

Obama's discourse of "hope": Making rhetoric work politically

Marcus Letts
University of Bristol
© Marcus Letts

**School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies
University of Bristol
Working Paper No. 04-09**

Marcus Letts is a former undergraduate student in the Department of Politics, University of Bristol. This paper, originally a BSc dissertation, received the highest mark awarded to any BSc dissertation in Politics at the University of Bristol in 2008-2009. A revised version of this paper is currently being prepared for submission to the journal *New Political Science*.

University of Bristol

School of Sociology, Politics, and International Studies

Title: Obama's discourse of "hope":

Making rhetoric work politically



(Morris, C. 2008)

Question: What is articulated in Obama's discourse of "hope"?

How did this rhetoric work politically?

Marcus Letts

Word Count: 9,899

Contents:

Introduction: The US elections of 2008: A contextualisation

The "strange death of Republican America": A grand theme of change.....	5
A "rhetorical situation"?.....	6
The birth of "Brand Obama": An exceptional campaign.....	7
The nature of American "polyarchy"	9

Literature Review: Two theories of discourse.

Derrida's deconstruction and Laclau logics: A theory of discourse.....	10
The process of signification: to "arrest the flow of differences"	11
Antagonism, dislocation, and the political logic of hegemony.....	11
Constructing a centre: The empty signifier.....	12
Two conceptions of subjectivity.....	13
Foucault's discursive formations: Archaeology and Genealogy.....	14
A "series of interpretations": Identifying continuity and discontinuity.....	15
Debrix's "Tabloidization": A discursive formation in post-modern America.....	16
Rules of formation: Self-referentiality and intertextuality.....	16
Addressing the object of study: A sample of Obama's speechmaking.....	17

Chapter One: Deconstructing Obama's discourse of "hope".

Antagonisms, dislocations and the political logic of hegemony.....	19
Constructing a Centre: Obama's empty signifier of "hope".....	20
Tracing the logics of equivalence and difference: Nodal points, subject positions and the role of exclusion.....	23

Chapter Two: Authorising Obama's rhetoric.

Rules of Formation: Identifying self-referentiality and intertextuality.....	26
Sensationalism, simplification and personalisation.....	29
A monumental conception of history: A process of subjectivation.....	30

Chapter Three: The "rhetorical situation": An analytical framework.

Three interpretations of the "rhetorical situation".....	33
Emphasising dislocation: Articulating the situation.....	34
Enabling the subject: A hegemonic response.....	35
Authorising Obama's rhetoric: An easily understood, instantly recognisable discourse.....	36

Conclusion:

Towards a radical democracy?.....	39
-----------------------------------	----

Appendices:

Appendix A: Iowa Caucus.....	43
Appendix B: "Yes, we can"	47
Appendix C: "A more perfect union"	51
Appendix D: Democratic National Convention.....	65
Appendix E: President-elect.....	78

Bibliography:

Books.....	84
Journals.....	88
Online Sources.....	89
Images.....	92

Introduction:

The US elections of 2008: A contextualisation.

In early November 2008, Barack Obama became the 44th president of the United States, sweeping to a victory of historic consequence. Exotically named and unusually coloured, Obama's candidacy was intoxicating. He "hit the American scene like a thunderclap" (Von Drehle, 2008), rising from relative obscurity to transform the political agenda and restore the fragile confidence of an increasingly disorientated superpower. Supported by a remarkably effective campaign - "powered by hope" (Obama, 2009) - his margin of victory was the largest of any democratic candidate in history (Uhlenbeck, 2008; Harris, 2008), signalling a popular desire for change, and handing Obama a mandate to refashion America's political terrain in the most radical terms since Reagan's landslide victory of 1980. Quite apart from the symbolic reverberation of his ethnicity, Obama's eloquent and inspirational rhetoric helped reaffirm a nation's faith in its most cherished of myths, whilst confirming the decline of a political discourse that had dominated American society, and indeed the wider world, for almost three decades. To understand the content of Obama's narrative, and demonstrate how his rhetoric has worked politically, this analysis will first examine the particulars of a complex and in many ways unprecedented election; a process that will locate this research firmly in historical and political context and justify its limited ambitions.

The "strange death of Republican America": A grand theme of change.

The "strange death of Republican America", as observed by former Clinton aide Sidney Blumenthal, refers to the dislocation of a political ideology dominant since Nixon's election in

1968; an ideology consolidated by Reagan and radicalised under the recently departed Bush administration (Blumenthal, 2008). It is not the intention of this study to develop a coherent analysis of the ill-fated Bush-Cheney regime that has polarised American politics and fragmented Republican ideology; only to recognise the consequences its dislocation, particularly through emphasis of a "grand theme" of change (Tomasky, 2008), prevalent throughout the 2008 elections. An understanding of how and why this political discourse has evolved to produce such a "vitriolic and bitter climate", "transforming the nation's priorities in profoundly regressive, militaristic, and repressive ways" (Street, 2009:180), to significantly reorientate American politics, is not of direct consequence, and though relevant to a degree, is beyond the scope of this research. Nevertheless, that Obama's rise coincided with such a pervasive atmosphere of discontent is highly significant. In the midst of Bush's second term, a staggering 80 per cent of Americans polled believed their country to be headed "in the wrong direction" (CNN, quoted in Street, 2009:169); a reflection of the widespread and sustained contempt held for a president whose approval ratings were consistently amongst the lowest on record (Gallup, 2009). It is an assumption of this study that such popular disillusionment is evidence of an emerging sense of ideological bankruptcy, rather than merely a reaction to presidential incompetence.

A "Rhetorical Situation"?

Such a grand theme of change has been highly significant, playing an important role in accommodating the rise of a candidate as unlikely as Obama, and generating a wave of hope and surge in optimism that he has proved uniquely qualified to channel. This assumption, that America's recent elections were conducted amidst extraordinary national circumstances, a "1932 moment" (Weltman and Lachelier, 2008), which helped generate a tremendous receptivity for Obama's

message, and in many ways enabled his spectacular rise, is relatively uncontested. However, the character, of these "nearly unique national circumstances" (Honderich, 2008) is of significant consequence, comparable with Bitzer's much contested notion of the "rhetorical situation" (Bitzer, 1968; Vatz, 1973; Biesecker, 1999). Using an analytical framework derived from his formulation, this study's final chapter will introduce a theoretical discussion of the complex relationship between a situation, an audience, and an orator; located within the concrete historical and political context of Obama's electoral campaign. Following an extensive analysis of his discourse, this discussion will reconsider how Obama's narrative has been made possible by, and furthermore, has contributed to, an atmosphere that has proved highly conducive to his rhetoric of change, hope and unity.

The birth of "Brand Obama": An exceptional campaign.

This research will focus on Obama's discursive activity, limiting its object of study to five speeches, delivered at various junctures, and perceived to have been crucial in capturing the hearts and minds of an electorate pinning for change. However, it must be acknowledged that the success of Obama's campaign has involved more than mere rhetoric. In building "Brand Obama", campaign conventions were exposed as outdated and ineffectual by an unprecedented exercise in marketing and political commodification, an embrace of multimedia social networks, and the unlikely co-option of a network of loosely-related grassroots organizations (Erwin, 2008); critical in endorsing Obama's radical appeal and mobilising an army of volunteers, whose role in getting out the vote should not be underestimated. For example, "MoveOn.org" members contributed an astonishing 933,800 volunteers, campaigning for over 20,841,507 hours across all fifty states (Pariser, 2008). While the "reality does not match the myth", relying as heavily on large contributions and "bundling methods" (Malbin, 2008) as "working men and women, who dug into what little savings

they had" (Appendix E: 46), Obama's tsunami of fund-raising was both impressive and innovative, collecting the most money from the most donors in American history (Washington Post, 2008).

Obama's was truly an "impeccably designed candidacy" (Rawsthorn, 2008:1). He became a phenomenon; the revolutionary outsider that disillusioned American's craved; an entirely new breed of candidate who shared his unwavering optimism with a disheartened electorate. A political and cultural icon to rival John F Kennedy, he was the "meme of the moment, the miracle cure" (Parker, quoted in Street, 2009: xxviii); a youthful, charismatic and eloquent David whose radical politics of hope promised to transform the corrupt and cynical excesses of Washington's Goliath (Hill, 2008). Just six days after his election, Advertising Age heralded "Brand Obama" as a "case study in audacious marketing", "a brand that was big enough to be anything to anyone yet had an intimate-enough feel to inspire advocacy" (Advertising Age, quoted in Street, 2009). As political commentator Matt Tabbai observed, Obama's "entire political persona is an ingeniously crafted human cipher" (Tabbai, 2007); the conscious pursuit of a "universalist ideological hermaphroditism" (Street, 2009: xxxi). Though beyond the limited ambitions of this project, the careful design of Obama's campaign - its structure, imagery and embrace of multimedia networks - has been significant in constructing his "transformational image" (Borger, 2008), and providing the foundations for his "profoundly personal and yet general" discourse of hope (Miyazaki, 2008a:5). Focusing upon a limited selection of Obama's most prominent and influential articulations, this research will analyse the discourse of this exceptional candidate in significant detail, to provide a novel interpretation that can contribute to a wider political debate by helping to demystify the Obama phenomenon.

The nature of American "polyarchy".

Before evaluating the approaches to discourse analysis that will constitute the methodological basis of this interpretation, a brief discussion of the nature of American democracy is necessary, to ensure an appropriate degree of contextualisation and identify further limitations. Despite a popular perception of democracy, America's two party system is assumed by many of its critics to better reflect a "polyarchy" (Domhoff, 2006); a system of "elite decision-making and public ratification" (Chomsky, 2003), or "low intensity democracy" (Robinson, 1996:385; Robinson, 2006). Controlled by different factions of a privileged elite, "narrow ideological and policy parameters" (Street, 2009: ix) dictate an electoral process considered roughly equivalent to a series of "personalised quadrennial extravaganzas" (Chomsky, quoted in Street, 2009:183), placing an overwhelming emphasis on a candidate's style and quality, rather than their substance. The resulting shortfall, between America's "democratic promise and the authoritarian realities of concentrated wealth and power", reflects an uncomfortable compromise, revealing the "dark essence of US political culture" (Street, 2009: xxxiv). Despite being symptomatic of an "irreconcilable tension" between the "liberal logic of difference and the democratic logic of equivalence" (Torfing, 1999:252), this analysis will not address the nature of America's democracy in any detail. Nevertheless, that Obama's discourse has proved successful within a political culture assumed to betray such characteristics is significant, and will be elaborated upon as the implications of this study are considered.

Literature Review:

Two theories of discourse.

Derrida's deconstruction and Laclau's logics: A theory of discourse.

A discourse can be described as a relational system of meaning; a "framework of consistently related concepts and logics", produced and reproduced by a "distinctive social ontology" whose rules often come to form epistemological regularities, and inform a common language, used to "describe, interpret and evaluate social phenomena" (Howarth, 2000a:130; see also Smith, 1995: 26-28). It is these systems that constitute the identities and social relations of, and between, subjects and objects. As Howarth describes, Laclau and Mouffe understand discourses to be inherently political entities which, when attempting to dominate a field of meaning, must necessarily involve the "construction of antagonisms and the exercise of power" (Howarth et al, 2000b:9). Such discursive practice is articulated in order to "institute an impossible object (society), and master an excessive element (the real in Lacanian terms)" (Stravarakakis, 2005:100). Observing the inevitable dislocation of these contingent constructions, analysts must interpret discourse as "both a technique of power, and the terrain on which identity and meaning are contested" (Gavin, 2008:16).

Using the concepts and deconstructive logics inspired by Derrida, and developed by Laclau and Mouffe, this study will interpret Obama's discourse as hegemonic, articulated in response to dislocation, by tracing the interacting logics of equivalence and difference. As the use of abstract tools to explain concrete events is fraught with difficulty, commonly identified within the discipline as a "methodological deficit" (Howarth and Torfing, 2005:316), a theoretical elaboration will be necessary; to "modulate and articulate" (Howarth, 2000a:133) certain concepts and justify their suitability, while problematising the phenomena that will be interpreted as significant.

The process of signification: to "arrest the flow of differences".

While comprehensively rewriting Foucault's discourse analysis (Anderson, 2003:49), Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory is significantly influenced by many eminent thinkers, from Lacan and Hegel, to Derrida and Žižek. Despite being primarily a clarifying and systematising theory, their failure to develop an operational strategy or provide clearly defined analytical tools is compensated by a shift towards deconstruction, inspired by Derrida's concept of "*differance*" (Derrida, 1973; Derrida, 1976; Derrida, 1981). Identifying an original internal division within all elements, whose two sides must "incessantly pollute and contaminate one another" (Anderson, 2003:61), deconstruction establishes difference as "a mechanism in a game of signification" (Anderson, 2003:58), pinpointing political logics while reducing and referring the articulations of a discourse to a "system of exact different locations" (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985:113). Through this process of deconstruction, the radical indecision of all difference is identified, providing the foundation for a theoretical elaboration. Discourse is constituted as an attempt to "arrest the flow of differences, to construct a centre"; to partially fix meaning despite the "constant overflowing of every discourse to the infinitude of the field of discursivity" (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985:112-113).

Antagonism, dislocation, and the political logic of hegemony.

Precluding the possibility of necessary and determining political logics, the concept of antagonism is of primary significance, revealing the "constitutive impossibility of society" (Laclau, quoted in

Howarth et al, 2000b:9), or in Lacanian terms, disclosing "the lack at the heart of all social identity and objectivity" (Howarth et al, 2000b:10). Experienced as social meaning is contested and dislocated, subjects are unable to fully constitute their respective identities, and antagonistic relations thus expose the unstable frontiers of hegemonic constructions, found at the "root of all paradigm, discursive, or ideological shifts" (Stravarakakis, 2005:110). From a variety of dispersed elements, hegemonic formations represent the partial success of endeavours to dominate certain discursive fields and suture dislocation, reorganizing chains of signification through "political conflict", or a "battle over nodal points...which can arrest the sliding of the many signifiers across the signified" (Anderson, 2003:53). Hegemony thus operates to construct, transform, and maintain collective social imaginaries, described by Laclau as a horizon, or "absolute limit which structures a field of intelligibility" (Laclau, quoted in Howarth et al, 2000b:15-16), by simultaneously structuring and signifying (Gavin, 2008:6). However, to master Lacan's escaping real and provide a sense of closure or fullness of meaning, despite society's constitutive impossibility, the subversion of this process is required. The production of a signifier emptied of its differential nature, capable of interrupting the continuous expansion of a "politics of signifiers" (Laclau, quoted in Anderson, 2003:56), by signifying the "pure cancellation of all difference" (Laclau, 1996:38).

Constructing a centre: The empty signifier.

Drawing on Hegel's conception of limits, and Saussure's assertion that all signifying systems are purely relational, Laclau has developed his concept of the empty signifier, used to signify that which does not allow signification - the limits of discursive signification - through the "undecidable locus" (Laclau, 1996:39) of his logics of equivalence and difference. Specifically, these complex logics interact "by privileging the dimension of equivalence to the point that its

differential nature is almost entirely obliterated" (Laclau, 1996:39); a process of emptying through which the signifier may assume the role of representing a system as pure being. As confirmed by Freud's analysis of the libidinal organisation of groups (Freud, 2002), Kristeva's theory of abjection (Kristeva, 1982), and Zizek's interpretation of shared identifications, "structured in fantasies and directly linked to the hatred of Others" (Zizek, 1993:201), the very existence of a system's limits presupposes an exclusion. It is because of this exclusion, which threatens to expose the contingent nature of a system of signification, that the emergence of the empty signifier is necessary; as a signifier of this absent totality, whose presence is the "very condition of hegemony"(Laclau, 1996:43).

Two conceptions of subjectivity.

