesten halvparten av Oslos befolkningen er single. Dessuten er det mange som lever i familier som vår, med bonusbarn som har to hjem og to sett foreldre.” (119)

²⁴³ *kontantstøtte*

encourage ethnic minority families to send their children to kindergarten through price caps and “free core time in day-care centres’ (...) in areas with a high proportion of immigrant children” (Thun 2014).

When it comes to the social democratic welfare state, some will see the government taking responsibility for care work as liberating, while others will see it as unnecessary governmental intervention into their personal lives (Thun 2014: 9). These interventions serve “to shape these population groups – socially, culturally, physically and psychologically – according to Scandinavian norms” (Thun 2014). This is further complicated by the ways in which “non-Norwegian” is constructed through assumed cultural, ethnic and religious differences – often based on stereotypical collective categories of difference” (Thun 2014: 13). This pigeonholes ethnic minority women as less-gender equal and serves to maintain them as “others” (Thun 2014: 18).

Ethnic minority women therefore have to “prove that they are gender equal – even more gender equal than the majority population.” (Thun 2014: 15). Ethnic majority women who select to stay at home with their children are viewed as having made an individual, free choice, but ethnic minority women are constructed as not having made a free choice to “due to different family norms and values” originating from her less-gender equal culture (Thun 2014: 12). These women are pressured into employment by the majority society, and individual choice in turn becomes an option only for ethnic majority women (Thun 2014: 13, 19). This is ultimately a double standard that negatively affects ethnic minority women

Brodtkorb and Lysbakken are both advocates of free choice but also encourage women to be employed, as shown in chapter five. But in not participating in this very relevant debate regarding ethnic minorities and care, Brodtkorb and Lysbakken symbolically lean their supports in maintaining this double standard.

7.1.2 Non-heterosexual couples

Andersen and Hellesund write of the commonality of a homosexual identity and increasing public support and acceptance (2009: 103). Likewise, homosexuals are still considered an “out group” compared to their heterosexual peers (Andersen and Hellesund 2009: 104).

The theory of compulsory heterosexuality harkens back to Adrienne Rich, writing primarily on the invisible lives of lesbian women in research on the lives of women. Simply put, compulsory heterosexuality states that the heterosexual relationship is the ideal sexual partnership, and was socially enforced. She argued that compulsory heterosexuality worked to force women into physical, economic, and emotional submission to men, and is reinforced through lesbian invisibility (1980: 155). Lesbian invisibility can be extrapolated to include other non-heterosexual groups, as their invisibility also would serve to maintain same the patriarchal power structure. Today, the theory has been toned down slightly, with Rich herself calling her original article “unrefined” and “outdated,” yet also reiterating that heteronormativity is still “without question” (Rich, 2004: 9-10).

Although Norwegian politics has made great progress in the legal equality of homosexuals, Andersen and Hellesund still “witness a consensus on heteronormativity as the basic axiom in public discussions on homosexuality and adoption” (2009: 117). This means that there is still a tendency for Norwegians, both laymen and politicians, to retain a heterosexual picture of “the family” over one with same-sex parents. Holmberg also wrote of a lack of attention to the intersection of the welfare state and sexuality, writing, “homosexuality is not merely a sexual preference, but homosexuals also build families and live in long-term partnerships²⁴⁴” (Holmberg 1993: 56). In light of this cultural tendency, it could be interpreted that Brodtkorb and Lysbakken exhibit a culturally-influenced heteronormativity. In this instance, this trait led to forgetting to include more about these families.

Compulsory heterosexuality continues to permeate Norwegian society and politics to a high enough degree that the straight, married family remains the ideal family structure. Rich asserts that considering and including the “atypical” family structures will help foster increased social freedom, writing that forgetting these families “have meant an incalculable loss to the power of all women *to change the social relations of the sexes, to liberate ourselves and each other*” (her emphasis) (Rich 1980: 165). This reduction in power only works to hinder gender equality efforts. Notions of flexibility of services and individual

²⁴⁴ “Vad man däremot sällan problematiserat i det svenska feministiska samtalet är välfärdsstaten och sexualiteten. Däremot har både feministiska forskare och sociologer studerat familjen och familjepolitiken. Om man nu låter frågan om sexualitet och familjepolitik mötas blir det intressant att fokusera det lagverk som reglerar homosexuellas parförhållanden i dagens samhälle. Homosexualitet är inte enbart en fråga om sexuella preferenser, utan homosexuella bildar också familjer och lever i fasta parförhållanden” (Holmberg 1993: 56).

choice should thus be reevaluated in light of atypical families' invisibility in the current discussion.

