

INCLUSIVITY AND LIBERAL DEMOCRACY: IDEOLOGICAL CONSTRUCTION IN OBAMA'S CAMPAIGN ADVERTISEMENT FOR 2008 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

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ABSTRACT

Advertisement has been known for its multi-purposes including political campaign. This thesis is an attempt to analyze Obama's commercial campaign advertisement entitled "American Stories, American Solutions" which was broadcasted on television and made Obama won the presidential election. The main objective of the study is to find the ideology constructed behind Obama's campaign advertisement. In so doing, the writer applied Barthean semiotics approach that breaks the analysis into three steps of signification: denotative meaning, connotative meaning, and the myth or ideology. The data or the advertisement was divided into two major things: first, the stories of American and Obama's appearance as the figure. The data were then analyzed through semiotics' steps: linguistic messages, visual meaning and complex meaning. While for the data on Obama's appearance, the analysis for visual meaning was going deeper, that is, exploring the color and setting as well as shots and paces. Finally the writer discussed the correlation between Obama's aim and the stories of Americans. The study revealed two points of myths/ideologies: first, Obama is suitable to be president of United States as he possesses characteristic and determination in solving problems with his inclusivity. Second, the campaign conveys Obama's vision of liberal democracy, which is a freedom to determine American's condition.

Keywords: Advertisement, Semiotics, Ideology, Liberal Democracy

1. Introduction

The advertisement advance had been noticed not only by Profit Company to sell their products but also politicians in election season, they tried to introduce society of their candidacy for the next president. To gain more voters, the society must get familiar with the candidate and the perfect way to get the voters is not only by holding rally-campaign but also through campaign advertisement on television. And this research focuses on the campaign advertisement as promotional material created by Barack Obama's presidential campaign team that produce in the mainstream media, television. The advertisement used is a 30 minutes commercial campaign aired nationally by CBS, NBC, FOX, MSNBC, TV One, and Univision on 2007 which had been downloaded from YouTube.com on 2010. The director of this infomercial is David Guggenheim, the director of 2006's "An Inconvenient Truth". The advertisement's title is "American Stories, American Solutions (Colville online).

Obama's campaign advertisement itself has been chosen because there are several interesting points that the writer believe can lead to the purpose of the advertisement, firstly because the advertisement was a success, seen from its ratings standpoint. According to Nielsen, "in the top 56 local television markets where Nielsen maintains electronic TV meters," 21.7 percent of households watched the Obama campaign advertisement (Colville online). The second, because he has won over the nation's brand builders and he has been named as Advertising Age's marketer of the year 2008, his phenomenal campaign had already been voted by hundreds of marketers, agency heads and marketing-services vendors (Creamer 1). Also from it, his rival, John McCain's and his campaign team going six ranks of Age Marketers (3). The last is because the profile of Obama itself, as the first African-American candidate that won the presidential election which gain a lot number of voters, succeed to persuade people an image of charismatic figure, through his famous rhetoric skill when he makes a speech as Redmond argues in his book 'Celebrity Studies': "Obama and those who adore him...promise of deliverance in the celebrity political figure. This is a

charismatic authority figure who promises this solidity yet streams in and out of material view (Redmond 3).”

Obama and his team created advertisement in form of compilation or excerpts of every image and slogan that he wants to deliver to his voters and can reflect his ideas, to gain people attention then the director applies an attractive audiovisual element that relies on the nature of television advertisement. He uses television as a media of moving image to send his advertisement’s message. Barthes helps to demonstrate not only that meaning is polysemic but that it is conveyed by both text and image; the initial of images can dominate our historical moment (Hartley 2). Barthes’s argued that the image does not illustrate the text, but the text that strengthens the connotative potential of the image (2).

According to Nurhadi, trans. *Mythologies* by Barthes, those images show that there is power to disclose many things that can be analyzed (Barthes 126). At first, image creation on certain candidates explain one correlation of problems between them and their voters; they not only offer the voters some programs to evaluate but also tell them physical condition of the country and express it from their performances and postures (126). This meaning comes up from the caption or accompanying text, it is when the image first appeared, provides what Barthes calls ‘anchorage’. ‘Anchorage’ is the process of amplifying or strengthening the meaning of the image as myth (Hartley 3). Obama’s campaign explains the linguistic sign or the text that may appear in the first image or in the middle accompanied by several aspects that is considered as the non-linguistic sign such images, camera works, also wardrobe and its color. Altogether build polysemic meaning likewise the previous passage clarifies. Because the writer consider certain signs such linguistics and non- linguistics, the result of the meaning may come various and polysemic that this campaign advertisement may also represent contemporary society’s basic values where the advertisement director tries to illustrate its way of life and dramatize its controversies and struggles that Obama explains further in the advertisement, as well as its modes of conflict resolution of American today. Those aspects lead to the question about what ideology is constructed in Obama campaign advertisement.

The intention to find what ideology that Obama constructed in the advertisement is based on Barthean semiotic. By breaking down every level of signification, we can interpret the meaning of the advertisement and reveal the myth or ideology that the campaign wants to deliver toward the viewer since they play an important role in the theory to understand the sign. As one of communication instruments, advertisement communicates with audience not only from the language sign but also color, setting, and cinematographic features of the advertisement that are also called as symbol (Noeryani 8). Barthes’s theory is considered as suitable one to decode the sign and analyze the advertisement comprehensively by revealing the implicit meaning of texts and visual culture product (Storey 109). Most importantly, the theory can help reveal the ideology constructed in the advertisement.