Laclau and Mouffe's theory will form the analytical foundation for this study's most rigorous deconstruction of Obama's discourse, to discover what, precisely, has been articulated. However, this approach will be complemented by a Foucauldian analysis, to interpret Obama's articulations as emerging from a more general discursive formation. To ensure these analytical methods remain distinct, despite significant commonality, a brief description of how Foucault's conception differs from that of Laclau and Mouffe's is necessary. Relating directly to the ambitions of this study, a broadly similar conception of subjectivity is particularly significant. Drawing on Freud and Lacan, in a substantial revision of Althusser's theory of ideology, Laclau and Mouffe contend that subjectivity is "forever in process" (Derrida, 1981:242), and that subjects are compelled "to act and identity" (Howarth and Torfing, 2005:323), in response to dislocation. Foucault's conception is broadly consonant, identifying an important analytical distinction between processes of subjection and subjectivation, that permits analysis of whether a discourse demands "active self-appropriation

of a subject position" (Anderson, 2003:24); a mode of transformation that is encouraged throughout Obama's rhetoric.

Foucault's discursive formations: Archaeology and Genealogy.

While Laclau and Mouffe dismiss the existence of the 'non-discursive', correctly asserting that no object could constitute itself outside of its "discursive conditions of emergence" (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985:108), Foucault's interpretation of discourse is less inclusive, limited to an analysis of irregular statements; the "building blocks of discourse" (Anderson, 2003:9) which constitute, through the regularity of their dispersion, various discursive formations. These groups of statements do not simply refer to a single object, inferring a sense of "permanence and uniqueness", but rather a shared perceptual field, or common space in which various objects "emerge and are continuously transformed" (Foucault, 2002:32-33). For Foucault, discursive formations describe regularities detectable within systems of dispersion, conditioned by rules of formation which determine the constitution of subjects and objects, and the structure of conceptual networks and strategies. Discursive practices are characterised by a "delimitation of a field of objects, the definition of a legitimate perspective for the agent of knowledge and the fixing of norms for the elaboration of concepts and theories" (Foucault, quoted in Bouchard, 1977:199). These systems, which in every society order the procedures which control, select, organise and redistribute the production of discourse (Foucault, quoted in Mills, 2003:62), simultaneously structure the ways in which reality is commonly perceived, realizing certain "preferred meanings" (Debrix, 2008:13) and establishing "regime[s] of truth" (Foucault, 1984b:74) which regulate. Statements should therefore be analysed as they emerge, to expose the "underlying meaning of the stated" through the detection of conditions of acceptability, without recourse to "reductive or interpretive statement descriptions"

(Anderson, 2003:9-10), which reference the intentions or circumstances of an author.

A "series of interpretations": Identifying continuity and discontinuity.

Using Foucault's complementary axes of archaeological and genealogical analysis, attention is again drawn towards the phenomenon of discontinuity, rejecting a "meta-historical deployment of ideal significations and indefinite teleologies" (Barker, 1993:65), to describe the "complex and unstable" processes through which discourse not only produces and reinforces power, but "undermines it and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart" (Foucault, 1978:100-101). Within any historical context there exists "a grid of knowledge making possible every scientific discourse, every production of statements" (Eribon, 1991:158) which will authorise "only possible creations, possible innovations" (Foucault, quoted in Davidson, 1997:119). As Foucault asserts, the task of the discourse analyst is to describe "the law of existence of statements, that which rendered them possible...the conditions of their singular emergence" (Foucault, 1991:59), and to interrogate the continued openness of a particular object of study. The historical development of humanity is conceptualised as a constructed reality that is rooted in perspectivism; "a series of interpretations", or rather, the "violent or surreptitious appropriation of a system of rules" (Foucault, 1984a:86). Through archaeology and genealogy, an analysis of how certain discourses and certain speakers are authorised and empowered at particular historical moments is made possible, revealing elements of coherence and rupture; discontinuity within that which appears continuous, and continuity within that which is posed as "new, different, or unique" (Anderson, 2003:20-22).

Debrix's "Tabloidization": A discursive formation in post-modern America.

Following an analytical deconstruction of Obama's discourse, this research will identify the anonymous rules of formation and acceptability which have authorised his rhetoric, and concealed its investment within a network of power and knowledge. This study will therefore interpret Obama's narrative as part of a more general formation, by analysing significant discursive continuity, through an elaboration of François Debrix's concept of "Tabloidization" (Debrix, 2008); identified as a dominant discursive formation, conditioning the production of knowledge within post-modern America.

Rules of formation: Self-referentiality and intertextuality.

Including a "highly mixed bag of typical forms, thematic concerns, image repertoires, tones of voice, and narrative patterns", Debrix describes a formation which occupies an amorphous and mobile space, "where journalism and popular culture intersect" (Glynn, 2000:2); a discursive formation which has become "the dominant mode of communication, representation, expression, and entertainment in 1990s post-modern America" (Debrix, 2008:6). Defining two prominent rules of formation as intertextuality and self-referentiality, Debrix's analysis is both persuasive and illuminative. Tabloid discursive formations produce knowledge which informs and comforts through a "quick, unattached and ever-changeable message", complementing Lyotard's assessment that, within the contemporary moment, referred to as the post-modern condition, "eclecticism is the zero-degree of contemporary general culture" (Lyotard, 1984:76). Simultaneously, through a blending together of disparate narratives, tabloid discursivity create a highly believable, largely

coherent, and often emotion-inducing reality that is "totally self-referential", and yet endowed with meaning through an appearance of "truth, factuality and historical accuracy" (Debrix, 2008:7). As Baudrillard first conceived, these processes of intertextuality and self-referentiality generate a fluidly interpenetrating, always interdiscursive simulation of reality that is constantly produced and reproduced; a simulation, or "hyperreal", which transcends representation (Baudrillard, 1983b:146). Since these discursive formations are presented as "an endless horizon of human experience", the social problems which give politics its meaning and purpose are "always already a matter of tabloid discursive production, representation and mediation"; a politics filtered to a consuming public through "the simulacrum of tabloid culture" (Debrix, 2008:8).

Tabloidization is recognised as more than a specific discourse, representing a "generalized modality of knowledge production" (Debrix, 2008:14) operating to create, appropriate and proliferate truth-effects with an "inescapable conditioning power" (Debrix, 2008:35). In post-modern America, a "golden age of tabloid culture" where political life has become increasingly hyperreal (Edelman, 1988:7), a desire to sensationalise reality, and ensure narratives may be "readily understood and instantly recognizable" (Debrix, 2008:38), has encouraged an increasingly spectacular style and form; a dramatic, personal and simple presentation that is seductive and prioritises entertainment, functioning to condition the public through a lack of knowledge, demanding "adherence to and acceptance of the tabloid narrative" (Debrix, 2008:45).

Addressing the object of study: A sample of Obama's speechmaking.

By synthesising Foucault's theory of discourse with a contemporary analysis, this research will observe a significant degree of discursive continuity, and demonstrate how certain rules of

formation have conditioned Obama's narrative. Simultaneously his discourse will be conceptualised as a hegemonic construction, which is articulated in response to dislocation. Finally, the complementary nature of these seemingly contradictory conclusions will be illustrated, situating both analyses in context, to develop a complex but coherent interpretation of what is articulated within Obama's discourse, and how this rhetoric has worked politically.

A sample of Obama's speechmaking, selected on the basis of record-breaking "you-tube.com" (Appendices A-E) viewing figures, will limit this research to the detailed analysis of five memorable articulations, delivered at crucial moments over the final year of his electoral campaign. Significant in launching, consolidating, and celebrating Obama's success, they reflect his typical stump speech, as well as a variety of distinctive, set-piece deliveries.

Chapter One:

Deconstructing Obama's discourse of "hope".

Antagonisms, dislocations, and the political logic of hegemony.

For the discourse analyst attention must be focused on the creation, disruption and transformation of signifying structures, to discover "how, under what conditions, and for what reasons discourses are constructed, contested and change" (Howarth, 2000a:131). A case study approach is well suited to these objectives, providing an "ideal vehicle" (Howarth and Torfing, 2005:330) by locating articulatory practices and abstract theory in context. In order to demonstrate the "primacy of political concepts and logics" (Howarth et al, 2000b:5), such as hegemony, articulated in response to dislocation, Obama's discourse will be framed as an "extreme case"; used to "highlight particular phenomena in a dramatic fashion" (Howarth and Torfing, 2005:330-1).

Within each of the speeches analysed, Obama places significant emphasis on the contestation of social meaning, exposing the unstable frontiers of the existing hegemonic formation, and providing the "conditions for the construction of antagonistic relations" (Howarth, 2000a:132). He articulates a "set of monumental problems" (Appendix C: 78), considered to be "the greatest of our lifetime" (Appendix E: 57); neatly summarised as "two wars, a planet in peril" and "the worst financial crisis in a century" (Appendix E: 58), though elaborated to variously include "9/11" (Appendix C: 205), "genocide and disease" (Appendix B: 51), "a chronic health care crisis" (Appendix C: 75-76), and "the tyranny of oil" (Appendix B: 42). While his emphasis is effective in pronouncing the experience of dislocation, such experience cannot "determine the form" (Howarth, 2000a:132) that a "viable hegemonic project" will assume (Howarth and Torfing, 2005:325). Obama's interpretation thus elaborates these multiple dislocations, attributing their prominence to a "long political

darkness" (Appendix B: 24-25); the "failed policies" (Appendix C: 32), "worn out ideas" (Appendix D: 248) and "broken politics" (Appendix C: 32) of "that old, discredited Republican philosophy," (Appendix D: 78) concluding, with an acute sense of urgency, that "our time for change has come" (Appendix A: 10). Representing an "emergency discourse" (Debrix, 2008:22), Obama's narrative is marked throughout by this sense of urgency, repeatedly asserting at various junctures that "now is the time" (Appendix D: 153); that "this was the moment" (Appendix A: 56), or that "there's something happening" (Appendix B: 14), at "this defining moment" (Appendix E: 17). Anchored in a powerful imaginary of historical transformation, Obama's articulations function to stimulate subjectivity and lay the foundations for the construction of his universalising political project, by framing multiple dislocatory experiences as direct consequences of "a politics that breeds division, and conflict, and cynicism" (Appendix C: 264-265). Describing "the division and distraction" (Appendix B: 26), the "bitterness and pettiness and anger" (Appendix A: 11) of a "politics where we tear each other down instead of lifting this country up" (Appendix A: 64), Obama identifies and extends the dislocation of America's dominant political discourse, emphasising a pervasive atmosphere of fear and anxiety, cynicism and division. Subsequently, his rhetoric is articulated in response to this dislocation, suturing meaning by reconstructing social relations and rearranging subject positions around an empty signifier of hope.

Constructing a centre: Obama's empty signifier of hope.

For Laclau and Mouffe, the "constitutive impossibility of society" may be subverted only "through the production of empty signifiers" (Laclau, 1996:43). Contemplating the limits of discursive signification - the real, in Lacanian terms - logics of equivalence and difference can be traced to expose a process of radical exclusion; a subversion of signification that is a precondition of all

difference (Laclau, 1996:39). As all limits are inherently exclusionary, an "essential ambivalence" is introduced between the elements which reside within the frontiers of any particular system of differences; a constitutive split that confirms the "undecidable locus" of each elements identity (Laclau, 1996:38-39). As these systems cannot represent themselves in positive terms through any conventional act of signification, the subversion of this process is required. An empty signifier is not simply equivocal or ambiguous, but emptied of its differential nature, privileging the logic of equivalence, and enabling the signifier to assume the role of representing the system itself, as pure being (Laclau, 1996:39). The following analysis will identify the concept of hope as a highly effective empty signifier within Obama's discourse, describing a "profoundly personal and yet general" character (Miyazaki, 2008a:5), that is marked by "an enduring indeterminacy" (Bloch, 1998:341).

Before identifying how Obama's concept can be considered distinctive, the "wide and powerful appeal" (Miyazaki, 2008a:1) of hope must first be acknowledged; to analyse its particular salience within the post-modern moment and discuss both its affect and methodology. In an age of anxiety, a "hopeless, hapless, grey world" (Negri and Guattari, 1990:11-12), marked by a general loss of confidence in traditional fixed categories of knowledge (Harvey, 2000), hope has become an important subject of inquiry across multiple disciplines, appealing through its "embrace of the radical uncertainty and indeterminacy of the present moment" (Miyazaki, 2008a:5). Residing in the topos of the "not-yet-become", an "inexhaustible horizon" that "breaks with and against that which exists" (Anderson and Fenton, 2008:76-77; see also Lear, 2006; Zournazi, 2002), relations of hope are multiple; "mobilized and modulated" to prolong oppression, sustain "valued ways of being", or herald, however remotely, "alternative, better ways" (Anderson and Fenton, 2008:78).

A crucial element of Obama's concept of hope, facilitating its spectacular success as an empty signifier, resides in the conspicuous absence of any definitive specificity. While heralding the

"audacity" (Appendix C: 248) of our "unyielding hope" (Appendix E: 103), Obama vaguely describes its content as "that thing inside us"; "what led me here today," or "what I saw in the eyes" of one loosely identified woman, and "heard in the voice" of another (Appendix A: 70-83). Such a lack of conceptual specificity has contributed to the "general, abstract and intangible" (Miyazaki, 2008b) character of Obama's rhetoric, attracting considerable criticism, most notably from Hillary Clinton, who publicly derided Obama for his lack of substance (Brown, 2008). Nevertheless, this "strategic appeal" to the "generality of hope" (Miyazaki, 2008a:5) has been significant in guaranteeing the success of Obama's definition. His emphatic assertion that "there has never been anything false about hope" (Appendix B: 67-68), illustrates how this highly equivalential nature, or lack of differentiality, has guaranteed hope's effectiveness as an empty signifier.

A further, and equally crucial, element of Obama's concept is described by Miyazaki as a "simultaneously personal" quality, residing in hope's "capacity to replicate itself interactively from one person to another, and from one moment to another" (Miyazaki, 2008a:8). Through a "conscious conflation of the personal and the general" (Miyazaki, 2008a:8), Obama's conception of hope stimulates subjectivity; inviting the replication of its general appeal in a "specific, personal and substantive" (Miyazaki, 2008b) context. Obama is thus able to tendentially privilege the logic of equivalence to deliver a powerful message of unity, whilst simultaneously articulating a definition of hope that is vague enough to mean anything to anyone. The differential nature of hope, when employed by Obama as an empty signifier, is "almost entirely obliterated" (Laclau, 1996:43). While his declaration that "hope is the bedrock of this nation" (Appendix A: 85) represents an abstract appeal to a mythical sense of patriotism, the assertion that "while we breathe, we hope" (Appendix E: 137-138) evokes a universal and yet personal reflection, affirming hope's necessity, and inviting the subject to identify more intimately with Obama's narrative. Similarly, the observation that "we may have different stories, but we hold common hopes" (Appendix C: 25-26) inspires a context specific replication of hope's general sentiment, while alluding to "the hope of a

better day" (Appendix E: 15) invokes the concept's radical possibility; an imagined power to transform "ordinary, quotidian life," (Anderson and Fenton, 2008:76) if only through perpetual deferral (Nietzsche, 1996:45).

Tracing the logics of equivalence and difference: Nodal points, subject positions and the role of exclusion.

This analysis has identified Obama's successful construction of a centre, capable of "incarnating an ultimate fullness of meaning" and, tendentially at least, "arresting the flow of differences (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985:112). However, it is possible to significantly extend this process of deconstruction. This chapter will conclude by tracing the logics of equivalence and difference; to discover where nodal points have partially fixed meaning, how subject positions have been reordered, and to consider the role of exclusion. As it is this study's intention to complement this analytical deconstruction with an alternative interpretation, the following discussion is limited to a brief outline of significant logics and dominant themes.

Kristeva's theory of abjection (Kristeva, 1982), described by Debrix as "an elaboration and extension of prior theories about desire, identity, and disgust," (Debrix, 2008:16) confirms that it is "the ambiguity of meaning, representation, and identity" (Debrix, 2008:74) which characterise our "abject dispositions" (Debrix, 2008:74). Her theory revolves around a common interpretation of the role of exclusion; a "hatred of Others" (Žižek, 1993:201), presupposed by the limits of signification and their subsequent subversion. Despite articulating a discourse of hope, narrowing the political through the collapse of differential identities, and constructing several highly inclusive chains of equivalence, these shared identifications must be maintained by the "covering over of a lack"

(Howarth and Torfing, 2005:73); a process which can only be supported by the exclusion of an "Other", upon which social antagonisms can be concentrated.