7.1.3 Infertility and disabilities

Disabilities can include a wide range of issues. Parents can have psychological disabilities, including depression, schizophrenia, or anxiety. They can also have physical disabilities and require the use of wheelchairs or other assistance for example. Another form of disability is infertility. Lysbakken, in his discussion about paternal leave, writes about different families that do not have the right to paternal leave, for example fathers who have a child with students or unemployed women. He adds that since July 2011, fathers who have a child with a mother who is on disability assistance²⁴⁵ (97). This is the only mention of some kind of disability between both books. This is surprising, since disabilities are many and varied, individually-based, and not uncommon.

Finding theory to explore this topic proved difficult. Many articles write about parents of children with disabilities, although some look at the effect on children with parents with drug addiction or depression (Sundfær 2005; Klevan, Viksmo and Borg 2013). One debate that interested me was that of infertility. Anderson writes about the way the debate on surrogacy is framed in light of artificial insemination and adoption of children for parents unable to conceive naturally. She begins by exploring cultural norms in Norway surrounding parenthood. She writes that men and women across all socioeconomic classes who do not become parents are viewed as having missed out on one of the most important things in life, to be a parent (Anderson 2013: 35).

This insistence is, however, met with one of the strictest policies surrounding fertility assistance and adoption in the world, with “the heterosexual couple with a stable income and a conventional lifestyle is practically the only acceptable category” when it comes to adoption (Anderson 2013: 35-36). Additionally, single and gay parents are not able to use artificial insemination, a right granted to lesbian couples through the gender equal marriage law (Anderson 2013: 36). Anderson therefore based her study around families who qualify for neither adoption nor fertility assistance through artificial insemination and instead hire surrogates abroad. (Anderson 2013: 36).

²⁴⁵ *uføretrygdet*

What is most relevant through Anderson's research is the normative context. Once again, a heterosexual couple is the norm, the expectation. Additionally, the insistence that all should become a parent not only teaches the individual to desire to become a parent, but devalues those who never have children. This means that those who have chosen to be childless are equally guilty of breaking Norwegian cultural norms as those who have employed surrogates (Anderson 2013: 32).

7.1.4 Summary

It could have been that the inclusion of atypical families was removed for publishing reasons. It does not seem likely that the publisher decided that the book would only be marketed to heterosexual, fertile, ethnic Norwegians, which would have required a streamlining of the content and removing any mentions of atypical families. It also does not seem likely that sections on atypical families were edited out due to space, since both books are short and could be extended to 200 pages without considerable cost to the publisher.

A plausible scenario is that both authors, being ethnic Norwegians, heterosexual, and fertile themselves, had difficulty in writing about atypical families. As we have seen, both authors used personal stories to support their political platforms. In this case, there would seemingly be no personal story to support a message on atypical families. Additionally, this lack of expertise could lead to disorganized writing, necessitating either significant editing or removal from the book. In this case, we cannot overly criticize Brodtkorb and Lysbakken for being less informed about atypical families than families like their own. We can, however, encourage them to become more aware of the connection between sexuality, family politics, and the welfare state.