2. Semiotic by Roland Barthes

Semiotics itself was introduced first by Ferdinand de Saussure in 1916. According to Copley and Janz, semiotics as a discipline is the analysis of signs or the study of the functioning of sign system (Copley & Jansz 48). Today in modern era, it has been developed by noticeable figures such as Charles S. Pierce, Julia Kristeva, Umberto Eco, Roland Barthes, and many more semioticians. This study applies Barthes theory of semiotics because as the modern era, sign objects could be form also in any objects which belong to different categories as he stated in his writing ‘*Mythologies*’ that the sign is not simply the signifier expressing the

signified, but also deals with any semiological system, not with two, but with three different terms (Barthes 3). In his other writing ‘*Elements of Semiology*’, Barthes grouped them under four main headings taken from structural linguistics. Four of them are language and speech, signifier and signified syntagm and system, denotation and connotation (Saktia 12, Barthes 1964).

In their book, ‘*Introducing Semiotics*’, Copley and Janz’s classify Barthes’ theory into three parts: coded iconic messages as the connotative meanings of an image that is related to a broader

sign system in the society, non-coded messages as the denotative meaning of an image, and linguistic messages that include all phonemes, letter words or sentences in the advertisement that can be treated as signs. The methodologies using Barthes's approaches of semiotics may possibly vary since the theory itself is applicable in exploring many visual objects such as advertisement which is discussed.

The manner in which this happens is that the first order sign becomes the expression (signifier) for a second order sign (Barthes). A second order system can also develop when the sign becomes the content (signified) of a second order system. Barthes's *Mythologies* exposes how the larger sign system makes up the society. He interprets the connotation meaning in the text and defines the system of connotation as myth and later describes this as ideology. Barthes argues that mass media creates mythologies or ideologies at secondary sign systems by giving their messages a foundation in nature (Saktia 15, Barthes 131). As stated in the denotation level, the signs communicate natural meaning at the connotative level then both will fully examine the ideological meaning. Whenever culture exists, the ideology exists (15). Culture is a part of ideology itself so ideology is through a range of codes that go over the text in the form of important signs and interpretation such as language or speech, background, and some cinematic features like camera techniques, wardrobe, and so on.

3. Liberal Democracy

After the Second World War, America faced the temporary success of a cultural and political agreement, theoretically based on liberalism, pluralism, classlessness. Liberalism is emphasized in total improvement of people freedom which does not come from the government. It has been seen as a change of way in

that it sees the government as a means of correcting the problems and failure of society through the use of encouraging action. Today's America would see liberals in the government as a positive force in issues involving, for example, civil rights when the government can use its authority and power to change society for the good so that individuals can experience a positive benefit to their lives brought about by government action. In this sense, according to political website, democracy liberals do not see the government necessarily as a major threat to individual freedom. The point is that United States' basis of governments has to go to the electorate on a stable and regular rate is part of this democratic process (historylearningsite online).

Effective guarantees of freedom of speech, press, religion, assembly, and petition and of equality before the law are crucial to a democratic system of government. Politics, parties and politicians are the catalytic agents that make democracy workable. Plano and Greenberg argued in their book, most Americans consider of their political system as best described by the term democratic (14). The material wealth and well-being of American society is being undermined by the dehumanizing effects of mass culture. Rosenberg in Storey's book argued that mass culture is not American by nature or by example. Nor is it the inevitable culture of democracy (Storey 34).

Then American assumed it as rule that expose society by a government, they claim to be democratic in name but in practice it will decide what it will do for the people as an election victory has given it as the public order to do.

4. Economic Hardship: Life Stories

To answer the research question, the writer needs to analyze few talks, speeches and conversations taken from the advertisement that are meaningful to the

ideology discovery. There are similar components found here that leads to the solutions given by Obama, their problems and anxieties of health care, expensive education's tuition, taxes for families and small business, also jobs, and retirement. Each stories explain different condition with the same problems, then it followed by Obama's appearance to give solutions towards their problems which actually all American's difficulties.

5. Story 1

5.1 Linguistic Message

The first linguistic message in verbal meaning is when Americans told their life story. First story after Obama's opening speech is the story of a working woman, Rebecca Johnston and her family

"Brian, me, Nathan, Marley, Ethan, Gabriella, Tulula, and Jake"(00:01:54) She introduced her family member by showing the picture behind her car that represents her family member, even their pets also mentioned as part of the family member.

"...I think everybody feels the same way, they would like to see an end in sight to all the worry and the chaos of everyday living. Trying to make ends meet. Ok, how much are we bringing in this week?(00:03:12)" then continue with "...It just keeps going up and up and up and I can't remember a time when I didn't have to worry about this stuff"(00:03:43), according to the transcript of her story, the word

'worry' is said twice. This brief clip told the fact that she cannot afford to heal her husband because she has to pay her children tuition and their daily need, it shows that their family and financial condition makes her worry all the time, then the narrative (Obama's voice) stated the same condition also happens in most of American family he met during the campaign. The story is told using the present tenses to describe also the current condition.

5.2 Visual Meaning

This visual representation acts as the denotation meaning in the image of the advertisement. Barthes himself uses 'the non-coded iconic message' to refer this

'literal' denotation, the recognition of identifiable objects (Cobley and Jansz 49). Barthes notices this meaning as 'the coded iconic message' term and basically uses for visual connotation derived from the structure of visual elements as what has been explained previously.