Obama's first post-caucus victory speech, delivered to rapturous applause in Iowa, begins by uniting his audience through a process of exclusion, identifying "the cynics" who "said this country was too divided, too disillusioned to ever come together around a common purpose" (Appendix A: 2-4).

While systematically reducing available subject positions through a manifestly equivalential logic, proclaiming that "we are one people" (Appendix B: 87) and extolling "the strength and grace to bridge divides and unite in common effort" (Appendix D: 261), Obama's articulations are simultaneously exclusionary. Identifying Washington's "lobbyists" and "special interests"

(Appendix C: 216) amongst a narrow and poorly defined band of cynics and "nay-sayers", Obama depicts his own candidacy as "not the likeliest"; not hatched "in the halls of Washington", and certainly not fitting "the typical pedigree" (Appendix D: 272-275). Similarly, while describing the "common threats of the 21st century" as a "challenge that should unite America and the world" (Appendix A: 35-36), Obama's exclusion of "the perverse and hateful ideologies of radical Islam" (Appendix C: 74-75) is entirely predictable, signifying the necessary maintenance of America's distant "Other" (Papadopoulos, 2002).

Accepting his presidential nomination at the Democratic National Convention in Denver, Obama's eloquent description of the American promise is rooted in a strong sense of exceptionalism, and articulated around complementary nodal points of unity and change. This mythical conception is used to supplement his empty signifier; itself representing a nodal point around which a chain of equivalence is articulated. Obama invokes "that American spirit - that American promise", which "pushes us forward even when the path is uncertain; that binds us together in spite of our differences; that makes us fix our eye not on what is seen, but what is unseen, that better place around the bend" (Appendix D: 299-301). Describing "values that we all share" (Appendix E: 88)

and "the promise of our ideals" (Appendix C: 20) as "our greatest inheritance" (Appendix D: 302), Obama's rhetoric blends a general sense of American optimism with an equally shared understanding of national unity. By synthesising these long-standing chains of equivalence Obama's discourse is easily recognised, though infused with a "hint of novelty"; a "new kind of relationality and solidarity" (Miyazaki, 2008a:8), inspired by his originality in articulation, to reinvigorate values that are commonly identified with, as inherently American. By reworking conventional signifiers, invested with the "political power to signify the future", Obama reconstructs their "phantasmatic promise" (Butler, 1993:220); the promise of completion, of concluding every subject's "endless and impossible" (Smith, 1998:76) search for an absent fullness. Through this blending together of familiar social categories and boundaries, Obama's discourse of hope is perceived to be unique, and yet comforts through its familiarity. His rhetoric promises transformation, and yet is rooted in origin myths.

Chapter Two:

Authorising Obama's rhetoric.

Rules of formation: Identifying self-referentiality and intertextuality.

The following chapter will interpret Obama's discourse as an emerging part of an enduring discursive formation - described by Debrix as a process of "Tabloidization" (Debrix, 2008) - by identifying how certain rules, or conditions of acceptability, have authorised his rhetoric. This research will avoid a general analysis of "media generated and infused tabloid discourses" (Debrix, 2008:22), preferring to focus on the important role of self-referentiality and intertextuality in constructing Obama's narrative. Nevertheless, a brief analysis of Debrix's interpretation is required, not least to clarify this study's limited objectives. Drawing on Lyotard, Debrix asserts that modern power is manifested "in the ability to produce meaning effects", which increasingly function as "mode[s] of rationalization" (Debrix, 2008:20-22), comforting a pandemic and pervasive contemporary mood of fear and anxiety. His conception of a certain "post-modern condition" denotes the "passage of social knowledge into media-conditioned and released information" (Lyotard, 1984; Debrix, 2008:22); a process through which subjectivity is relinquished by "mesmerized audiences", or Baudrillard's "silent majorities" (Debrix, 2008:21; Baudrillard, 1983a). This analysis will assume that an "undecidability of the event and uncertainty of meaning" (Debrix, 2008:21) are prominent characteristics of America's "fully mediatized society" (Debrix, 2008:20; see also McLuhan, 2003); a society where the production of knowledge is almost entirely self-referential and intertextual. However, while conceding that Obama's discourse is inescapably produced and reproduced within such a "hyperreal" simulation (Baudrillard, 1983b), this analysis will focus on understanding where techniques of intertextuality and self-referentiality have been

used explicitly, to condition Obama's discourse and produce "consistency-effects, certainty-effects, and truth-effects" (Debrix, 2008:23).

Obama's reliance on self-referentiality is easily identified. His personal story, the "great sweeping legend of Obamerica", has proved a source of considerable fascination within a culture "addicted to origin myths" (Anderson, 2008), becoming a significant asset in authorizing his narrative. Obama's multiracial ethnicity and multicultural upbringing have combined to empower him with "more touchstones and cultural reference points than any predecessor", though his penchant for "non-stop self-narration" can be considered generational; an extension of his embrace of multimedia networks (Lee, 2009). Nevertheless, that Obama's "maddeningly vague" (Klein, 2008) message of change, hope and unity has relied extensively upon a carefully edited personal experience, to reassure and resonate with his audience, is clearly observable. He describes his "own American story"; a "story that has seared into my genetic make-up" an "unyielding faith in the decency and generosity of the American people" and a conviction that "out of many, we are truly one" (Appendix C: 29-42). He frequently recounts the "stories that shaped me" (Appendix D: 118), blending his personal experience with that of America in a bizarre "fusion of man and nation" (Anderson, 2008), declaring, with reference to a variety of ethnically and culturally distinct relatives, that "these people are part of me" and, as if by extension, that "they are part of America, this country that I love" (Appendix C: 130). More generally, Obama presumes an intimate knowledge of the "change we need", if only "because I've seen it" and "because I've lived it" (Appendix D: 284-285).

Consistently proclaiming his own destiny, and heralding his own triumphs, Obama's discourse demonstrates further evidence of self-referentiality. Assertions such as "this was the moment when it all began" (Appendix A: 56-57), "that is what we started here" (Appendix A: 88) or that "change is what's happening in America" (Appendix B: 22) frequently punctuate Obama's rhetoric, a prophetic tendency that is self-fulfilling, playing a crucial role in building and sustaining the

momentum of "this improbable journey" (Appendix B: 54-55). Describing the highly effective, "YouTube-ready" (Anderson, 2008) slogan "yes, we can", as "that timeless creed that sums up the spirit of a people" (Appendix E: 139), and "a creed written into the founding documents" (Appendix B: 72), this subtle synthesis, blending Obama's self-referential rhetoric with many of America's most politically inclusive origin myths, is illustrated emphatically.

In the first of his autobiographical publications, "Dreams from my Father", Obama describes an "underlying struggle" that has defined the American experience; between "those who embrace our teeming, colliding, irksome diversity, while insisting on a set of values that binds us together, and those who would seek, under whatever flag or slogan or sacred text, a certainty and simplification" (Obama, 2004:3). Though unintentionally, this reflection denotes a central tension, prominent throughout his articulations, of "unruly diversity pulled together by visionary incantations"; an ambition to "yoke together diverse, sometimes incongruous aspects of American history" (Anderson, 2008), conceptualised within this study as a condition of acceptability, which has authorised Obama's rhetoric through an intertextual blend of disparate narratives. Throughout his emerging discourse, Obama refers to "a young preacher from Georgia" who spoke of "his dream" (Appendix D: 308), while imitating many of America's most memorable presidential refrains, quoting both Lincoln and Kennedy, and frequently invoking the authority and historical anchorage of the constitution, as well as various other temporal deities. His articulations are sometimes explicitly secular, and regularly quasi-religious, proclaiming that "I am my brothers keeper; I am my sister's keeper" (Appendix D: 134-135), while encouraging his audience to "hold firmly, without wavering, to the hope that we confess" (Appendix D: 321-322). Narrating a powerful imaginary of personal and collective struggle, Obama appeals to America's revolutionary history, the diverse experiences of slaves and immigrants, and a shared sense of patriotism, while simultaneously addressing "we the people" (Appendix C: 1); to "remind and reassure" (Coville, 2008:4) the American public of their "common purpose" (Appendix E: 120); that "together, our

dreams can be one" (Appendix D: 313). As Coville observes, Obama's speeches are "densely connected" to several disparate human contexts "in a myriad of ways" (Coville, 2008:5). Through repetition, deep refrains like "hope is" (Appendix A: 68-85) and "yes, we can" (Appendix B: 71-84) acquire a tremendous familiarity and potency, authorizing Obama's discourse and empowering his rhetoric with the "potential to transform" (Coville, 2008:5).

Sensationalism, simplification and personalisation.

While Debrix identifies self-referentiality and intertextuality as important rules of formation that will condition any statement emerging from his conception of America's post-modern discursive formation, he further observes a dominant tabloid style; a description of reality which combines "a populist emphasis on the injustices done to the 'average' American" with "the allure of the extremes of vividly told stories" (Shattuc, 1997:17-18). Within a highly mediatised society, a "generalized, illogical, often unspecified sense of panic" (Debrix, 2008:22; see also Massumi, 1993:11; Ballard, 1990) is produced and reproduced through a "succession of threats and reassurances" (Edelman, 1988:1), frequently giving way to "emergencies and emergency discourses" (Debrix, 2008:22). To capture the attentions of a "continuously anxious and constantly hopeful" (Edelman, 1988:123) silent majority, tabloid truth-telling must also be "eye-catching" (Debrix, 2008:22), "awe-inspiring", and "emotion-stirring" (Debrix, 2008:7); constructing a social imaginary that is simple, personal and sensational, to produce a "political spectacle", that is both dynamic and ambiguous (Edelman, 1988:90). Despite his sustained critique of a political culture that has served "to simplify and stereotype and amplify the negative to the point that it distorts reality" (Appendix C: 138-139), Obama's rhetoric constitutes a similarly tabloidised narrative, made "readily understood and instantly recognisable" (Debrix, 2008:45) through both its style and content.

Throughout each of the five articulations analysed, Obama's discourse relies extensively on personalisation, involving a radical simplification; a narrowing of the political, typically supported by a spectacular, or "monumental," conception of history (Anderson, 2003:18). After briefly identifying where his rhetoric can be considered overtly personal, simple or sensational, this chapter will conclude with a limited Foucauldian analysis of Obama's narrative, describing his conception of history and an important process of subjectivation.

While Obama's discourse is consistently sensational, constructed around an almost unique rhetorical ability to inspire, his message is equally effective through its lack of substance, typically revolving around a repetition of "stylistic felicities"; simple phrases which appeal to large audiences, delivered in a context which temporarily elevates their meaning above the banal (Edelman, 1988:113). Obama states that "we are choosing hope over fear" and "unity over division" (Appendix A: 17); an easily understood and highly accessible message of change, constructed around a series of memorable refrains. More specifically, Obama's narrative is made explicitly personal by regular appeals to the everyday experience of the working American; the "plight of the dishwasher in Las Vegas" and "the dreams of the boy who learns on the streets of LA" (Appendix B: 83-85); "the waitress who lives on tips" or just "another worker tell[ing] me that his factory has shut down" (Appendix D: 95-107).

A monumental conception of history: A process of subjectivation.

According to Foucault, monumental history "harmonises heterogeneity, generalises" and, conclusively, "deceives and seduces through analogies" (Anderson, 2003:18). Describing "a place

where all things are possible" (Appendix E: 1-2), and proclaiming that in "the next great chapter in the American story", there will be "no destiny that we cannot fulfil" (Appendix B: 85 and 30), Obama's narrative demonstrates such a conception of history; an interpretation which is "all but critical", presenting the future "in the singular, as necessary and inevitable" (Anderson, 2003:18). Within the context of Obama's discourse of hope, such an analysis is intriguing, and broadly consistent with Debrix's interpretation, emphasising a style and content which are both simple and spectacular. For example, the assertion that "our trials and triumphs" must be considered "at once unique and universal" (Appendix C: 106), is typical of a narrative dominated by a logic of equivalence, used to simplify and generalise a vast diversity of historical experience. Despite "impossible odds", analogised to variously include "an unforgiving wilderness" and "the darkest of nights", Obama confidently asserts that "yes, we can repair this world" (Appendix B: 69-80). His rhetoric is seductive, supported by a vivid imaginary heavily indebted to many of America's most sensational origin myths; of "founding documents that declared the destiny of a nation" (Appendix B: 72), a union that "can always be perfected" (Appendix C: 299), a "king who took us to the mountaintop and pointed the way to the promised land" (Appendix B: 78-79), and an enduring sense of hope, which "led the greatest of generations to free a continent and heal a nation" (Appendix A: 79-80).

Furthermore, by inspiring subjects with a "future prospect that enables them to act and perform" (Anderson, 2003:18), Obama's monumental conception of history facilitates an important process of subjectivation; a crucial mode of transformation that has helped his rhetoric work politically. Analysis of the ways in which "human beings constitute themselves as subjects through modes of subjectivation" (Barker, 1993:82-3) requires an identification of where subjects are actively encouraged to "change or elaborate" (Davidson, 1986:229) themselves; invited to fulfil an ambition that "extends beyond mere activity" (Anderson, 2003:26). While observation of "our self-forming activity" (Davidson, 1986:229) may be problematic from the perspective of the discourse analyst,

Obama's elevative and inspirational rhetoric has clearly extended beyond invitation, demanding a process of transformation whereby the subject is encouraged to "give oneself to oneself" (Schmidt, quoted in Anderson, 2003:24). Obama's temporal notion of "change we need" (Appendix D: 136) is emphasised throughout each of the five speeches analysed, consistently deployed to locate his rhetoric within the historical and political context which he articulates. Stressing that "tonight belongs to you" (Appendix B: 59), and that "at this moment, in this election, we can come together" (Appendix C: 276), Obama urges his audience to actively demand change; to "rise up and insist on new ideas and new leadership" (Appendix D: 283), "continue the long march" (Appendix C: 21-22), and "join in the work of remaking this nation" (Appendix E: 72). While Debrix correctly asserts that an uncritical "adherence to and acceptance of the tabloid narrative" is all that is required of a "(now passive) subject" (Debrix, 2008:45), Obama's discourse is an exception; demanding, if only temporarily, the "active self-appropriation of a subject position" (Anderson, 2003:24).

Chapter Three:

The "rhetorical situation": An analytical framework.

Three interpretations of the "rhetorical situation".

The "rhetorical situation" refers to "an exigence which strongly invites utterance" (Bitzer, 1968:5); a crisis situation, which calls discourse into existence. For Bitzer, the situation is primary, dictating the "purpose, theme, matter, and style" (Bitzer, 1968:10) of a rhetorical response, which functions pragmatically, as "a mode of altering reality" (Bitzer, 1968:4). His formulation has provoked a significant theoretical discussion, primarily concerning various interpretations of the relationship between a situation, an audience, and an orator. Vatz has challenged the ontological foundation of Bitzer's theory, contending that the *sine qua non* of rhetoric concerns the "art of linguistically or systematically creating salience" (Vatz, 1973:160); a persuasive assertion, which draws extensively on Edelman and Perelman. As the world consists of a "scene of inexhaustible events" (Vatz, 1973:156), of which any person is only able to organise "an infinitesimal fraction" (Edelman, 1971:33) into a meaningful structure, or "sliver of reality" (Burke, 1936:16), the interpretation of any situation is critical; representing "a creation, an invention of significance" (Perelman, 1969:116-7). Used to complement this discussion, Biesecker's analysis is particularly sophisticated, developing Derrida's thematic of difference to "rethink the rhetorical situation as articulation" (Biesecker, 1999:233), or more precisely, as "an incident that produces and reproduces the identities of subjects and constructs and reconstructs linkages between them" (Biesecker, 1999:242-3). Throughout following chapter, these often conflictual interpretations will be applied directly to Obama's discourse; to locate this study in a concrete historical and political context, and analyse with greater clarity how Obama's rhetoric has worked politically.

Emphasising dislocation: Articulating the situation.

Assuming a prevailing atmosphere of popular discontent, this research has identified the US elections of 2008 as a "rhetorical situation", assuming a significant dislocation of meaning; conceptualised by Bitzer, as "an imperfection marked by urgency" (Bitzer, 1968:6), and contextualised with reference to Blumenthal, as the "strange death of republican America" (Blumenthal, 2008). Emphasising a grand theme of change, and generating a tremendous receptivity for Obama's message, this assumption is broadly conducive with Bitzer's primary assertion; that the world "really invites change" (Bitzer, 1968:14), conceived and effected through the rhetorical response to a particular situation. However, this understanding of Obama's rhetoric, as cued by an objective reality, or crisis situation, is problematic, compromising the ontological foundations of this study.