What are the results of the invisibility of atypical families? Migration has been a heavily politicized issue for many decades, so it is surprising to see Brodtkorb and Lysbakken ignore it. Thun writes that since gender equality has become a normative cultural value in Scandinavia, "it hides the fact that there are differences of opinion within both the majority and the minorities regarding gender equality" (2014: 20). In forgetting that diversity exists within ethnic minorities, a simplistic in-group/out-group dichotomy is created. Brodtkorb and Lysbakken's silence maintains this dichotomy. Rich and Andersen and Hellesund agree that the absence of homosexuality from the conversation is ultimately negative. Rich writes that it results in weaker arguments, or in the case of Brodtkorb and Lysbakken, weaker political

platforms (1980: 140). Andersen and Hellesund write that equalizing heterosexuality and homosexuality represents the ultimate proof of “being a tolerant, secular society based on human rights and reason” (2009: 115). Additionally, families that fall outside of the normative family, are seemingly less valued and consequently “othered”. Then, it would follow that when two politicians, across the political axis, writing on the topics of feminism, gender equality, and family politics write through a heteronormative position, we can see evidence of its reproduction as a cultural standard. In her article, Anderson writes of how people cannot experience “the good life” without having become parents (56). This cultural norm portrays those who do not have children whether because of intention or biology, as having less meaningful and possibly less valuable, lives. The normative construction of the family as ethnic Norwegian, heterosexual, and fertile leads to invisibility of atypical families, to forgetting diversity, and “othering” those who do not fit the norm.

8 Conclusion

Julie Brodtkorb's book, "*Bare en kvinne? Blå feminisme, hersketeknikker og likeverdige liv*" tells many stories. She introduces and explains bourgeois feminism, writing to women aligned with bourgeois politics, and highlighting the lightly revolutionary spirit found in Høyre's women's politics. She also tries to fulfill a role somewhere between teacher and role model. Writing about combatting master suppression techniques, balancing work and family, and prioritizing one's life through scheduling, can be of use to many modern women. Her frequent use of the *ethos* argument also works to establish this role, as she constructs herself as "someone who has been there".

In "*Frihet, Likhet, Farskap*", Audun Lysbakken tells the story of being a father on paternal leave. Through this story, he writes of his fight for a three-part leave system, connecting this to his daily activities with his daughter. He also writes philosophically about his victories and defeats in fatherhood, with his message ultimately being that fatherhood does not need to be perfect to be successful. He also challenges perceptions of gender equality politics and feminism, indicating that a male perspective is necessary in order to obtain full gender equality in Norway.

My thesis statement asked: In what ways are Brodtkorb and Lysbakken similar and different to each other on the topics of feminism and gender equality, both as people and as representatives for their political parties? In general, they had much more in common than I originally assumed, especially when it came to their agreement on the connection between gender roles and gender equality. I was surprised that Brodtkorb was more identified with feminism than Lysbakken, the leader of a self-declared feminist political party. While I don't imagine it happening any time soon, or often, the significant similarities between the two hints that Høyre and SV working together on gender equality legislation could be possible, especially on the topics of flexible services or gender equality for children. The similarities also show that gender equality is, and will remain, a priority in Norwegian politics. In singling out gender roles as the main reason for continued inequality, Brodtkorb and Lysbakken are focusing on an area of life that is often barely visible. This means that they see the majority of significant barriers to gender equality, education or human rights for example, have been removed from Norwegian society. It remains to be seen whether or not

traditional gender roles will become a political target, but further research analyzing gender equality politics based on gender roles could be relevant for the future.

Given that Brodtkorb and Lysbakken have so much in common, it was initially difficult to discuss their differences. Feminism continues to be an ever changing ideology with many different directions. Lysbakken's leftist feminism had been the normative type of feminism for a few decades. But Brodtkorb's bourgeois feminism, taking its inspiration from some of the earliest feminists, is reemerging as a response to leftist feminism and is increasingly visible and popular. At the heart of their differences remains their view of the role of the government. Although both do see individual freedom as positive, Lysbakken balances it with the state's intervention as a benefit, not as unnecessary interference like Brodtkorb. This perspective also helps explain their ideas on state feminism. Lysbakken is still a supporter of state feminism from below as a social movement, but also state feminism from above through political processes. Brodtkorb still sees frequent state intervention as excessive, but supports and encourages mobilization from below. However, it is argued that Brodtkorb and other bourgeois feminists are operating with a not completely accurate definition of state feminism. Teigen asserts that state feminism is more than just gender equality politics, but the receptiveness of the state to the gender equality demands of the public (2014: online). This would, then, be a concept Brodtkorb would seemingly support and work towards expanding.