So in the first story has shown the big plain house, not so luxurious also but seems comfortable to live in the suburban area. The writer assumed it was not a luxury house as there was not a big gate or luxurious ornament and furniture like typically house in Beverly Hills or mansion of the rich people. But that can indicate that her family not really poor family but tends to be categorized as middle class, and the figure beside Rebecca's house shows is the picture that represents her family member, the picture draws his husband, her, her children and pets holding hands each other. It is like she introduces her happy family from the picture below.



Figure 1



Figure 2

From two picture above combined with the testimonial of Rebecca Johnston, it can be seen that she tries so hard to meet family's sustainability. While the caption 'For further information: Barackobama.com' in the picture beside it notified the additional information in case the viewer are interested to visit the website or even vote for Obama after they watch the advertisement.

6. Story 2

6.1 Linguistic Message

Second story tells about Larry Stewart and Juanita, old couple lived in Sardinia, Ohio Juanita: "I take 12 different medications per day. When Larry was working, all of that was covered. When he

retired I did not have medical insurance, and each year it just got worse and worse and worse "(00:08:31). The word 'retire' has been mentioned three times in this section to describe this old couple's condition. "Larry is retired a total of ten years. But five of those years, he had to go back to work"(00:09:00).

"Associate salesman, in other words, I just sell stuff. That's all. I'm 72 years old, and things are changing"(00:09:11). Then the last Juanita's sentence formed future tense that tends to ask her their next finance condition. "You just wonder, you know, where am I going from here?"(00:09:30)

Juanita is an old age housewife that suffers because of her husband cannot afford her health care since he has retired from the B& O Railroad after 30 years working on, it was told then after his retirement from one company he still has to get money and look for another job to continue his wife medication and pay the loans to the bank and get their house back. It is told in a form of simple present and past tense also to distinguish an explanation of the old couple previous condition until today where everything can be worst.

6.2 Visual Meaning



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7

The first scene of this story also shoots the house with large yard, not as dense as the first story's house but it is also comfortable and spacy. Just like Johnston house, if we take a look closer to the house is painted with plain color and ordinary design. Non-luxury stuff and furniture also complete inside the house. With the caption 'Sardinia, Ohio' on the screen which is told as the place where they live. The yard with high trees in front of it also forms different meaning, it can be said that they do not have any typical garden of beautiful flower that every upper class family usually have it. It seems like grow wildly and nobody take care of it, since they

cannot afford to nurture it and let it be like that to give shelter to the house from the sun heat or rain.

And the figure beside it, Larry Stewart, about 70 years old man that wears his uniform again after the retirement to fulfill his wife's health care needs. Larry is shot in medium shot, from face then moved down to chest to show his name tag of some company he works lately. The blue

uniform can be an indication that his position in the company is what usually we call the level of blue collar worker. Worker with low payment and tough job always indicate that they are middle or even lower class. This intention is to gain particular meaning to bring viewers closer to the character as Prince explain in his book about showing some of the environment (12).

In the seventh figure above is written 'For other information: Text vote to

62262', with the same arrangement from the previous logo in the right corner of the screen to indicate the number where the viewer should send their voice to support Obama when they watch that advertisement and also can indicate that advertisement is an official one.

7. Story 3

7.1 Linguistic Message

Then there is third story about a widow with two children and loan, Juliana Sanchez, lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico. "A lot of the families here go through extreme financial hardships" (00:04:09). Her statement tries to generate the representation of all American family financial condition; they have the same experience and similar difficulties. Sanchez notices that in her region, her neighborhoods that are considered as neighborhood that most American have are surviving from the crisis by taking more than one job like this statement.

"Most of us are educators, we all have second jobs. Financially the pressure is just to keep your head above water, so that you don't feel like you are drowning all the time. Health care, food, electric, gas, it takes out so much out of my paycheck" (00:04:30), or like another story at the end of the school day, her work is only half done. This story focus more on education field and teacher's life in America who are paid less for their job so they have to take two jobs to fulfill their daily need.

She is concerned about professionalism in her job as an educator, but she also cannot avoid taking second job to feed the family member and put her children in a good school. The word implied in the story and also told by Obama, as the narrator is

'good education'. No matter how difficult the condition, every American wants the best education for their children. This story will be the introduction of what Obama will contribute. Her intention to tell the story in the present and present progressive

tense because it shows that her testimonial and story happen today, when all

Americans also facing difficult time in economy, job, health care, and education.

7.2 Visual Meaning



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10

Like other three stories before, the scene always start by showing a house and name of the place where the story occurs. Now, the story happens in Albuquerque, New Mexico with the background of ordinary house seen from the car window and it is moving fast to give general overview of houses in New Mexico. The next picture is Julia Sanchez and her daughter buying their daily needs, pushing the empty trolley

because the things are getting more expensive and they have to be really concern to pick the affordable things, this scene also says what Sanchez means by saying 'Health care, food, electric, gas - it takes out so much out of my pay check. You go buy a gallon of milk and you're like going ok - is it a gallon or half gallon? What can I afford? You feel like you can't breathe even though you need to breathe'(00:04:54)

The sentences above strengthen her financial condition; she prefers buying little things and saves for tomorrow so her family can still survive. The picture of vegetable and daily product's prices was shot in close up mode, it specifies how tight is the economy condition overall and whether this family still can afford to survive. Later, this meaning could be seen as one of Obama's reason to offer solution to decrease the price and stabilize economic.