As identified, Obama's rhetoric emphasises a multitude of antagonisms, crucially extending the experience of dislocation, whilst encouraging his audience to identify with the emergency which he articulates. For Vatz, his narrative represents an interpretation, selecting particular elements to define a "set of monumental problems" (Appendix C: 75-76), and presenting them to his audience, implying their "importance and pertinency" (Perelman, 1969:116-7) by describing a "broken politics" (Appendix D: 32) marked by a sense of urgency. These elements, articulated to identify dislocation and emphasise antagonistic relations, work to endow Obama's rhetoric with salience, "organizing meaningful perceptions" (Edelman, 1971:66) to create significance. Through the construction of a universalising political project, a rhetoric response to the situation Obama has articulated, the assertion that "situations obtain their character from the rhetoric which surrounds

them or creates them" (Vatz, 1973:159), is demonstrated conclusively.

For Howarth and Torfing, history is "marked by radical discontinuity", as certain discursive formations are entirely dislocated, and replaced by the construction of others, to reorganise the social order "around an external hegemonic principle" (Howarth and Torfing, 2005:23).

Unravelling the "interplay between discursive path-shaping and path-dependency", the following discussion will contend that Obama's rhetoric, while articulated to identify, extend, and respond to, dislocation, has worked politically by remaining significantly continuous, or more accurately, "broadly consonant with the established order" (Howarth and Torfing, 2005:23). Before reaching this conclusion, a discussion of how Obama's discourse has functioned to stimulate subjectivity must first be revisited.

Enabling the subject: A hegemonic response.

Speaking into a particular crisis situation, the rhetorical event is described by Biesecker as "the situated displacement and condensation of identities and audiences" (Biesecker, 1999:243). Her analysis is structured around a Derridean conception of subjectivity, ordered by difference and thus "forever in process, indefinite, controvertible" (Biesecker, 1999:242). As Derrida elaborates, "the subject is constituted only in being divided from itself, in becoming space, in temporizing, in deferral" (Derrida, 1981:29). This conception of discourse as "radical possibility" (Biesecker, 1999:233), marking the "articulation of provisional identities" and "construction of contingent relations" (Biesecker, 1999:242-3), is particularly relevant to Obama's narrative; used to discover what has been articulated and how this rhetoric has worked politically.

Obama's concept of hope is identified as an empty signifier; a context-specific production that may not, as Laclau describes, be "abstractly determined", or derived from its "formal possibility" (Butler, 2000:192). Responding to a situation imbued with salience by his own rhetoric, Obama's empty signifier is highly effective; universalised through the radical extension of its equivalential chain, though capable of "specific, personal and substantive" (Miyazaki, 2008b) replication. Emptied of its differential nature, the subject is invited to identify through substitution, encouraging an indefinite number of particularities to be attached (Butler, 2000:194). In addition, Foucault's conceptual distinction between subjection and subjectivation is considered, revealing a further stimulation of subjectivity. Invoking a monumental conception of history, Obama articulates several chains of equivalence and blends disparate narratives, whilst narrating a powerful social imaginary of change; inspiring subjects to transform or elaborate themselves. Furthermore, Obama's narrative is conceptualised as an "emergency discourse" (Debrix, 2008:22), articulating a succession of threats and reassurances, to capture the attentions of a "continuously anxious and constantly hopeful" (Edelman, 1988:90) American public. His rhetoric identifies and extends dislocation, to articulate a crisis situation, before reassuring a now "mesmerized audience" (Debrix, 2008:21); comforting them through a highly inclusive narrative that is "eye-catching", "awe-inspiring" and "emotion-stirring" (Debrix, 2008:22).

Authorising Obama's rhetoric: An easily understood and instantly recognisable discourse.

Identifying self-referentiality and intertextuality as rules of formation, and describing the production of a tabloid narrative that is sensational, simple and personal, Obama's discourse can be conceptualised as an emerging part of an enduring discursive formation. However, such an interpretation is problematic, appearing conflictual when complemented by a deconstructive

analysis which describes Obama's discourse as a universalising political project, articulated in response to dislocation. Using the analytical framework of the "rhetorical situation", this unsatisfactory contradiction can be resolved, by locating Obama's discursivity, and describing the historical and political context into which he is speaking.

Obama's narrative has been articulated in response to a dislocation of social meaning that, while significant, is only partial. Though his discourse has restructured social relations and reordered subject positions, his rhetoric has consistently sought credibility, deriving authority from a combination of familiar rules and logics. The resulting narrative has sutured a discursive dislocation, despite adhering to the rules of formation and conditions of acceptability of a more general discursive formation. As Edelman describes, the success of all rhetoric, when articulated in response to any particular situation, depends on the consensual acceptance of "meaningful perceptions abstracted from a complex bewildering world" (Edelman, 1971:66). This "process of mutual agreement upon significant symbols" (Edelman, 1971:66) is of critical significance. While emphasising dislocation and stimulating subjectivity, Obama's discourse of hope has worked to restructure social relations around a hegemonic principle that is internal, not external, by extending conventional chains of equivalence. Simultaneously, Obama's rhetoric has been authorised through the co-option of a self-referential and intertextual mode of truth-telling, identifying his narrative as part of an already dominant discursive formation.

This study has combined approaches to discourse analysis that are theoretically distinct, producing an interpretation of Obama's discursivity that initially appears contradictory. However, when interrogated using the framework outlined within this chapter, such analyses can be considered more complementary than conflictual, helping to clarify a complicated understanding of Obama's narrative, whilst developing a more sophisticated appreciation of the context into which he is articulating. While the central assumption of this study has been revised, the description of a

significant, though partial, dislocation can be easily reconciled with less abstract interpretations of the US elections of 2008. Though it has never been the ambition of this research to provide a fully contextualised analysis, the following conclusion will discuss its contribution, and speculate as to where any additional research should depart, while drawing together several primary observations and identifying their significant implications.

Conclusion:

Towards a radical democracy?

Assuming the dislocation of a complex contemporary hegemony, this study has developed a concise but coherent interpretation of a limited, though reflective, sample of Obama's most prominent speeches, articulated during the final year of his electoral campaign. Derrida's method of deconstruction is used to demonstrate how Obama's discourse has worked politically, in response to a contestation of social meaning, tracing the logics of equivalence and difference to identify the construction of an empty signifier of hope. This analysis is complemented by observing of a process of exclusion, and the reworking of several conventional signifiers as nodal points. In contrast, Obama's discourse is analysed as an emerging part of America's dominant discursive formation, developing an understanding of how certain rules and conditions have authorised his rhetoric, and discovering evidence of self-referentiality and intertextuality, as well as the replication of an enduring tabloid style. This interpretation is synthesised with a limited Foucauldian analysis, identifying a monumental conception of history and an important process of subjectivation; strengthening Debrix's analysis and illustrating its enduring relevance, whilst confirming the tabloidization of Obama's narrative. Finally, chapter three introduces a discussion of the rhetorical situation, used as an analytical framework, to locate this study firmly in context and interrogate its primary assertions with greater clarity. Following a brief discussion of how Obama's rhetoric has worked politically, by articulating dislocation and inviting subjectivity, the central assumption of this research has been partly revised, concluding that Obama's narrative demonstrates significant discursive continuity, and simultaneously, that it has been articulated in response to the dislocation of a dominant political discourse.

Relying extensively on Debrix, this research has reaffirmed the continued applicability of his analysis, despite the dislocation of America's previously dominant political discourse of fear, around which his conception had previously been constructed. Embracing Kristeva's analysis of abjection (Kristeva, 1982), Debrix describes a post-9/11 tabloid discourse that is dominated by a "cultural, social and ideological imposition and normalization of war, destruction and death as acceptable everyday realities" (Debrix, 2008:17); a political language and imagery that is "increasingly mediated through a spectacle of terrorism in which fear and violence become central modalities through which to grasp the meaning of self in society" (Giroux, 2006:1). Though beyond the limited ambitions of this study, this process of discursive succession must be rigorously analysed to discover how Obama has adapted and extended the tabloid narrative, and to examine the replication of fear's function, using his conception of hope; an opposite, but equally dynamic, ideological foundation. Further research should examine how Obama's rhetoric has extended the potentiality and, through its analysis, can help to develop our understanding of this newly conceptualised discursive formation; transforming the political imaginary, though remaining dependent upon a simple dimension that inspires and excites, inviting subjectivity, and trumping an increasingly "overdetermined ensemble of identifications" (Torfing, 1999:255).

This study has demonstrated the "primacy of political concepts and logics" (Howarth et al, 2000b:5), identifying a series of articulations which represent an "extreme case" (Howarth and Torfing, 2005:330-1). Furthermore, by properly locating his articulatory practice, this research has partially contextualised a complicated and significantly under-analysed theoretical distinction, between a discourse and a discursive formation. However, it does not constitute an interdiscursive analysis, and has relied extensively on several substantial assumptions, failing to describe the dislocation around which it is constructed, or critique the contemporary nature of America's democracy. Nevertheless, the content of Obama's discourse has been analysed in considerable

detail, developing a sophisticated and multifarious understanding of how his rhetoric has worked politically, whilst advancing an interpretation that is novel, to significantly demystify the Obama phenomenon.

This analysis is not suggesting that Obama's discursivity is somehow corrupt or nonsensical. As Edelman has observed, it must be acknowledged that "contradiction, ambivalence and an endless horizon of signs" have long been "integral to political action" (Edelman, 1988:115). Dynamism and ambiguity are not specific to Obama's narrative, but "endemic to political discourse" (Edelman, 1971:19), while abstract political symbolism is always essentially meaningless; in whichever context it is deployed. Nevertheless, Obama's narrative has generated an unprecedented level of optimism, and cultivated a popular imaginary of democratic revolution, described variously as "a triumph of hope over fear", a "victory for everyone" (Uhlenbeck, 2008), and an "extraordinary display of democracy" (Chomsky, 2008), "symbolizing the opening of a new chapter" (Walker, 2008). Despite the tremendous success of his inspirational and elevative rhetoric, Obama's discourse of hope must be continually deconstructed, to develop this interpretation, and furthermore, critique a narrative that is dangerously indeterminate and worryingly self-referential. As noted by the graffiti artists of New Orleans, "hope is not a plan" (Uhlenbeck, 2008).

Laclau has theorised that there can "no true emancipation except in a discourse whose anchoring terms remain empty"; indeed "no politics of pure particularity" (Butler, 2000:210 and 305) in any sense. Nevertheless, the temptation to "do away with social division and antagonism in the name of a conflictless society" (Butler, 2000:306) is problematic, and must be resisted. The construction of a healthy democracy will necessarily involve a "vibrant clash of political positions and an open conflict of interests" (Mouffe, 1993:6); a newly confrontational politics that, rather paradoxically,

can save democracy only by acknowledging its "own radical impossibility" (Žižek, 1989:6).

Obama's discursivity has seduced and inspired, often appearing to constitute a new social imaginary by articulating a political vocabulary and constructing political frontiers that have been interpreted as new, or different, even radical (Torfing, 1999:261). However, as this study has demonstrated, his narrative is simultaneously continuous, authorised by the privileged reference points of an existing discursive formation; made readily understood and instantly recognised, or, as described by Žižek, "posed as presupposed" (Žižek, 1991:201-3).

According to Torfing, an "immanent critique" of the limitations of the existing social imaginary must remain the objective of a fragmented and marginalised political Left, to construct a "radical plural democracy" (Torfing, 1999:247), advanced through democratic revolution; "reappropriated and redefined" within the specific historical context of post-modern America (Smith, 1998:7).

While highly successful in securing his election, Obama's discourse of hope represents a compromise, failing to constitute such a project. By transforming an enduring discursive formation, his narrative has consolidated its dominance, and impeded the possibility of its eventual transcendence. Though reflective of a popular demand for change, and symbolising a partial renaissance of the American Left, his narrative must be critiqued in such terms; as an obstruction, or necessary deferral.

Appendices:

Appendix A

Iowa: Caucus Victory Speech (03/01/08)

- BarackObamadotcom. 2008. 'Iowa Caucus Victory Speech' (online). *YouTube.com*. Posted on 03/01/08. Accessed on 15/10/08. Available from World Wide Web:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yqoFwZUp5vc&feature=channel>
- Obama, B. 2008. 'Our time for change has come' (online). *The Guardian*. Published on 04/01/08. Accessed on 15/10/08. Available from World Wide Web:
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2008/jan/04/timeforchangehascome>

1 You know, they said this day would never come. They said our sights were set too high.
They said this country was too divided, too disillusioned to ever come together around a
common purpose.

But on this January night, at this defining moment in history, you have done what the cynics
5 said we couldn't do.

You have done what the state of New Hampshire can do in five days. You have done what
America can do in this new year, 2008.

In lines that stretched around schools and churches, in small towns and in big cities, you
came together as Democrats, Republicans and independents, to stand up and say that we are
10 one nation. We are one people. And our time for change has come.

You said the time has come to move beyond the bitterness and pettiness and anger that's
consumed Washington.

To end the political strategy that's been all about division, and instead make it about
addition. To build a coalition for change that stretches through red states and blue states.

15 Because that's how we'll win in November, and that's how we'll finally meet the challenges
that we face as a nation.

We are choosing hope over fear. We're choosing unity over division.

You said the time has come to tell the lobbyists who think their money and their influence
speak louder than our voices that they don't own this government - we do. And we are here
20 to take it back.

The time has come for a president who will be honest about the choices and the challenges
we face, who will listen to you and learn from you, even when we disagree, who won't just
tell you what you want to hear, but what you need to know.

And in New Hampshire, if you give me the same chance that Iowa did tonight, I will be that
25 president for America.

I'll be a president who finally makes health care affordable and available to every single
American, the same way I expanded health care in Illinois, by bringing Democrats and
Republicans together to get the job done. I'll be a president who ends the tax breaks for
companies that ship our jobs overseas and put a middle-class tax cut into the pockets of
30 working Americans who deserve it.

I'll be a president who harnesses the ingenuity of farmers and scientists and entrepreneurs to
free this nation from the tyranny of oil once and for all.

And I'll be a president who ends this war in Iraq and finally brings our troops home who
restores our moral standing, who understands that 9/11 is not a way to scare up votes but a
35 challenge that should unite America and the world against the common threats of the 21st
century. Common threats of terrorism and nuclear weapons, climate change and poverty,
genocide and disease.

Tonight, we are one step closer to that vision of America because of what you did here in
Iowa.

40 And so I'd especially like to thank the organizers and the precinct captains, the volunteers
and the staff who made this all possible.

And while I'm at it on thank yous, I think it makes sense for me to thank the love of my life,
the rock of the Obama family, the closer on the campaign trail.

I know you didn't do this for me. You did this because you believed so deeply in the most
45 American of ideas - that in the face of impossible odds, people who love this country can
change it.

I know this. I know this because while I may be standing here tonight, I'll never forget that
my journey began on the streets of Chicago doing what so many of you have done for this
campaign and all the campaigns here in Iowa, organizing and working and fighting to make
50 people's lives just a little bit better.

I know how hard it is. It comes with little sleep, little pay and a lot of sacrifice. There are
days of disappointment. But sometimes, just sometimes, there are nights like this, a night
that, years from now, when we've made the changes we believe in, when more families can
afford to see a doctor, when our children inherit a planet that's a little cleaner and safer,
55 when the world sees America differently, and America sees itself as a nation less divided
and more united, you'll be able to look back with pride and say that this was the moment
when it all began.

This was the moment when the improbable beat what Washington always said was
inevitable.

60 This was the moment when we tore down barriers that have divided us for too long; when
we rallied people of all parties and ages to a common cause; when we finally gave
Americans who have never participated in politics a reason to stand up and to do so.

This was the moment when we finally beat back the policies of fear and doubts and
cynicism, the politics where we tear each other down instead of lifting this country up. This

65 was the moment.