My first research question asked how and when the authors used feminism in their writing. To begin with Brodtkorb, her openness and time devoted to explaining bourgeois feminism not only shows that she has heavily researched the subject, but that she also identifies deeply with bourgeois feminism. The frequency in which she used the word "feminism" indicates comfortableness in using it, refusing to be affected by any stigma of the term. On the other hand, Lysbakken's silence hints at the opposite. While it is completely possible that his lack of identification happened by chance, the way in which he responded to hegemonic feminists indicated that here is at least some disenchantment with feminism as a whole for ignoring men and fatherhood. However, in the instances where they write positively about what feminism has achieved, it can be interpreted that they see feminism as a valuable tool with potential to foster significant change. Ultimately, the common thread is that the authors seek to change the status quo. In writing about feminism, they challenge the hegemonic notions of feminism. In telling their personal stories, they challenge the role of elite politicians into being someone the public can understand and relate to. Brodtkorb and Lysbakken show that

full gender equality could be obtained once men and women challenge the rigid roles of "mother" and "father" and divide their home lives more equally.

My second question asks: How do the authors understand, explain, and attempt to solve gender inequalities in Norway? While there can be, and likely are, many reasons why gender inequality continues in Norway, both Brodtkorb and Lysbakken are in agreement that the maintenance of traditional gender roles prevents full gender equality in Norway. Both authors work through the roles of men and women as workers and parents, and show that the expectations of traditional gender roles still manifest themselves to society's disadvantage. With instruction beginning from one's date of birth, gender roles influence how children are dressed, what toys they play with, and how they are spoken to by others. These activities converge to construct a rigid system where women are still expected to put their family first, while men are expected to have lucrative careers to financially support their families. Women end up electing to work part time, or not work at all, because they feel both a pressure and a taught desire to devote themselves to their families. Due to the social democratic welfare state found in Norway, this means decreased tax revenue and decreased funding to health, education, and infrastructure. Father's desire to participate in a role other than financial provider is prevented but mothers maintaining a hold on the home and care work as their personal domain. Additionally, the government not viewing mothers and fathers as having equal rights and responsibilities when it comes to the division of parental leave not only reproduces the signal that the mother is the primary caregiver, but also that the father is easily encouraged by their employers to not take more than the required quota of weeks.

My third question asked about the authors' blind spots in their messages. The most significant blind spot, that of the A4 family. Although it makes sense for both authors to conceptualize the family to mirror one similar to their own, it is surprising that, as politicians with significant experience in family politics, they would fail to discuss the applications of their feminism or politics for atypical families. Unmarried, homosexual, disabled, and ethnic minority couples continue to create families and are becoming increasingly present in the media and in advertisements. Additionally, these families have received increased rights and protections that legally value their families equally with heterosexual, fertile, ethnic Norwegian families. However, Brodtkorb and Lysbakken's silence indicate a cultural devaluing of these families as norm breakers. I would not have come to that conclusion should one author have been more verbal on the topic, but their combined silence seems to

support the notion that atypical families are tolerated but not celebrated as legitimate to the same extent as married, ethnic Norwegian, fertile, heterosexual families.

In the time since I began this thesis, the government changed from red-green to dark blue, the father's quota was reduced from twelve to ten weeks, and the bourgeois feminist, also known as blue feminism, emerged onto the scene in full force. Karen Thue and Victoria Wæthing's *Blåstømpet: Vi er de nye feministene* was published only weeks before thesis submission and has received a lot of press. Sweden's parliamentary election in September 2014 earned the Feminist Initiative a seat in the parliament for the first time. Inspired by this victory, Lysbakken hopes to increase feminist visibility in politics, not only among socialists, but all sides of the political spectrum (Melgård 2014: online). And while he continued to call SV a feminist party, he once again remained silent regarding his personal affiliation. Feminism is once again a relevant topic of discussion, but it remains to be seen if one political side will retain the definition, or if both sides will come to participate in the discussion.

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