The same text and Obama's logo also appear once again to announce further information down right of the screen. Because it is a 30 minutes infomercial campaign, the information about candidate and election are assumed to appear several times in each stories. This time, the caption is 'for further information: Barackobama.com', is the same as appears on Johnston's story.

8. Story 4

8.1 Linguistic Message

Last story is come from Louisville, Kentucky. A third-generation of Ford motor employee, Mark Dowd and his wife Melinda who has put off her job before the testimonial, will tell their story. Now the company where the couple works is broke, Mark's work are cutting to every other week and they are surviving to make the money enough until the end of the month.

'When manufacturing spread to towns across America, it brought jobs and a way of life. Working-class families could buy their first home and a piece of the American dream' (00:02:39). Obama as narrator give a reflection about what happens in the past about manufacturing companies and their workers. A lot of chances and opportunity of a middle class family can be achieved from working in such companies, but today when all the big companies are broke and have to decrease their employee because of the financial crisis.

"If a plant shut down here in Louisville, it would just be devastating. People would lose their homes. Restaurants and retail stores would lose business because people wouldn't have the money to shop. I feel like we're all in the same boat. We got to pull together. If we don't, we're going to lose America as we once known it"(00:03:42). The conditional sentence that Mark says is to indicate the result if the action is still undertaken, with their difficult times today, it will not be a significant resolution.

8.2 Visual meaning



Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13

Picture 11 shows like preceding stories' scenery, the house of most Americans family with its plain color paint, wide, and ordinary. The house also looks far in long shot to give general view. The next picture also displays Obama's campaign logo and information about number of short message service center whenever the viewer wants to vote for Obama. Obviously that logo of additional information always appears in each story. The same pattern that is applied in every story like the name of every state also appears in this last story. This family lives in Kentucky where the Ford motor

company also has their manufacturing center and becomes the background of the scene with its chimney's top.

8.3 Connotative Meaning

From the first scene until the last, there are several patterns that the researcher believed it has been setting by the director of this advertisement to achieve certain meanings. The meanings about it are: that the American families in the story are classified as middle class people. First because it can be seen from the same-model of their house which is plain and ordinary, there is not found any luxurious things inside or outside the house. Second, it is from their job like Rebecca Johnston and her husband that even cannot afford to do a surgery for her husband, or Larry Stewart that has to take another job after his retirement, Julia Sanchez as an educator and still has to take second job to fulfill her families need, and Mark Dowd that work as an employee of Ford motor company, the next is that from all Americans, none of them holds an important position or as decision maker like CEO of some company or stock broker.

According to MIT economist Frank Levy in his question-answer session with Tess Vigeland, he defined the middle class based on Census data for families in their prime years that reasonable rank is about \$30,000 to \$90,000. "It means you can afford a single-family house and a car or to heat the house and so on. For Obama, Americans that make more than \$97,000 a year is only 6 percent. Then, 6 percent is not the middle class; but it is the upper class" (Vigeland online).

The talents also mention the keywords of economic; about work (28 times); dollar (6 times); payment (3 times); company (15 times); Jobs (3 times). Then this classification determines their

economic status, all the anxieties and difficulties they have met as middle class is mainly caused by economy (scharloth online).

The second is that the caption of Obama's campaign information plays an important role in emphasizing the importance of website and short message service to be displayed on the screen in each stories, the intention on displaying the website address not only to give additional information about the campaign but also how to donate the campaign through the web, and number that also appear on each stories' scenes is where Americans can vote directly and declare their support toward Obama right away after they see the advertisement. Because the high probability that the director predict, the more often the advertisement are played on television, the more viewer are influenced with Obama and the four stories as they experience the same and alter their mindset about election. According to Jeffrey Goldfarb, Obama campaigns is a new form of electoral politics that has appeared in more sociological, inclusive, and the way the social interactions of the Web has helped in the constitution of an independent public space for political action in his campaign (3). So after watching the advertisement, the viewer can have interactions and contribution towards Obama campaign through his official website www.BarackObama.com.

The fourth is the family sustainability and difficulties. Since this advertisement entitled 'American Stories, American Solutions', the stories will tell about American families and their daily activities, the frames and setting consist of house, family member, work places, and road view. When Rebecca Johnston shows a picture of her family behind her car with holding hands or the scene where every photos of Stewarts is shot or when Sanchez family has dinner together or when Dowd takes his children to the playground, those all tell about American family's happiness where the goal of every American people is to keep their family's stable even they now facing difficulties in finance, jobs, and health care.

Then the anxieties always appear since the crisis. And from all the testimonial they have made are assumed that they need some changes and government's solutions for the middle class citizens like them. Besides, the keywords they used are mostly about family member that indicates the campaign's concern, according to <http://scharloth.com/poltracker.html> that found words: kid (6 times); grandchild (4 times); son (5 times); father (4 times); family (13 times). This website provides new analysis on semantic of the U.S. presidential candidates campaign in 2008, John McCain and Barack Obama. According to it examinations using semantic search and new tracking technology, the language and the characteristic features of candidates' political campaign are compared even word per word with a probability of 95% and higher (scharloth online). The differences between the candidate's languages in their campaign speeches are not random but are the result of specific linguistic strategies in the creation of political messages.