Years from now, you'll look back and you'll say that this was the moment, this was the place where America remembered what it means to hope. For many months, we've been teased, even derided for talking about hope. But we always knew that hope is not blind optimism. It's not ignoring the enormity of the tasks ahead or the roadblocks that stand in our path.

70 It's not sitting on the sidelines or shirking from a fight. Hope is that thing inside us that insists, despite all the evidence to the contrary, that something better awaits us if we have the courage to reach for it and to work for it and to fight for it.

Hope is what I saw in the eyes of the young woman in Cedar Rapids who works the night shift after a full day of college and still can't afford health care for a sister who's ill. A young
75 woman who still believes that this country will give her the chance to live out her dreams.

Hope is what I heard in the voice of the New Hampshire woman who told me that she hasn't been able to breathe since her nephew left for Iraq. Who still goes to bed each night praying for his safe return.

Hope is what led a band of colonists to rise up against an empire. What led the greatest of
80 generations to free a continent and heal a nation. What led young women and young men to sit at lunch counters and brave fire hoses and march through Selma and Montgomery for freedom's cause.

Hope, hope is what led me here today. With a father from Kenya, a mother from Kansas and a story that could only happen in the United States of America.

85 Hope is the bedrock of this nation. The belief that our destiny will not be written for us, but by us, by all those men and women who are not content to settle for the world as it is, who have the courage to remake the world as it should be.

That is what we started here in Iowa and that is the message we can now carry to New Hampshire and beyond.

90 The same message we had when we were up and when we were down; the one that can save
this country, brick by brick, block by block, that together, ordinary people can do
extraordinary things.

Because we are not a collection of red states and blue states. We are the United States of
America. And in this moment, in this election, we are ready to believe again.

95 Thank you, Iowa

Appendix B

New Hampshire: Yes, We Can (08/01/08)

- BarackObamadotcom. 2008. 'Barack Obama: Yes We Can' (online). *YouTube.com*. Posted
on 09/01/08. Accessed on 15/10/08. Available from World Wide Web:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fe751kMBwms>
- Obama, B. 2008. 'Barack Obama's New Hampshire Primary Speech' (online). *The New York
Times*. Published on 08/01/08. Accessed on 15/10/08. Available from World Wide Web:
<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/08/us/politics/08text-obama.html>

1 Thank you, New Hampshire. I love you back. Thank you. Thank you. Well, thank you so
much. I am still fired up and ready to go. Thank you. Thank you.

Well, first of all, I want to congratulate Senator Clinton on a hard-fought victory here in
New Hampshire. She did an outstanding job. Give her a big round of applause.

5 You know, a few weeks ago, no one imagined that we'd have accomplished what we did
here tonight in New Hampshire. No one could have imagined it.

For most of this campaign, we were far behind. We always knew our climb would be steep.
But in record numbers, you came out, and you spoke up for change.

And with your voices and your votes, you made it clear that at this moment, in this election,
10 there is something happening in America.

There is something happening when men and women in Des Moines and Davenport, in
Lebanon and Concord, come out in the snows of January to wait in lines that stretch block
after block because they believe in what this country can be.

There is something happening. There's something happening when Americans who are
15 young in age and in spirit, who've never participated in politics before, turn out in numbers
we have never seen because they know in their hearts that this time must be different.

There's something happening when people vote not just for party that they belong to, but the
hopes that they hold in common.

And whether we are rich or poor, black or white, Latino or Asian, whether we hail from
20 Iowa or New Hampshire, Nevada or South Carolina, we are ready to take this country in a
fundamentally new direction.

That's what's happening in America right now; change is what's happening in America.

You, all of you who are here tonight, all who put so much heart and soul and work into this
campaign, you can be the new majority who can lead this nation out of a long political
25 darkness.

Democrats, independents and Republicans who are tired of the division and distraction that
has clouded Washington, who know that we can disagree without being disagreeable, who
understand that, if we mobilize our voices to challenge the money and influence that stood
in our way and challenge ourselves to reach for something better, there is no problem we
30 cannot solve, there is no destiny that we cannot fulfill.

Our new American majority can end the outrage of unaffordable, unavailable health care in
our time. We can bring doctors and patients, workers and businesses, Democrats and
Republicans together, and we can tell the drug and insurance industry that, while they get a

seat at the table, they don't get to buy every chair, not this time, not now.

35 Our new majority can end the tax breaks for corporations that ship our jobs overseas and put a middle-class tax cut in the pockets of working Americans who deserve it.

We can stop sending our children to schools with corridors of shame and start putting them on a pathway to success. We can stop talking about how great teachers are and start rewarding them for their greatness by giving them more pay and more support. We can do
40 this with our new majority.

We can harness the ingenuity of farmers and scientists, citizens and entrepreneurs to free this nation from the tyranny of oil and save our planet from a point of no return.

And when I am president of the United States, we will end this war in Iraq and bring our troops home.

45 We will end this war in Iraq. We will bring our troops home. We will finish the job -- we will finish the job against Al Qaida in Afghanistan. We will care for our veterans. We will restore our moral standing in the world.

And we will never use 9/11 as a way to scare up votes, because it is not a tactic to win an election. It is a challenge that should unite America and the world against the common
50 threats of the 21st century: terrorism and nuclear weapons, climate change and poverty, genocide and disease.

All of the candidates in this race share these goals. All of the candidates in this race have good ideas and all are patriots who serve this country honorably.

But the reason our campaign has always been different, the reason we began this improbable
55 journey almost a year ago is because it's not just about what I will do as president. It is also about what you, the people who love this country, the citizens of the United States of America, can do to change it.

That's what this election is all about.

That's why tonight belongs to you. It belongs to the organizers, and the volunteers, and the
60 staff who believed in this journey and rallied so many others to join the cause.

We know the battle ahead will be long. But always remember that, no matter what obstacles stand in our way, nothing can stand in the way of the power of millions of voices calling for change.

We have been told we cannot do this by a chorus of cynics. And they will only grow louder
65 and more dissonant in the weeks and months to come.

We've been asked to pause for a reality check. We've been warned against offering the people of this nation false hope. But in the unlikely story that is America, there has never been anything false about hope.

For when we have faced down impossible odds, when we've been told we're not ready or
70 that we shouldn't try or that we can't, generations of Americans have responded with a simple creed that sums up the spirit of a people: Yes, we can. Yes, we can. Yes, we can.

It was a creed written into the founding documents that declared the destiny of a nation: Yes, we can. It was whispered by slaves and abolitionists as they blazed a trail towards freedom through the darkest of nights: Yes, we can. It was sung by immigrants as they struck out
75 from distant shores and pioneers who pushed westward against an unforgiving wilderness: Yes, we can.

It was the call of workers who organized, women who reached for the ballot, a president who chose the moon as our new frontier, and a king who took us to the mountaintop and pointed the way to the promised land: Yes, we can, to justice and equality. Yes, we can, to
80 opportunity and prosperity. Yes, we can heal this nation. Yes, we can repair this world. Yes, we can.

And so, tomorrow, as we take the campaign south and west, as we learn that the struggles of

the textile workers in Spartanburg are not so different than the plight of the dishwasher in Las Vegas, that the hopes of the little girl who goes to the crumbling school in Dillon are the same as the dreams of the boy who learns on the streets of L.A., we will remember that there is something happening in America, that we are not as divided as our politics suggest, that we are one people, we are one nation.

And, together, we will begin the next great chapter in the American story, with three words that will ring from coast to coast, from sea to shining sea: Yes, we can.

Thank you, New Hampshire. Thank you. Thank you.

Appendix C

Philadelphia: A More Perfect Union (18/03/08)

- BarackObamadotcom. 2008. 'Obama Speech: "A More Perfect Union"' (online). *YouTube.com*. Posted on 18/03/08. Accessed on 15/10/08. Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWe7wTVbLU>
- Obama, B. 2008. 'A More Perfect Union' (online). *Truthout.org*. Published on 18/03/08. Accessed on 15/10/08. Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.truthout.org/article/barack-obama-a-more-perfect-union>

"We the people, in order to form a more perfect union."

Two hundred and twenty one years ago, in a hall that still stands across the street, a group of men gathered and, with these simple words, launched America's improbable experiment in democracy. Farmers and scholars; statesmen and patriots who had traveled across an ocean to escape tyranny and persecution finally made real their declaration of independence at a Philadelphia convention that lasted through the spring of 1787.

The document they produced was eventually signed but ultimately unfinished. It was stained by this nation's original sin of slavery, a question that divided the colonies and brought the convention to a stalemate until the founders chose to allow the slave trade to continue for at least twenty more years, and to leave any final resolution to future generations.

Of course, the answer to the slavery question was already embedded within our Constitution - a Constitution that had at its very core the ideal of equal citizenship under the law; a Constitution that promised its people liberty, and justice, and a union that could be and should be perfected over time.

And yet words on a parchment would not be enough to deliver slaves from bondage, or provide men and women of every color and creed their full rights and obligations as citizens of the United States. What would be needed were Americans in successive generations who were willing to do their part - through protests and struggle, on the streets and in the courts, through a civil war and civil disobedience and always at great risk - to narrow that gap between the promise of our ideals and the reality of their time.

This was one of the tasks we set forth at the beginning of this campaign - to continue the long march of those who came before us, a march for a more just, more equal, more free, more caring and more prosperous America. I chose to run for the presidency at this moment in history because I believe deeply that we cannot solve the challenges of our time unless we solve them together - unless we perfect our union by understanding that we may have different stories, but we hold common hopes; that we may not look the same and we may not have come from the same place, but we all want to move in the same direction - towards a better future for our children and our grandchildren.

This belief comes from my unyielding faith in the decency and generosity of the American people. But it also comes from my own American story.

I am the son of a black man from Kenya and a white woman from Kansas. I was raised with

the help of a white grandfather who survived a Depression to serve in Patton's Army during World War II and a white grandmother who worked on a bomber assembly line at Fort Leavenworth while he was overseas. I've gone to some of the best schools in America and
35 lived in one of the world's poorest nations. I am married to a black American who carries within her the blood of slaves and slaveowners - an inheritance we pass on to our two precious daughters. I have brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews, uncles and cousins, of every race and every hue, scattered across three continents, and for as long as I live, I will never forget that in no other country on Earth is my story even possible.

40 It's a story that hasn't made me the most conventional candidate. But it is a story that has seared into my genetic makeup the idea that this nation is more than the sum of its parts - that out of many, we are truly one.

Throughout the first year of this campaign, against all predictions to the contrary, we saw how hungry the American people were for this message of unity. Despite the temptation to
45 view my candidacy through a purely racial lens, we won commanding victories in states with some of the whitest populations in the country. In South Carolina, where the Confederate Flag still flies, we built a powerful coalition of African Americans and white Americans.

This is not to say that race has not been an issue in the campaign. At various stages in the
50 campaign, some commentators have deemed me either "too black" or "not black enough." We saw racial tensions bubble to the surface during the week before the South Carolina primary. The press has scoured every exit poll for the latest evidence of racial polarization, not just in terms of white and black, but black and brown as well.

And yet, it has only been in the last couple of weeks that the discussion of race in this
55 campaign has taken a particularly divisive turn.

On one end of the spectrum, we've heard the implication that my candidacy is somehow an

exercise in affirmative action; that it's based solely on the desire of wide-eyed liberals to purchase racial reconciliation on the cheap. On the other end, we've heard my former pastor, Reverend Jeremiah Wright, use incendiary language to express views that have the potential not only to widen the racial divide, but views that denigrate both the greatness and the goodness of our nation; that rightly offend white and black alike.

I have already condemned, in unequivocal terms, the statements of Reverend Wright that have caused such controversy. For some, nagging questions remain. Did I know him to be an occasionally fierce critic of American domestic and foreign policy? Of course. Did I ever hear him make remarks that could be considered controversial while I sat in church? Yes. Did I strongly disagree with many of his political views? Absolutely - just as I'm sure many of you have heard remarks from your pastors, priests, or rabbis with which you strongly disagreed.

But the remarks that have caused this recent firestorm weren't simply controversial. They weren't simply a religious leader's effort to speak out against perceived injustice. Instead, they expressed a profoundly distorted view of this country - a view that sees white racism as endemic, and that elevates what is wrong with America above all that we know is right with America; a view that sees the conflicts in the Middle East as rooted primarily in the actions of stalwart allies like Israel, instead of emanating from the perverse and hateful ideologies of radical Islam.

As such, Reverend Wright's comments were not only wrong but divisive, divisive at a time when we need unity; racially charged at a time when we need to come together to solve a set of monumental problems - two wars, a terrorist threat, a falling economy, a chronic health care crisis and potentially devastating climate change; problems that are neither black or white or Latino or Asian, but rather problems that confront us all.

Given my background, my politics, and my professed values and ideals, there will no doubt be those for whom my statements of condemnation are not enough. Why associate myself

with Reverend Wright in the first place, they may ask? Why not join another church? And I confess that if all that I knew of Reverend Wright were the snippets of those sermons that
85 have run in an endless loop on the television and You Tube, or if Trinity United Church of Christ conformed to the caricatures being peddled by some commentators, there is no doubt that I would react in much the same way

But the truth is, that isn't all that I know of the man. The man I met more than twenty years ago is a man who helped introduce me to my Christian faith, a man who spoke to me about
90 our obligations to love one another; to care for the sick and lift up the poor. He is a man who served his country as a U.S. Marine; who has studied and lectured at some of the finest universities and seminaries in the country, and who for over thirty years led a church that serves the community by doing God's work here on Earth - by housing the homeless, ministering to the needy, providing day care services and scholarships and prison ministries,
95 and reaching out to those suffering from HIV/AIDS.

In my first book, *Dreams From My Father*, I described the experience of my first service at Trinity:

"People began to shout, to rise from their seats and clap and cry out, a forceful wind carrying the reverend's voice up into the rafters....And in that single note - hope! - I heard
100 something else; at the foot of that cross, inside the thousands of churches across the city, I imagined the stories of ordinary black people merging with the stories of David and Goliath, Moses and Pharaoh, the Christians in the lion's den, Ezekiel's field of dry bones. Those stories - of survival, and freedom, and hope - became our story, my story; the blood that had spilled was our blood, the tears our tears; until this black church, on this bright day, seemed
105 once more a vessel carrying the story of a people into future generations and into a larger world. Our trials and triumphs became at once unique and universal, black and more than black; in chronicling our journey, the stories and songs gave us a means to reclaim memories that we didn't need to feel shame about...memories that all people might study and

cherish - and with which we could start to rebuild."

110 That has been my experience at Trinity. Like other predominantly black churches across the country, Trinity embodies the black community in its entirety - the doctor and the welfare mom, the model student and the former gang-banger. Like other black churches, Trinity's services are full of raucous laughter and sometimes bawdy humor. They are full of dancing, clapping, screaming and shouting that may seem jarring to the untrained ear. The church
115 contains in full the kindness and cruelty, the fierce intelligence and the shocking ignorance, the struggles and successes, the love and yes, the bitterness and bias that make up the black experience in America.

And this helps explain, perhaps, my relationship with Reverend Wright. As imperfect as he may be, he has been like family to me. He strengthened my faith, officiated my wedding,
120 and baptized my children. Not once in my conversations with him have I heard him talk about any ethnic group in derogatory terms, or treat whites with whom he interacted with anything but courtesy and respect. He contains within him the contradictions - the good and the bad - of the community that he has served diligently for so many years.

I can no more disown him than I can disown the black community. I can no more disown
125 him than I can my white grandmother - a woman who helped raise me, a woman who sacrificed again and again for me, a woman who loves me as much as she loves anything in this world but a woman who once confessed her fear of black men who passed by her on the street, and who on more than one occasion has uttered racial or ethnic stereotypes that made me cringe.

130 These people are a part of me. And they are a part of America, this country that I love.

Some will see this as an attempt to justify or excuse comments that are simply inexcusable. I can assure you it is not. I suppose the politically safe thing would be to move on from this episode and just hope that it fades into the woodwork. We can dismiss Reverend Wright as a

crank or a demagogue, just as some have dismissed Geraldine Ferraro, in the aftermath of
135 her recent statements, as harboring some deep-seated racial bias.

But race is an issue that I believe this nation cannot afford to ignore right now. We would be making the same mistake that Reverend Wright made in his offending sermons about America - to simplify and stereotype and amplify the negative to the point that it distorts reality.

140 The fact is that the comments that have been made and the issues that have surfaced over the last few weeks reflect the complexities of race in this country that we've never really worked through - a part of our union that we have yet to perfect. And if we walk away now, if we simply retreat into our respective corners, we will never be able to come together and solve challenges like health care, or education, or the need to find good jobs for every American.

145 Understanding this reality requires a reminder of how we arrived at this point. As William Faulkner once wrote, "The past isn't dead and buried. In fact, it isn't even past." We do not need to recite here the history of racial injustice in this country. But we do need to remind ourselves that so many of the disparities that exist in the African-American community today can be directly traced to inequalities passed on from an earlier generation that suffered
150 under the brutal legacy of slavery and Jim Crow.

Segregated schools were, and are, inferior schools; we still haven't fixed them, fifty years after Brown v. Board of Education, and the inferior education they provided, then and now, helps explain the pervasive achievement gap between today's black and white students.

Legalized discrimination - where blacks were prevented, often through violence, from
155 owning property, or loans were not granted to African-American business owners, or black homeowners could not access FHA mortgages, or blacks were excluded from unions, or the police force, or fire departments - meant that black families could not amass any meaningful wealth to bequeath to future generations. That history helps explain the wealth and income

gap between black and white, and the concentrated pockets of poverty that persists in so
160 many of today's urban and rural communities.

A lack of economic opportunity among black men, and the shame and frustration that came
from not being able to provide for one's family, contributed to the erosion of black families -
a problem that welfare policies for many years may have worsened. And the lack of basic
services in so many urban black neighborhoods - parks for kids to play in, police walking
165 the beat, regular garbage pick-up and building code enforcement - all helped create a cycle
of violence, blight and neglect that continue to haunt us.

This is the reality in which Reverend Wright and other African-Americans of his generation
grew up. They came of age in the late fifties and early sixties, a time when segregation was
still the law of the land and opportunity was systematically constricted. What's remarkable is
170 not how many failed in the face of discrimination, but rather how many men and women
overcame the odds; how many were able to make a way out of no way for those like me who
would come after them.

But for all those who scratched and clawed their way to get a piece of the American Dream,
there were many who didn't make it - those who were ultimately defeated, in one way or
175 another, by discrimination. That legacy of defeat was passed on to future generations - those
young men and increasingly young women who we see standing on street corners or
languishing in our prisons, without hope or prospects for the future. Even for those blacks
who did make it, questions of race, and racism, continue to define their worldview in
fundamental ways. For the men and women of Reverend Wright's generation, the memories
180 of humiliation and doubt and fear have not gone away; nor has the anger and the bitterness
of those years. That anger may not get expressed in public, in front of white co-workers or
white friends. But it does find voice in the barbershop or around the kitchen table. At times,
that anger is exploited by politicians, to gin up votes along racial lines, or to make up for a
politician's own failings.

185 And occasionally it finds voice in the church on Sunday morning, in the pulpit and in the
pews. The fact that so many people are surprised to hear that anger in some of Reverend
Wright's sermons simply reminds us of the old truism that the most segregated hour in
American life occurs on Sunday morning. That anger is not always productive; indeed, all
too often it distracts attention from solving real problems; it keeps us from squarely facing
190 our own complicity in our condition, and prevents the African-American community from
forging the alliances it needs to bring about real change. But the anger is real; it is powerful;
and to simply wish it away, to condemn it without understanding its roots, only serves to
widen the chasm of misunderstanding that exists between the races.

In fact, a similar anger exists within segments of the white community. Most working- and
195 middle-class white Americans don't feel that they have been particularly privileged by their
race. Their experience is the immigrant experience - as far as they're concerned, no one's
handed them anything, they've built it from scratch. They've worked hard all their lives,
many times only to see their jobs shipped overseas or their pension dumped after a lifetime
of labor. They are anxious about their futures, and feel their dreams slipping away; in an era
200 of stagnant wages and global competition, opportunity comes to be seen as a zerosum game,
in which your dreams come at my expense. So when they are told to bus their children to a
school across town; when they hear that an African American is getting an advantage in
landing a good job or a spot in a good college because of an injustice that they themselves
never committed; when they're told that their fears about crime in urban neighborhoods are
205 somehow prejudiced, resentment builds over time.

Like the anger within the black community, these resentments aren't always expressed in
polite company. But they have helped shape the political landscape for at least a generation.
Anger over welfare and affirmative action helped forge the Reagan Coalition. Politicians
routinely exploited fears of crime for their own electoral ends. Talk show hosts and
210 conservative commentators built entire careers unmasking bogus claims of racism while

dismissing legitimate discussions of racial injustice and inequality as mere political correctness or reverse racism.

Just as black anger often proved counterproductive, so have these white resentments distracted attention from the real culprits of the middle class squeeze - a corporate culture rife with inside dealing, questionable accounting practices, and short-term greed; a Washington dominated by lobbyists and special interests; economic policies that favor the few over the many. And yet, to wish away the resentments of white Americans, to label them as misguided or even racist, without recognizing they are grounded in legitimate concerns - this too widens the racial divide, and blocks the path to understanding.

215 This is where we are right now. It's a racial stalemate we've been stuck in for years. Contrary to the claims of some of my critics, black and white, I have never been so naïve as to believe that we can get beyond our racial divisions in a single election cycle, or with a single candidacy - particularly a candidacy as imperfect as my own.

But I have asserted a firm conviction - a conviction rooted in my faith in God and my faith in the American people - that working together we can move beyond some of our old racial wounds, and that in fact we have no choice if we are to continue on the path of a more perfect union.

For the African-American community, that path means embracing the burdens of our past without becoming victims of our past. It means continuing to insist on a full measure of justice in every aspect of American life. But it also means binding our particular grievances - for better health care, and better schools, and better jobs - to the larger aspirations of all Americans - the white woman struggling to break the glass ceiling, the white man whose been laid off, the immigrant trying to feed his family. And it means taking full responsibility for own lives - by demanding more from our fathers, and spending more time with our children, and reading to them, and teaching them that while they may face challenges and discrimination in their own lives, they must never succumb to despair or cynicism; they

must always believe that they can write their own destiny.

Ironically, this quintessentially American - and yes, conservative - notion of self-help found frequent expression in Reverend Wright's sermons. But what my former pastor too often
240 failed to understand is that embarking on a program of self-help also requires a belief that society can change.

The profound mistake of Reverend Wright's sermons is not that he spoke about racism in our society. It's that he spoke as if our society was static; as if no progress has been made; as if this country - a country that has made it possible for one of his own members to run for the
245 highest office in the land and build a coalition of white and black; Latino and Asian, rich and poor, young and old - is still irrevocably bound to a tragic past. But what we know - what we have seen - is that America can change. That is true genius of this nation. What we have already achieved gives us hope - the audacity to hope - for what we can and must achieve tomorrow.

250 In the white community, the path to a more perfect union means acknowledging that what ails the African-American community does not just exist in the minds of black people; that the legacy of discrimination - and current incidents of discrimination, while less overt than in the past - are real and must be addressed. Not just with words, but with deeds - by investing in our schools and our communities; by enforcing our civil rights laws and
255 ensuring fairness in our criminal justice system; by providing this generation with ladders of opportunity that were unavailable for previous generations. It requires all Americans to realize that your dreams do not have to come at the expense of my dreams; that investing in the health, welfare, and education of black and brown and white children will ultimately help all of America prosper.

260 In the end, then, what is called for is nothing more, and nothing less, than what all the world's great religions demand - that we do unto others as we would have them do unto us. Let us be our brother's keeper, Scripture tells us. Let us be our sister's keeper. Let us find

that common stake we all have in one another, and let our politics reflect that spirit as well.

For we have a choice in this country. We can accept a politics that breeds division, and

265 conflict, and cynicism. We can tackle race only as spectacle - as we did in the OJ trial - or in
the wake of tragedy, as we did in the aftermath of Katrina - or as fodder for the nightly
news. We can play Reverend Wright's sermons on every channel, every day and talk about
them from now until the election, and make the only question in this campaign whether or
not the American people think that I somehow believe or sympathize with his most
270 offensive words. We can pounce on some gaffe by a Hillary supporter as evidence that she's
playing the race card, or we can speculate on whether white men will all flock to John
McCain in the general election regardless of his policies.

We can do that.

But if we do, I can tell you that in the next election, we'll be talking about some other

275 distraction. And then another one. And then another one. And nothing will change.

That is one option. Or, at this moment, in this election, we can come together and say, "Not
this time." This time we want to talk about the crumbling schools that are stealing the future
of black children and white children and Asian children and Hispanic children and Native
American children. This time we want to reject the cynicism that tells us that these kids can't
280 learn; that those kids who don't look like us are somebody else's problem. The children of
America are not those kids, they are our kids, and we will not let them fall behind in a 21st
century economy. Not this time.

This time we want to talk about how the lines in the Emergency Room are filled with whites
and blacks and Hispanics who do not have health care; who don't have the power on their
285 own to overcome the special interests in Washington, but who can take them on if we do it
together.

This time we want to talk about the shuttered mills that once provided a decent life for men

and women of every race, and the homes for sale that once belonged to Americans from every religion, every region, every walk of life. This time we want to talk about the fact that
290 the real problem is not that someone who doesn't look like you might take your job; it's that the corporation you work for will ship it overseas for nothing more than a profit.

This time we want to talk about the men and women of every color and creed who serve together, and fight together, and bleed together under the same proud flag. We want to talk about how to bring them home from a war that never should've been authorized and never
295 should've been waged, and we want to talk about how we'll show our patriotism by caring for them, and their families, and giving them the benefits they have earned.

I would not be running for President if I didn't believe with all my heart that this is what the vast majority of Americans want for this country. This union may never be perfect, but generation after generation has shown that it can always be perfected. And today, whenever
300 I find myself feeling doubtful or cynical about this possibility, what gives me the most hope is the next generation - the young people whose attitudes and beliefs and openness to change have already made history in this election.

There is one story in particular that I'd like to leave you with today - a story I told when I had the great honor of speaking on Dr. King's birthday at his home church, Ebenezer
305 Baptist, in Atlanta.

There is a young, twenty-three year old white woman named Ashley Baia who organized for our campaign in Florence, South Carolina. She had been working to organize a mostly African-American community since the beginning of this campaign, and one day she was at a roundtable discussion where everyone went around telling their story and why they were
310 there.

And Ashley said that when she was nine years old, her mother got cancer. And because she had to miss days of work, she was let go and lost her health care. They had to file for

bankruptcy, and that's when Ashley decided that she had to do something to help her mom.

She knew that food was one of their most expensive costs, and so Ashley convinced her

315 mother that what she really liked and really wanted to eat more than anything else was
mustard and relish sandwiches. Because that was the cheapest way to eat.

She did this for a year until her mom got better, and she told everyone at the roundtable that
the reason she joined our campaign was so that she could help the millions of other children
in the country who want and need to help their parents too.

320 Now Ashley might have made a different choice. Perhaps somebody told her along the way
that the source of her mother's problems were blacks who were on welfare and too lazy to
work, or Hispanics who were coming into the country illegally. But she didn't. She sought
out allies in her fight against injustice.

Anyway, Ashley finishes her story and then goes around the room and asks everyone else

325 why they're supporting the campaign. They all have different stories and reasons. Many
bring up a specific issue. And finally they come to this elderly black man who's been sitting
there quietly the entire time. And Ashley asks him why he's there. And he does not bring up
a specific issue. He does not say health care or the economy. He does not say education or
the war. He does not say that he was there because of Barack Obama. He simply says to
330 everyone in the room, "I am here because of Ashley."

"I'm here because of Ashley." By itself, that single moment of recognition between that
young white girl and that old black man is not enough. It is not enough to give health care to
the sick, or jobs to the jobless, or education to our children.

But it is where we start. It is where our union grows stronger. And as so many generations

335 have come to realize over the course of the two-hundred and twenty one years since a band
of patriots signed that document in Philadelphia, that is where the perfection begins.

Appendix D

Denver: Democratic National Convention (28/08/08)

- CSPAN. 2008. 'Sen. Barack Obama's Full Speech to the DNC' (online). *YouTube.com*.

Posted on 28/08/08. Accessed on 15/10/08. Available from World Wide Web:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ato7BtisXzE>

- Obama, B. 2008. 'Barack Obama, Illinois' (online). *Democratic National Convention*.

Published on 28/08/08. Accessed on 15/10/08. Available from World Wide Web:

<http://www.demconvention.com/barack-obama/>

- 1 To Chairman Dean and my great friend Dick Durbin; and to all my fellow citizens of this great nation; With profound gratitude and great humility, I accept your nomination for the presidency of the United States.
- 5 Let me express my thanks to the historic slate of candidates who accompanied me on this journey, and especially the one who traveled the farthest - a champion for working Americans and an inspiration to my daughters and to yours -- Hillary Rodham Clinton. To President Clinton, who last night made the case for change as only he can make it; to Ted Kennedy, who embodies the spirit of service; and to the next Vice President of the United
- 10 States, Joe Biden, I thank you. I am grateful to finish this journey with one of the finest statesmen of our time, a man at ease with everyone from world leaders to the conductors on the Amtrak train he still takes home every night.
- To the love of my life, our next First Lady, Michelle Obama, and to Sasha and Malia - I love you so much, and I'm so proud of all of you.
- 15 Four years ago, I stood before you and told you my story - of the brief union between a young man from Kenya and a young woman from Kansas who weren't well-off or well-

known, but shared belief that in America, their son could achieve whatever he put his mind to.

It is that promise that has always set this country apart - that through hard work and

20 sacrifice, each of us can pursue our individual dreams but still come together as one American family, to ensure that the next generation can pursue their dreams as well.

That's why I stand here tonight. Because for two hundred and thirty two years, at each moment when that promise was in jeopardy, ordinary men and women - students and soldiers, farmers and teachers, nurses and janitors -- found the courage to keep it alive.

25 We meet at one of those defining moments - a moment when our nation is at war, our economy is in turmoil, and the American promise has been threatened once more.

Tonight, more Americans are out of work and more are working harder for less. More of you have lost your homes and even more are watching your home values plummet. More of you have cars you can't afford to drive, credit card bills you can't afford to pay, and tuition

30 that's beyond your reach.

These challenges are not all of government's making. But the failure to respond is a direct result of a broken politics in Washington and the failed policies of George W. Bush.

America, we are better than these last eight years. We are a better country than this.

This country is more decent than one where a woman in Ohio, on the brink of retirement,

35 finds herself one illness away from disaster after a lifetime of hard work.

This country is more generous than one where a man in Indiana has to pack up the

equipment he's worked on for twenty years and watch it shipped off to China, and then

chokes up as he explains how he felt like a failure when he went home to tell his family the news.

40 We are more compassionate than a government that lets veterans sleep on our streets and families slide into poverty; that sits on its hands while a major American city drowns before our eyes.

Tonight, I say to the American people, to Democrats and Republicans and Independents across this great land - enough! This moment - this election - is our chance to keep, in the
45 21st century, the American promise alive. Because next week, in Minnesota, the same party that brought you two terms of George Bush and Dick Cheney will ask this country for a third. And we are here because we love this country too much to let the next four years look like the last eight. On November 4th, we must stand up and say: "Eight is enough."

Now let there be no doubt. The Republican nominee, John McCain, has worn the uniform of
50 our country with bravery and distinction, and for that we owe him our gratitude and respect. And next week, we'll also hear about those occasions when he's broken with his party as evidence that he can deliver the change that we need.

But the record's clear: John McCain has voted with George Bush ninety percent of the time. Senator McCain likes to talk about judgment, but really, what does it say about your
55 judgment when you think George Bush has been right more than ninety percent of the time?

I don't know about you, but I'm not ready to take a ten percent chance on change.

The truth is, on issue after issue that would make a difference in your lives - on health care and education and the economy - Senator McCain has been anything but independent. He said that our economy has made "great progress" under this President. He said that the
60 fundamentals of the economy are strong. And when one of his chief advisors - the man who wrote his economic plan - was talking about the anxiety Americans are feeling, he said that we were just suffering from a "mental recession," and that we've become, and I quote, "a nation of whiners."