The last is that the people from the four stories comes from different states, they represents the Red states, whose the resident predominantly give their voices to Republican party presidential candidates and Blue state where the people tends to vote for Democratic party's candidates. Because Obama's campaign team (including the director of this advertisement) creates this advertisement to gain more voters even if they live in the state where the majority is supporting Republicans such as Kentucky where Mark Dowd's family live as seen from Wikipedia that taken from MSNBC.com mentions, because they still have time to change their decision and start to support Obama. Then Blue state like New Mexico where Sanchez's family live, Obama wants to make sure and emphasize his voters in Democratic dominant area to keep the trust and encourage them to take an action. While Ohio and Missouri where two families on the previous stories live represents the Purple state, that refers to swing state where both Democratic and Republican presidential candidates obtain strong support without an overwhelming majority of support for either party. Purple states are also often referred to as battleground states (Wikipedia online).

The last aspects is that all of the sentences above used with the same negative pattern as compiled in Hinkel's TOEFL, test strategies; Subject + Auxiliary + not+verb (64). That means negative condition or considered not in good and wealthy situation at that time, moreover this structure has supported by the simple present tense usage in the sentence as the time signal to draw the presence condition. The

next evidence is the word choices like worse, worry, drowning, lose, and so on that are also considered as negative in order to express anxiety.

Overall, the stories introduces the main problems that Americans face today is about economy, which also include job, middle class people, health care, and including environmentally friendly companies. Later, Obama that appears after each story tells that he will solve the problems by himself with people's contribution. That is why he infers the stories so that Americans have a freedom to overcome the problems together.

9. Obama's Speech

9.1 Linguistic Message

The next verbal meaning that is found in Obama's campaign advertisement beside the four main stories is the use of subject pronoun '**I**' spoken by Obama in most frames whenever he says his resolutions and speech in front of the public. The first sentence said by Obama to introduce his campaign advertisement is "**I'm** Barack obama and **I** proof this message" (00:00:02), this an approval from Obama himself with his identical voice heard in the advertisement is truly made by his team followed with visual where Obama and Biden's figure appear on screen. After camera fade in, we saw Obama standing in office setting and began his first speech, "Every where **I** go despite the economic crisis and war, and uncertainty about tomorrow, **I** still see optimist and hope and strength" (00:00:28), this first sentence has been said after he was describes the current condition of America, the negative result done by previous

leader's administration is the main cause of economic crisis and war- by sending the troops in conflict countries.

The next sentence that may be found mostly before he mentions solutions of matters told by Americans, "As president, here's what **I'll** do..." (00:04:57) this indicates that he hopes he can provide solution to overcome their problematic life. And the last speech he says to close the advertisement is "**I'm** reminded every single day, that **I** am not a perfect man. **I** will not be a perfect president. But **I** can promise you this, **I** will always tell you what **I** think and where **I** stand; **I** will always be honest with you about the challenges we face. **I** will listen to you when we disagree, and most importantly **I** will open the doors of government and ask you to be involved in your democracy again" (00:06:47). The use of 'will' in Obama's previous speech is identified as a future tense signaling what he will do if elected to be the new president. While the present progressive added with 'to be' indicate the actions has started before he elected.

The next related text that there are seventeen texts on screen where the viewer at home can read it clearly in the bottom of their television each time Obama speak the actions he would do if he becomes a president. Some of them are "Cut taxes for families making less than \$200.000" (00:05:00) ; "Freeze foreclosure for 90 days" (00:05:20); "Expand domestic oil production"(00:01:12); "Invest in clean coal energy"(00:01:08); "Rebuild our military"(00:04:41); "Improve information and technology" (00:07:56); "Help auto companies retool for fuel efficient cars" (00:00:51); and so on. But it has been analyzed that the first word used in every

sentences are verb one or infinitive without 'to' which are considered as concord,

'Which refers to the way a word has a form appropriate to the number or gender of the noun or pronoun it relates to (Collins). These sentences always appear on screen when Obama delivers his speech to the viewer in office setting and are considered as his resolution described in each point of what Obama said.

This result has shown far larger extent of personal pronoun representing collectivity and dialogue between Obama and his viewer. More specifically, Obama employs 'we' 1.4-times more than John McCain and 'us' 1.33-times more. The pronouns 'you' and 'yourself' also arise to a statistically significant higher degree (1.5-times more/6.17-times more) in his rhetoric (scharloth online).

9.2 Visual Meaning



Figure 14

Texts which are found in the advertisement are limited to several most important with the study intention and moreover they may be the fact to strengthen the analysis. Before texts about Obama resolution appears, the viewer will see in the first scene the “OBAMA” writing as the first text with the largest fonts among others. The OBAMA writing in the very first beginning of the scene with the biggest font used is considered as the emphasizing name to introduce in this campaign advertisement, the main character that announces his president candidacy. The director also wants to stress that Obama is the first man in the advertisement. Under “OBAMA” written, there is precisely “BIDEN” located in the top left of the screen just one size below Obama’s font, the intention to set one size before OBAMA’s font is to infer that he is the candidate partner of Obama or as vice president if Obama elected as president of United States, it can also be seen because both of them consist of the same five words but different length.

While in the right bottom of the screen written in smallest fonts was a website address of Obama, “WWW. BARACKOBAMA.COM”. The website address is put in the bottom right to acknowledge viewer that every further information about Obama candidacy and his success team so the viewer can visit it whenever they are online. The researcher has found additional fact which is supported this analysis that the internet based campaign is also one of the key way how social interactions of the Web has helped the components of an independent public space for political action in the Obama campaign where people can give direct comment or opinion to every policies made.