A nation of whiners? Tell that to the proud auto workers at a Michigan plant who, after they
65 found out it was closing, kept showing up every day and working as hard as ever, because they knew there were people who counted on the brakes that they made. Tell that to the military families who shoulder their burdens silently as they watch their loved ones leave for their third or fourth or fifth tour of duty. These are not whiners. They work hard and give

back and keep going without complaint. These are the Americans that I know.

70 Now, I don't believe that Senator McCain doesn't care what's going on in the lives of
Americans. I just think he doesn't know. Why else would he define middle-class as someone
making under five million dollars a year? How else could he propose hundreds of billions in
tax breaks for big corporations and oil companies but not one penny of tax relief to more
than one hundred million Americans? How else could he offer a health care plan that would
75 actually tax people's benefits, or an education plan that would do nothing to help families
pay for college, or a plan that would privatize Social Security and gamble your retirement?
It's not because John McCain doesn't care. It's because John McCain doesn't get it.
For over two decades, he's subscribed to that old, discredited Republican philosophy - give
more and more to those with the most and hope that prosperity trickles down to everyone
80 else. In Washington, they call this the Ownership Society, but what it really means is -
you're on your own. Out of work? Tough luck. No health care? The market will fix it. Born
into poverty? Pull yourself up by your own bootstraps - even if you don't have boots. You're
on your own.

85 Well it's time for them to own their failure. It's time for us to change America.

You see, we Democrats have a very different measure of what constitutes progress in this
country.

We measure progress by how many people can find a job that pays the mortgage; whether
you can put a little extra money away at the end of each month so you can someday watch
90 your child receive her college diploma. We measure progress in the 23 million new jobs that
were created when Bill Clinton was President - when the average American family saw its
income go up \$7,500 instead of down \$2,000 like it has under George Bush.

We measure the strength of our economy not by the number of billionaires we have or the
profits of the Fortune 500, but by whether someone with a good idea can take a risk and start

95 a new business, or whether the waitress who lives on tips can take a day off to look after a sick kid without losing her job - an economy that honors the dignity of work.

The fundamentals we use to measure economic strength are whether we are living up to that fundamental promise that has made this country great - a promise that is the only reason I am standing here tonight.

100 Because in the faces of those young veterans who come back from Iraq and Afghanistan, I see my grandfather, who signed up after Pearl Harbor, marched in Patton's Army, and was rewarded by a grateful nation with the chance to go to college on the GI Bill.

In the face of that young student who sleeps just three hours before working the night shift, I think about my mom, who raised my sister and me on her own while she worked and earned
105 her degree; who once turned to food stamps but was still able to send us to the best schools in the country with the help of student loans and scholarships.

When I listen to another worker tell me that his factory has shut down, I remember all those men and women on the South Side of Chicago who I stood by and fought for two decades ago after the local steel plant closed.

110 And when I hear a woman talk about the difficulties of starting her own business, I think about my grandmother, who worked her way up from the secretarial pool to middle-management, despite years of being passed over for promotions because she was a woman. She's the one who taught me about hard work. She's the one who put off buying a new car or a new dress for herself so that I could have a better life. She poured everything she had into
115 me. And although she can no longer travel, I know that she's watching tonight, and that tonight is her night as well.

I don't know what kind of lives John McCain thinks that celebrities lead, but this has been mine. These are my heroes. Theirs are the stories that shaped me. And it is on their behalf that I intend to win this election and keep our promise alive as President of the United

120 States.

What is that promise?

It's a promise that says each of us has the freedom to make of our own lives what we will, but that we also have the obligation to treat each other with dignity and respect.

It's a promise that says the market should reward drive and innovation and generate growth,

125 but that businesses should live up to their responsibilities to create American jobs, look out for American workers, and play by the rules of the road.

Ours is a promise that says government cannot solve all our problems, but what it should do is that which we cannot do for ourselves - protect us from harm and provide every child a

130 decent education; keep our water clean and our toys safe; invest in new schools and new roads and new science and technology. Our government should work for us, not against us.

It should help us, not hurt us. It should ensure opportunity not just for those with the most money and influence, but for every American who's willing to work.

That's the promise of America - the idea that we are responsible for ourselves, but that we also rise or fall as one nation; the fundamental belief that I am my brother's keeper; I am my

135 sister's keeper.

That's the promise we need to keep. That's the change we need right now. So let me spell out exactly what that change would mean if I am President.

Change means a tax code that doesn't reward the lobbyists who wrote it, but the American workers and small businesses who deserve it.

140 Unlike John McCain, I will stop giving tax breaks to corporations that ship jobs overseas, and I will start giving them to companies that create good jobs right here in America.

I will eliminate capital gains taxes for the small businesses and the start-ups that will create the high-wage, high-tech jobs of tomorrow.

I will cut taxes - cut taxes - for 95% of all working families. Because in an economy like

145 this, the last thing we should do is raise taxes on the middle-class.

And for the sake of our economy, our security, and the future of our planet, I will set a clear

goal as President: in ten years, we will finally end our dependence on oil from the Middle East.

Washington's been talking about our oil addiction for the last thirty years, and John McCain

150 has been there for twenty-six of them. In that time, he's said no to higher fuel-efficiency standards for cars, no to investments in renewable energy, no to renewable fuels. And today, we import triple the amount of oil as the day that Senator McCain took office.

Now is the time to end this addiction, and to understand that drilling is a stop-gap measure, not a long-term solution. Not even close.

155 As President, I will tap our natural gas reserves, invest in clean coal technology, and find ways to safely harness nuclear power. I'll help our auto companies re-tool, so that the fuel-efficient cars of the future are built right here in America. I'll make it easier for the American people to afford these new cars. And I'll invest 150 billion dollars over the next decade in affordable, renewable sources of energy - wind power and solar power and the
160 next generation of biofuels; an investment that will lead to new industries and five million new jobs that pay well and can't ever be outsourced.

America, now is not the time for small plans.

Now is the time to finally meet our moral obligation to provide every child a world-class education, because it will take nothing less to compete in the global economy. Michelle and

165 I are only here tonight because we were given a chance at an education. And I will not settle for an America where some kids don't have that chance. I'll invest in early childhood education. I'll recruit an army of new teachers, and pay them higher salaries and give them more support. And in exchange, I'll ask for higher standards and more accountability. And we will keep our promise to every young American - if you commit to serving your
170 community or your country, we will make sure you can afford a college education.

Now is the time to finally keep the promise of affordable, accessible health care for every single American. If you have health care, my plan will lower your premiums. If you don't,

you'll be able to get the same kind of coverage that members of Congress give themselves.

And as someone who watched my mother argue with insurance companies while she lay in
175 bed dying of cancer, I will make certain those companies stop discriminating against those
who are sick and need care the most.

Now is the time to help families with paid sick days and better family leave, because nobody
in America should have to choose between keeping their jobs and caring for a sick child or
ailing parent. Now is the time to change our bankruptcy laws, so that your pensions are
180 protected ahead of CEO bonuses; and the time to protect Social Security for future
generations.

And now is the time to keep the promise of equal pay for an equal day's work, because I
want my daughters to have exactly the same opportunities as your sons.

Now, many of these plans will cost money, which is why I've laid out how I'll pay for every
185 dime - by closing corporate loopholes and tax havens that don't help America grow. But I
will also go through the federal budget, line by line, eliminating programs that no longer
work and making the ones we do need work better and cost less - because we cannot meet
twenty-first century challenges with a twentieth century bureaucracy.

And Democrats, we must also admit that fulfilling America's promise will require more than
190 just money. It will require a renewed sense of responsibility from each of us to recover what
John F. Kennedy called our "intellectual and moral strength." Yes, government must lead on
energy independence, but each of us must do our part to make our homes and businesses
more efficient. Yes, we must provide more ladders to success for young men who fall into
lives of crime and despair. But we must also admit that programs alone can't replace parents;
195 that government can't turn off the television and make a child do her homework; that fathers
must take more responsibility for providing the love and guidance their children need.

Individual responsibility and mutual responsibility - that's the essence of America's promise.

And just as we keep our promise to the next generation here at home, so must we keep

America's promise abroad. If John McCain wants to have a debate about who has the
200 temperament, and judgment, to serve as the next Commander-in-Chief, that's a debate I'm
ready to have.

For while Senator McCain was turning his sights to Iraq just days after 9/11, I stood up and
opposed this war, knowing that it would distract us from the real threats we face. When John
McCain said we could just "muddle through" in Afghanistan, I argued for more resources
205 and more troops to finish the fight against the terrorists who actually attacked us on 9/11,
and made clear that we must take out Osama bin Laden and his lieutenants if we have them
in our sights. John McCain likes to say that he'll follow bin Laden to the Gates of Hell - but
he won't even go to the cave where he lives.

And today, as my call for a time frame to remove our troops from Iraq has been echoed by
210 the Iraqi government and even the Bush Administration, even after we learned that Iraq has
a \$79 billion surplus while we're wallowing in deficits, John McCain stands alone in his
stubborn refusal to end a misguided war.

That's not the judgment we need. That won't keep America safe. We need a President who
can face the threats of the future, not keep grasping at the ideas of the past.

215 You don't defeat a terrorist network that operates in eighty countries by occupying Iraq. You
don't protect Israel and deter Iran just by talking tough in Washington. You can't truly stand
up for Georgia when you've strained our oldest alliances. If John McCain wants to follow
George Bush with more tough talk and bad strategy, that is his choice - but it is not the
change we need.

220 We are the party of Roosevelt. We are the party of Kennedy. So don't tell me that Democrats
won't defend this country. Don't tell me that Democrats won't keep us safe. The Bush-
McCain foreign policy has squandered the legacy that generations of Americans --
Democrats and Republicans - have built, and we are here to restore that legacy.

As Commander-in-Chief, I will never hesitate to defend this nation, but I will only send our

225 troops into harm's way with a clear mission and a sacred commitment to give them the
equipment they need in battle and the care and benefits they deserve when they come home.
I will end this war in Iraq responsibly, and finish the fight against al Qaeda and the Taliban
in Afghanistan. I will rebuild our military to meet future conflicts. But I will also renew the
tough, direct diplomacy that can prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons and curb
230 Russian aggression. I will build new partnerships to defeat the threats of the 21st century:
terrorism and nuclear proliferation; poverty and genocide; climate change and disease. And I
will restore our moral standing, so that America is once again that last, best hope for all who
are called to the cause of freedom, who long for lives of peace, and who yearn for a better
future.

235 These are the policies I will pursue. And in the weeks ahead, I look forward to debating
them with John McCain.

But what I will not do is suggest that the Senator takes his positions for political purposes.
Because one of the things that we have to change in our politics is the idea that people
cannot disagree without challenging each other's character and patriotism.

240 The times are too serious, the stakes are too high for this same partisan playbook. So let us
agree that patriotism has no party. I love this country, and so do you, and so does John
McCain. The men and women who serve in our battlefields may be Democrats and
Republicans and Independents, but they have fought together and bled together and some
died together under the same proud flag. They have not served a Red America or a Blue
245 America - they have served the United States of America. So I've got news for you, John
McCain. We all put our country first.

America, our work will not be easy. The challenges we face require tough choices, and
Democrats as well as Republicans will need to cast off the worn-out ideas and politics of the
past. For part of what has been lost these past eight years can't just be measured by lost
250 wages or bigger trade deficits. What has also been lost is our sense of common purpose - our

sense of higher purpose. And that's what we have to restore.

We may not agree on abortion, but surely we can agree on reducing the number of unwanted pregnancies in this country. The reality of gun ownership may be different for hunters in rural Ohio than for those plagued by gang-violence in Cleveland, but don't tell me we can't
255 uphold the Second Amendment while keeping AK-47s out of the hands of criminals. I know there are differences on same-sex marriage, but surely we can agree that our gay and lesbian brothers and sisters deserve to visit the person they love in the hospital and to live lives free of discrimination. Passions fly on immigration, but I don't know anyone who benefits when a mother is separated from her infant child or an employer undercuts American wages by
260 hiring illegal workers. This too is part of America's promise - the promise of a democracy where we can find the strength and grace to bridge divides and unite in common effort.

I know there are those who dismiss such belief as happy talk. They claim that our insistence on something larger, something firmer and more honest in our public life is just a Trojan Horse for higher taxes and the abandonment of traditional values. And that's to be expected.
265 Because if you don't have any fresh ideas, then you use stale tactics to scare the voters. If you don't have a record to run on, then you paint your opponent as someone people should run from. You make a big election about small things.

And you know what - it's worked before. Because it feeds into the cynicism we all have about government. When Washington doesn't work, all its promises seem empty. If your
270 hopes have been dashed again and again, then it's best to stop hoping, and settle for what you already know.

I get it. I realize that I am not the likeliest candidate for this office. I don't fit the typical pedigree, and I haven't spent my career in the halls of Washington.

But I stand before you tonight because all across America something is stirring. What the
275 nay-sayers don't understand is that this election has never been about me. It's been about you.

For eighteen long months, you have stood up, one by one, and said enough to the politics of the past. You understand that in this election, the greatest risk we can take is to try the same old politics with the same old players and expect a different result. You have shown what history teaches us - that at defining moments like this one, the change we need doesn't come from Washington. Change comes to Washington. Change happens because the American people demand it - because they rise up and insist on new ideas and new leadership, a new politics for a new time. America, this is one of those moments.

I believe that as hard as it will be, the change we need is coming. Because I've seen it.

Because I've lived it. I've seen it in Illinois, when we provided health care to more children and moved more families from welfare to work. I've seen it in Washington, when we worked across party lines to open up government and hold lobbyists more accountable, to give better care for our veterans and keep nuclear weapons out of terrorist hands.

And I've seen it in this campaign. In the young people who voted for the first time, and in those who got involved again after a very long time. In the Republicans who never thought they'd pick up a Democratic ballot, but did. I've seen it in the workers who would rather cut their hours back a day than see their friends lose their jobs, in the soldiers who re-enlist after losing a limb, in the good neighbors who take a stranger in when a hurricane strikes and the floodwaters rise.

This country of ours has more wealth than any nation, but that's not what makes us rich. We have the most powerful military on Earth, but that's not what makes us strong. Our universities and our culture are the envy of the world, but that's not what keeps the world coming to our shores.

Instead, it is that American spirit - that American promise - that pushes us forward even when the path is uncertain; that binds us together in spite of our differences; that makes us fix our eye not on what is seen, but what is unseen, that better place around the bend.

That promise is our greatest inheritance. It's a promise I make to my daughters when I tuck

them in at night, and a promise that you make to yours - a promise that has led immigrants to cross oceans and pioneers to travel west; a promise that led workers to picket lines, and
305 women to reach for the ballot.

And it is that promise that forty five years ago today, brought Americans from every corner of this land to stand together on a Mall in Washington, before Lincoln's Memorial, and hear a young preacher from Georgia speak of his dream.

The men and women who gathered there could've heard many things. They could've heard
310 words of anger and discord. They could've been told to succumb to the fear and frustration of so many dreams deferred.

But what the people heard instead - people of every creed and color, from every walk of life - is that in America, our destiny is inextricably linked. That together, our dreams can be one.

"We cannot walk alone," the preacher cried. "And as we walk, we must make the pledge that
315 we shall always march ahead. We cannot turn back."

America, we cannot turn back. Not with so much work to be done. Not with so many children to educate, and so many veterans to care for. Not with an economy to fix and cities to rebuild and farms to save. Not with so many families to protect and so many lives to mend. America, we cannot turn back. We cannot walk alone. At this moment, in this
320 election, we must pledge once more to march into the future. Let us keep that promise - that American promise - and in the words of Scripture hold firmly, without wavering, to the hope that we confess.

Thank you, God Bless you, and God Bless the United States of America.

Appendix E

Chicago: President-elect, Victory speech (04/11/08)

- BarackObamadotcom. 2008. 'President-Elect Barack Obama in Chicago' (online). *YouTube.com*. Posted on 05/11/08. Accessed on 17/11/08. Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jl15baCAaQU&feature=channel>
- Obama, B. 2008. 'Full text: Obama's victory speech' (online). *BBC.co.uk*. Published on 05/11/08. Accessed on 17/11/08. Available from World Wide Web: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/us_elections_2008/7710038.stm

1 If there is anyone out there who still doubts that America is a place where all things are possible; who still wonders if the dream of our founders is alive in our time; who still questions the power of our democracy, tonight is your answer.