The last one is the caption: “APPROVED BY BARACK OBAMA PAID FOR BY OBAMA FOR AMERICA” in medium size of fonts, another fact is that all texts use capital letter, and there is captured in the scene a square and blue board that may be brought by Obama’s supporter written ‘OBAMA’ in the left side, one line with the website address. This also means similar with the writing OBAMA on the blue board hold by his supporter, camera only captures the board smaller than Obama and Biden’s figure that seems bigger on the screen, but in addition this board can represent that there are many people that support him to be the next president of United States.

The caption in the bottom middle of the frame has studied as approval message directly from the candidate who holds this campaign advertisement, Obama. The font also set in medium size or bigger than the website address to give notification that this approval text is more important to be noticed by the viewer rather than the website address. The meanings of the sentence to make it clearer and imply that this campaign advertisement’s fund comes from Obama’s own money under his own control during the making of advertisement because this advertisement is dedicated to America, in order to show Obama’s dedication toward his country and became the main reason his candidacy.

9.3 Color and Setting Representation

One of visual representations that had been analyzed to represent the important meaning in this advertisement is dominant color that is often used in both environment and costume worn by the main actor, Obama. According to Holahan in his book, *Environmental Psychology*, explain that a countless deal of popular and professional speculation has focused on the effects of various colors

on people's performance (134). The director notices this influential effect and simplifies its meaning by setting the environment and costume in particular colors, so when Obama began his single frame where he delivers his speech and promises then it is believed to imply an idea supported the main goal of the campaign advertisement itself. It has shown that great contrast in colors can directly affect performance on visual tasks that involve color discrimination (133). The dominated colors that can be found in the advertisement are red, blue, and white. Most of the colors make a pattern and combined each other:



Figure 15

Figure 16



Figure 17

Figure 18

The red one is found in most Obama's tie when he speaks indoor and outdoor when he meets people, Brig. Gen US Army (ret.) John Adam's tie the color of American flag's stripes that is found almost in every background of Obama scenes, in Obama's campaign logo as thin silhouette. Blue; found in American flag, Obama's tie in some occasion, Biden's tie in the first scene, in Obama's campaign logo and background, Obama's podium when he gives campaigning speech, Obama's stages whenever he holds a campaign in front of his supporter.



Figure 19

White; initiated most Obama's shirt with or without tie or formal suit, white stripes in American flag, used in Obama's campaign logo, and applied in font color of every text written during campaign advertisement. Those colors are believed to have formed strong correlation of meaning

seen from how often they appear in the environment around Obama and from the outfit that Obama wears during this advertisement. It cannot be coincidence event since those colors appear repeatedly almost every scene in order to deliver message as the goal of the advertisement.



Figure 20



Figure 21

The next visual representation is setting. In this investigation, the most frequent settings and backgrounds used in most frames are considered having a

hidden message. There are several settings that appear more often than others, indoor or outdoor. The settings are: formal office-like as the first background with table and desk and American flag in the corner assumed like typical 'Oval office' in the White house and scenery through the window behind it as a background.

The picture below is identical with president's office in the white house (Oval office) but different place:



Figure 22

The office setting in advertisement



Figure 23 Oval Office, White House

9.4 The Shots and Paces in Editing Process

In practice, camera works usually have basic positions that classified as variations of three essential camera setups, so this is one of several things that is discussed toward the denotative meaning of this advertisement: the long shot, the medium shot, and the close-up. Since the researcher cannot identify any significant close-up shots in most scenes, the analysis concerns only to the two main shots that frequently used. Paces also include tempo and dramatic focus by varying the lengths of shots, the director of this advertisement established rhythm in pacing that is called tempo in order to reach the dramatic focus and also modulated the pacing of the advertisement. The main focus of this part of analysis is Obama because he also inserts excerpts from speeches at the 2004 and 2008 Democratic National Conventions and other past speeches. According to Liz Colville, as well as statements taped specifically for the ad that outlines what he will do to grow the U.S. economy as president (Colville). It is because the length of the shots never remains constant throughout a moving image (Prince 12). Thus, the writer distinct that moving image not only about film and cinema with their fiction stories but also includes this infomercial advertisement functioned as campaigning tools.

Long shot may be stated as establishing shots of the outdoor rally campaign environment, with the visual composition's meaning is nearly all of the standing person; large parts of a building and shows a large scale action. Then after that scene, started with the narration voice, the camera fades in and changes into the office-setting's scene. In here, Obama is also shot in the long shot then the camera gradually stays on the medium shot, Obama has shown from waist up; medium-sized architectural details, before he suddenly faded out as his speech ended and comes in another different environment with many people inside the room and Obama in the center, speaks to them as there is held a public dialogue. The two scenes are framed brightens the character and preserves details of the setting. The other scenes that combine the two shots are the four stories of American. Most of the characters in the stories begin with long shot to show what kind of environment they live, and then the cut and pace begin faster that in Obama scene, after all they are to emphasize their story; the medium shot is needed whenever they tell their situation.

As an editor that has an authority over the director to modulate the pacing of this advertisement, he may cut to establish measured tempo (sometimes moods included) with shots of longer duration. Like when the scene of four American's stories, the analysis came up with the fact that most of the pace and cut operated slowly, approximately one until two seconds. Then the camera in a very slow motion fades in and fades out from one scene to another, from one story to Obama's speech, and it then goes back to another story and another different speech by turns. This editing product is studied as one of the most powerful narrative effects that editing can create (Prince 148).

9.5 Connotative Meaning

Meanwhile the anxiety expression has been recognized in four stories; Obama scene that comes after one story has been admitted by the current situation. Beforehand, he explains the status quo of United States and its position in the world correlated to what happen with the people who live in it. Those means that he, as candidate of president, has something to offer toward Americans, using subject pronoun 'I' that infers his originality concepts and somehow patriotic leader are eager to overcome the obstacles. Using 'I' as subject pronoun that repeated all the time, Obama speak whether on frame where he talks to the viewer or to the audience when he delivers speech, could be a clear sign of his ideas followed by several future tenses or simple present as a means of his action occur right now in the present time of his campaign advertisement or sooner when he is elected as president of United States.

The speech is delivered as if Obama himself would fix the problem of this nation with the support from Americans, the 'I' subject pronoun soon will make the audience who watch the advertisement are influenced by the idea that offering. Like in the very first scene where he is by himself approved the advertisement and narrated it: "**I'm** Barack obama and **I** proof this message".Obama functions the subject position while talking to the viewer with 'I' for mentioning himself as the candidate,'you' to the viewer at home, and mentions 'we' which refers to Obama and the viewer as unity, as American people.

The other indication of what has shown in the table of pronoun above is to once again stress that Obama wants to draw more diverse and complex image of problems and people's aspirations also where he expects to lead the nation in a collective effort toward the future in Democratic way which is freedom of contribution from American people. Then his resolution and purpose mentioned in his speech are considered as the suitable one to solve the difficulties correlated to the four previous stories. Evidence about his eagerness to lead is his strong words said on screen: 'optimist', 'strength', 'hope', 'change', which full of optimist expression (later known also as his jargon) and intention toward a betterment in America.

The color used in most of the scenes, from the suits that Obama has worn or from other properties used are considered reflecting American flag, and if those colors close to Obama's character, it is going to make a deep reflection between the psychological and character's meaning. And the connotative meaning that identifies colors is associated with particular moods (Holahan 133). The red color found in most ties, logo, and flag seen as 'exciting' and 'stimulating' color (Holahan 133). But for American flag, the red color means 'hardiness' and 'valor' (Smith).

By contrast, blue is often found also in Obama and Biden's tie, logo, and American flag. Blue psychologically affects 'secure' and 'soothing' (Smith). For color in American flag it means 'vigilance', 'perseverance', and 'justice' (Smith). While the white color found also in American flag, logo, and Obama's shirt is viewed as 'purity' and 'innocence' (Smith). From the facts the researcher may speculate as Holahan said in his book that colors affect people's mood differently, arousal, and attitudes indirectly also affect task performance (133). If taken a different point of view of identification, most red, blue, and white color appear in most scenes in form of Obama and other character's costumes which most of them are worn formal suits, and also American flag. Then from the analysis it is considered that those colors' idea indicate to American flag's color elements. The red, blue, and white color combination after analyzed as the color of American flag, it also represent the donkey which becomes the logo of Democratic, Obama's party with the same color like American flag. The famous Democratic donkey associated with Democratic Party, today the donkey is said by Democratic supporter as smart and brave animals.

Those colors are shown as American Democratic donkey then implicitly explain red as exciting, brave, blue as aware and care, and white as persistent and honest. The donkey and its color which is also American color, is the character that exists in Obama as democrat's presidential candidate. His strong character that is supposed to be had by all leaders' candidate emphasizes more with the four stories of worry American and their problematic situation. According to Goldfarb, his expressive capability as one of the most persuasive orators is an important component of the power he is generating (3).

The next meaning after analyzing closely to what Obama wear in the advertisement is the setting applied in the campaign advertisement. First setting is office, considered as the main frame for Obama to give conclusion form all compiled scenes and stories about America's life and his resolution, the same setting and placement with the 'Oval office' in white house might indicate that it pretend to be the simulation of president office and it seems Obama deserves to work in the 'Oval room', not only to work behind the desk but also to work for America as the next elected president.

Another camera and editing meaning having been explained is the shots and paces, the first is long shot. The director, Davis Guggenheim, creates the paces and slower cut to get idea and show Obama as the one who is going to help Americans together to solve the problems. He commonly uses the long shot to stress environment or setting to show a character's position in a relationship to a given environment (Prince 11). The first scene in one of Obama's campaign rally is used long shot to open an advertisement or to begin a scene and give viewers at home a pictorial of his campaign and his candidacy. Medium shot is used as the contrast to the long shot, the medium shot brings viewers closer to the character while still showing some of the environment (11). It means that Obama will stress any relationship as American to the viewers at home while in the same time integrating them into their environment, and share them the same feeling to the American in the stories of his advertisement.

While in the scenes of Americans life story, the director tends to apply both long shot in the first and medium shot when they tell their story of life. These shots are intended to give more portrait to the viewer at home that this four different people from different states actually are not rich and have the same financial problem. It causes them to pay more for their children's educations, their own health care, and have to take two jobs in a day, also taking higher loan.

The paces in editing use in this advertisement usually come from the director and editor that purposely create a slow pace and letting shots linger on screen, in order to give the screen melodramatic room to develop, they make it in a convincing manner and let the viewers have 'mirror image' time with the stories in the advertisement. More over the contrast between the pace in Obama scene that tend to be slower and moderate than in the American scene that cut faster is clear enough have a relation. The problems shown in the scene of four American actually are the problems that Obama wants to solve so when the turns of Obama's scene, the pace move slower because he will talk all the actions he will like to do for American people like them in the stories that he consider many Americans also have the same problems.

Obviously, both camera and human eye can see color, texture, movement, and the location of people and things in three-dimensional space. The way that editing signs the viewer is to make associations and draw interpretations across the cut and make them easier to receive the message of the advertisement. The director give some stories that only reflect the image of middle class American to connect to Obama's main concerned in his candidacy and campaign.

10. Myth/Ideology in Obama's Advertisement

Viewers can learn quickly that moving images including advertisement can define their own rules of representation. They accept the images, characters with his language and wardrobe, also stories that established in this advertisement as a representational American reality that in that time are true on its own situation. The director also stresses this idea in the shots and process of editing. As stated in the preceding analysis that Obama's infomercial mainly stressed on people's worry about the future, the economic uncertainty and the family, they are attempted to bring his concrete agenda through to the individual level in an emotional and personal approach while taking into account the life-long experiences and expectations of Americans across the country as explained in semantic matrix analysis of U.S Presidential Campaign '08 in the website (scharloth online).

After examining the linguistic messages and other supporting factors, such as color elements, shots, speeches and his party, the writer accomplished that the advertisement features Obama as a strong and promising candidate for presidency. It also offers the ideology of liberal democracy. Liberal democracy is used to explain

political philosophy of America and even some government sector claimed their base value on it (Plano and Greenberg 15). The term liberal itself in a political point of view is a change in politic, economy, and social status quo towards development and individual's welfare.

Obama realizes that the majority of American is come from middle class families as the stories told. He will have to take big actions to fight the obstacles with them if he wants to win the election. That is why his advertisement aimed to give illustration of ordinary American's family life represents from the four stories which talk mostly about family's happiness and economy anxiety. It possibly will help audiences to have closer impression toward Obama's experience and integrated stories that are told toward their own life situations. Furthermore, the message of ideology that Obama tries to deliver can be received by the viewer about his concern toward the middle class people who suffer financially, economically, and physically. That is why his resolutions if he is elected to be the next president will fully support for most American people, the middle class's prosperity.

The result analysis reflects Obama's political view and its goal, as Democratic Party's candidate that supports changes in political, economic, or social status equality, freedom and opportunity of the individual. He emphasizes the full improvement of the individual freedom from the government policy. The stories above have answering the needs of Americans; their economic

stability, their worry, and family happiness. Obama had answer their challenge by providing lower tax for

small business and cuts it for every working family that making less than \$200,000 , or giving low cost loan for small business to pay their worker. And persuasively asking his supporter to participate, vote him means vote for their own opportunity to change their difficult condition into betterment. It suits with the notion of liberal democracy that his party's value, which has seen a way of change in its look to government as a means of modifying the misuses and failings of society through the use of positive action.

According to '*the American Political Dictionary*', today's liberals would see the government as a positive force in issues involving, for example, civil rights when the government can use its authority and power to change society for the good so that individuals can experience a positive benefit to their lives brought about by government action (Plano and Greenberg 17). In this sense, modern liberal value that Obama's offered did not see the government necessarily as a major threat to individual freedom. And still that a new form of politics is developing (Goldfarb 6).

The related meaning of color blue, red, and white between Obama's wardrobe, American flag, and also the color of Democratic donkey implies a characteristic of American and their value that proves Obama as the appropriate candidate because he possesses the strong characteristics and determinations needed for a president in the moment of hardship. It is also supported by the speeches he has given in the advertisement and language chosen, the use of pronoun I, we, you, indicating the subject to do the changes toward American betterment. If it is linked it

to the previous stories, then it can be mean as 'We' (Obama and common American in the stories). He dares to offer inclusivity and liberal democracy to American people in order to stand on their feet and fight for a better life, better America.

11. Conclusion

It is very much a part of the innovative political era for people who support and also for people who oppose the Obama presidency, the notion of being involved in a public space, and being ready for community action. It is in the stuff of everyday life and it is politically significant. The politics of small things matters (Goldfarb 7). The advertisement has become significant tools to disperse Obama's idea to change American's condition and Goldfarb identifies it as a new political way of campaign.

In examining the advertisement, the writer has realized since the very first time that to reveal the 'myth' will meet many interpretations according to the signs that appear, Barthes has also stated that the meanings can be polysemic and multiple interpretations such as the color of Obama's suits, American flag, and Democrat donkey which mean many things and represent several signs. This relates to Obama and the team's awareness of this advertisement's target which is not only for American's majority, even it is the main concern, but also American from different class, color, and jobs, so he broadcasts it on most famous television station. Not only on the web but also ordinary television and his campaign appear as infomercial advertisement. Based on his speech analysis, he provides the full development in economy and sustainability free from the current government that bound them and from the policies that cause their long time anxieties.

But finally, the study has concluded the myth and answered the questions of what ideology that Obama constructed in his advertisement. He changes the political discourse in America and leads to the point now which the Democrats are likely support the ideas basically, which is divided into two points; the strong characteristic of Obama and his will to change into American goodness and to provide liberal democracy in solving people's problems together with him. Something new may be brought into the country, not as part of a revolution, but as part of liberal democracy.