It's the answer told by lines that stretched around schools and churches in numbers this
5 nation has never seen; by people who waited three hours and four hours, many for the very first time in their lives, because they believed that this time must be different; that their voices could be that difference.

It's the answer spoken by young and old, rich and poor, Democrat and Republican, black, white, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, gay, straight, disabled and not disabled -
10 Americans who sent a message to the world that we have never been just a collection of individuals or a collection of Red States and Blue States: we are, and always will be, the United States of America.

It's the answer that led those who have been told for so long by so many to be cynical, and fearful, and doubtful of what we can achieve to put their hands on the arc of history and
15 bend it once more toward the hope of a better day.

It's been a long time coming, but tonight, because of what we did on this day, in this

election, at this defining moment, change has come to America.

A little bit earlier this evening I received an extraordinarily gracious call from Senator
20 McCain. He fought long and hard in this campaign, and he's fought even longer and harder
for the country he loves. He has endured sacrifices for America that most of us cannot begin
to imagine. We are better off for the service rendered by this brave and selfless leader.

I congratulate him, I congratulate Governor Palin, for all they have achieved, and I look
forward to working with them to renew this nation's promise in the months ahead.

25 I want to thank my partner in this journey, a man who campaigned from his heart and spoke
for the men and women he grew up with on the streets of Scranton and rode with on that
train home to Delaware, the vice-president-elect of the United States, Joe Biden.

And I would not be standing here tonight without the unyielding support of my best friend
for the last 16 years, the rock of our family, the love of my life, the nation's next first lady,
30 Michelle Obama. Sasha and Malia, I love you both more than you can imagine, and you
have earned the new puppy that's coming with us to the White House.

And while she's no longer with us, I know my grandmother is watching, along with the
family that made me who I am. I miss them tonight, and know that my debt to them is
beyond measure. To my sister Maya, my sister Auma, all my other brothers and sisters -
35 thank you so much for all the support you have given me. I am grateful to them.

To my campaign manager David Plouffe, the unsung hero of this campaign, who built the
best political campaign in the history of the United States of America. My chief strategist
David Axelrod, who has been a partner with me every step of the way, and to the best
campaign team ever assembled in the history of politics - you made this happen, and I am
40 forever grateful for what you've sacrificed to get it done.

But above all, I will never forget who this victory truly belongs to - it belongs to you.

I was never the likeliest candidate for this office. We didn't start with much money or many endorsements. Our campaign was not hatched in the halls of Washington - it began in the backyards of Des Moines and the living rooms of Concord and the front porches of
45 Charleston.

It was built by working men and women who dug into what little savings they had to give \$5 and \$10 and \$20 to the cause.

It grew strength from the young people who rejected the myth of their generation's apathy; who left their homes and their families for jobs that offered little pay and less sleep; it grew
50 strength from the not-so-young people who braved the bitter cold and scorching heat to knock on the doors of perfect strangers; from the millions of Americans who volunteered, and organised, and proved that more than two centuries later a government of the people, by the people and for the people has not perished from the Earth.

This is your victory.

55 I know you didn't do this just to win an election and I know you didn't do it for me. You did it because you understand the enormity of the task that lies ahead. For even as we celebrate tonight, we know the challenges that tomorrow will bring are the greatest of our lifetime - two wars, a planet in peril, the worst financial crisis in a century.

Even as we stand here tonight, we know there are brave Americans waking up in the deserts
60 of Iraq and the mountains of Afghanistan to risk their lives for us.

There are mothers and fathers who will lie awake after their children fall asleep and wonder how they'll make the mortgage, or pay their doctor's bills, or save enough for their child's college education. There is new energy to harness and new jobs to be created; new schools to build and threats to meet and alliances to repair.

65 The road ahead will be long. Our climb will be steep. We may not get there in one year or even in one term, but America - I have never been more hopeful than I am tonight that we

will get there. I promise you - we as a people will get there.

There will be setbacks and false starts. There are many who won't agree with every decision or policy I make as president, and we know that government can't solve every problem. But

70 I will always be honest with you about the challenges we face. I will listen to you, especially when we disagree.

And above all, I will ask you to join in the work of remaking this nation the only way it's been done in America for 221 years - block by block, brick by brick, calloused hand by calloused hand.

75 What began 21 months ago in the depths of winter cannot end on this autumn night. This victory alone is not the change we seek - it is only the chance for us to make that change. And that cannot happen if we go back to the way things were. It cannot happen without you, without a new spirit of service, a new spirit of sacrifice.

So let us summon a new spirit of patriotism; of service and responsibility where each of us
80 resolves to pitch in and work harder and look after not only ourselves, but each other. Let us remember that if this financial crisis taught us anything, it's that we cannot have a thriving Wall Street while Main Street suffers - in this country, we rise or fall as one nation; as one people.

Let us resist the temptation to fall back on the same partisanship and pettiness and
85 immaturity that has poisoned our politics for so long. Let us remember that it was a man from this state who first carried the banner of the Republican Party to the White House - a party founded on the values of self-reliance, individual liberty, and national unity.

Those are values that we all share, and while the Democratic Party has won a great victory tonight, we do so with a measure of humility and determination to heal the divides that have
90 held back our progress. As Lincoln said to a nation far more divided than ours: "We are not enemies, but friends... though passion may have strained it must not break our bonds of

affection."

And to those Americans whose support I have yet to earn - I may not have won your vote tonight, but I hear your voices, I need your help, and I will be your president too.

95 And to all those watching tonight from beyond our shores, from parliaments and palaces to those who are huddled around radios in the forgotten corners of the world - our stories are singular, but our destiny is shared, and a new dawn of American leadership is at hand.

To those who would tear the world down - we will defeat you. To those who seek peace and security - we support you.

100 And to all those who have wondered if America's beacon still burns as bright - tonight we proved once more that the true strength of our nation comes not from the might of our arms or the scale of our wealth, but from the enduring power of our ideals: democracy, liberty, opportunity and unyielding hope.

For that is the true genius of America - that America can change. Our union can be
105 perfected. And what we have already achieved gives us hope for what we can and must achieve tomorrow.

This election had many firsts and many stories that will be told for generations. But one that's on my mind tonight is about a woman who cast her ballot in Atlanta. She's a lot like the millions of others who stood in line to make their voice heard in this election except for
110 one thing - Ann Nixon Cooper is 106 years old.

She was born just a generation past slavery; a time when there were no cars on the road or planes in the sky; when someone like her couldn't vote for two reasons - because she was a woman and because of the colour of her skin.

And tonight, I think about all that she's seen throughout her century in America - the
115 heartache and the hope; the struggle and the progress; the times we were told that we can't, and the people who pressed on with that American creed: Yes, we can.

At a time when women's voices were silenced and their hopes dismissed, she lived to see them stand up and speak out and reach for the ballot. Yes, we can.

When there was despair in the dust bowl and depression across the land, she saw a nation
120 conquer fear itself with a New Deal, new jobs and a new sense of common purpose. Yes, we can.

When the bombs fell on our harbour and tyranny threatened the world, she was there to witness a generation rise to greatness and a democracy was saved. Yes, we can.

She was there for the buses in Montgomery, the hoses in Birmingham, a bridge in Selma,
125 and a preacher from Atlanta who told a people that "we shall overcome". Yes, we can.

A man touched down on the Moon, a wall came down in Berlin, a world was connected by our own science and imagination. And this year, in this election, she touched her finger to a screen, and cast her vote, because after 106 years in America, through the best of times and the darkest of hours, she knows how America can change. Yes, we can.

130 America, we have come so far. We have seen so much. But there is so much more to do. So tonight, let us ask ourselves - if our children should live to see the next century; if my daughters should be so lucky to live as long as Ann Nixon Cooper, what change will they see? What progress will we have made?

This is our chance to answer that call. This is our moment.

135 This is our time - to put our people back to work and open doors of opportunity for our kids; to restore prosperity and promote the cause of peace; to reclaim the American dream and reaffirm that fundamental truth - that out of many, we are one; that while we breathe, we hope, and where we are met with cynicism and doubt and those who tell us that we can't, we will respond with that timeless creed that sums up the spirit of a people: yes, we can.

140 Thank you, God bless you, and may God bless the United States of America.

Bibliography:

Books:

- Anderson, N A. 2003. *Discursive Analytical Strategies: Understanding Foucault, Koselleck, Laclau, Luhmann*. (Bristol: The Policy Press)
- Ballard, J G. 1990. *War Fever*. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux)
- Barker, P. 1993. *Michel Foucault, Subversions of the Subject*. (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf)
- Baudrillard, J. 1983a. *In the Shadow of the Silent Majorities*. (New York: Semiotext(e))
- Baudrillard, J. 1983b. *Simulations*. trans. Beitchman, P, Foss, P and Patton, P. (New York: Semiotext(e))
- Biesecker, B A. 1999. 'Rethinking the Rhetorical Situation from within the Thematic of Differance,' in Luciates, J L, Conduit, C M and Caudill S. (eds) *Contemporary Rhetorical Theory: A Reader*. (New York: Guildford Press) Pages 232-246.
- Bloch, E. 1998. *Literary Essays*. trans. Jordan, A et al. (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press)
- Blumenthal, S. 2008. *The Strange Death of the Republican Party: Chronicles of a Collapsing Party*. (New York: Union Square)
- Bouchard, D F. 1977. *Language, Counter-memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews by Michel Foucault*. (Ithaca, NY: Cornel University Press)
- Burke, K. 1936. *Permanence and Change*. (New York: New Republic)
- Butler, J. 1993. *Bodies that matter: On the discursive limits of "sex"*. (London: Routledge)
- Butler, J, Laclau, E, and Zizek, S. 2000. *Contingency, Hegemony, Universality: Contemporary Dialogues On the Left*. (London: Verso)
- Davidson, A I. 1986. 'Archaeology, Genealogy, Ethics,' in Couzens Hoy, D. *Foucault: A*

Critical Reader. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell). Pages 221-234.

- Davidson, A I. (ed) 1997. *Foucault and his Interlocutors*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press)
- Debrix, F. 2008. *Tabloid Terror: War, Culture, and Geopolitics*. (New York: Routledge)
- Derrida, J. 1973. 'Differance', in Derrida, J. *Speech and Phenomena and Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs*. trans. Allison, D B. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press). Pages 129-160.
- Derrida, J. 1976. *Of Grammatology*. trans. Spivak, G C. (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press)
- Derrida, J. 1981. *Positions*. trans. Bass, A. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press)
- Domhoff, W G. 2006. *Who Rules America? Power, Politics, and Social Change*. (New York: McGraw-Hill)
- Edelman, M. 1971. *Politics as Symbolic Action*. (Chicago: Markham)
- Edelman, M. 1988. *Constructing the Political Spectacle*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press)
- Eribon, D. 1991. *Michel Foucault*. trans. Wing, B. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press)
- Foucault, M. 1978. *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*. trans. Hurley, R. (New York: Random House)
- Foucault, M. 1984a. 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History', in Rabinow, P. (ed) *The Foucault Reader*. (Harmondsworth: Penguin). Pages 76-100
- Foucault, M. 1984b. 'Truth and Power', in Rabinow, P. (ed) *The Foucault Reader*. (Harmondsworth: Penguin). Pages 51-75.
- Foucault, M. 1991. 'Politics and the Study of Discourse', in Burchell, G, Gordon, C and Miller, P. *The Foucault Effect*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press). Pages 53-72.
- Foucault, M. 2002. *The Archaeology of Knowledge /Michel Foucault 1926-1984*. trans. Sheridan Smith, A M. (London: Routledge)

- Freud, S. 2002. *Civilization and its Discontents*. trans. McLintock, D (London: Penguin)
- Giroux, H. 2006. *Beyond the Spectacle of Terrorism: Global Uncertainty and the Challenge of the New Media*. (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers)
- Glynn, K. 2000. *Tabloid Culture: Trash Taste, Popular Power and the Transformation of American Television*. (Durham: Duke University Press)
- Harvey, D. 2000. *Spaces of Hope*. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press)
- Howarth, D. 2000a. *Discourse*. (Buckingham: Open University Press)
- Howarth, D, Norval, A J and Stravarakakis, Y. 2000b. *Discourse Theory and Political Analysis: Identities, Hegemonies and Social Change*. (Manchester: Manchester University Press)
- Howarth, D and Torfing, J. 2005. *Discourse Theory in European Politics: Identity, Policy and Governance*. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan)
- Kristeva, J. 1982. *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*. (New York: Columbia University Press)
- Laclau, E and Mouffe, C. 1985. *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*. trans. Moore, W and Cammack, P. (London: Verso)
- Laclau, E. 1996. *Emancipation(s)*. (London: Verso)
- Lear, J. 2006. *Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation*. (London: Harvard University Press)
- Lyotard, J F. 1984. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. trans. Bennington, G and Massumi, B. (Manchester: Manchester University Press)
- Massumi, B. 1993. *The Politics of Everyday Fear*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota)
- McLuhan, M. 2003. *Understanding Media: the Extensions of Man*. (Corte Madera: Gingko Press)
- Mouffe, C. 1993. *The Return of the Political*. (London: Verso)
- Negri, A and Guattari, F. 1990. *Communists like us: New spaces of liberty, new lines of*

- alliance*. (New York: Semiotext(e))
- Nietzsche, F. 1996. *Human, all too Human: A Book for Free Spirits*. trans. Hollingdale, R J. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)
 - Obama, B. 2004. *Dreams from my Father: A story of race and inheritance*. (New York: Three Rivers Press)
 - Perelman, C and Olbrechts-Tyteca, L. 1969. *The New Rhetoric*. trans. Wilkinson, J and Weaver, P. (London: University of Notre Dame Press)
 - Robinson, W I. 1996. *Promoting Polyarchy: Globalization, US Intervention, and Hegemony*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)
 - Robinson, W I. 2006. *Latin America After Neoliberalism: Turning the Tide in the 21st Century?* (New York: The New Press)
 - Shattuc, J. 1997. *The Talking Cure: TV Talk Shows and Women*. (New York: Routledge)
 - Smith, A M. 1998. *Laclau and Mouffe: The Radical Democratic Imaginary*. (London: Routledge)
 - Smith, S. 1995. 'The self-images of a discipline', in Booth, K and Smith, S. (eds) *International Relations Theory Today*. (Cambridge: Polity Press)
 - Stravarakakis, Y. 2005. 'Passions of Identification: Discourse, Enjoyment, and European Identity', in Howarth, D and Torfing, J. *Discourse Theory in European Politics: Identity, Policy and Governance*. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan). Pages 68-92.
 - Street, P. 2009. *Barack Obama and the Future of American Politics*. (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers)
 - Torfing, J. 1999. *New Theories of Discourse: Laclau, Mouffe and Zizek*. (Oxford: Blackwell)
 - Zizek, S. 1989. *The Sublime Object of Ideology*. (London: Verso)
 - Zizek, S. 1991. *For They Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor*. (London: Verso)

- Zizek, S. 1993. *Tarrying With the Negative. Kant, Hegel, and the Critique of Ideology.* (Durham: Duke University Press)
- Zournazi, M. 2002. *Hope: New Philosophies for Change.* (Sydney: Pluto Press)

Journals:

- Anderson, B and Fenton, J. 2008. 'Editorial Introduction: Spaces of Hope,' *Spaces and Culture.* vol 11, issue 76, pages 76-81.
- Bitzer, L F. 1968. 'The Rhetorical Situation,' *Philosophy and Rhetoric.* vol 1, issue 1, pages 1-14.
- Coville, E. 2008. 'Our Union Grows Stronger: The Poetic Persuasion of Barack Obama,' *Anthropology News.* vol 49, issue 8, pages 4-5.
- Gavin, A. 2008. 'Reading Katrina: Race, Space and an Unnatural Disaster', *New Political Science.* vol 30, issue 3, pages 325-346.
- Miyazaki, H. 2008a. 'Barack Obama's Campaign of Hope: Unifying the General and the Personal', *Anthropology News.* vol 49, issue 8, pages 5-8.
- Papadopoulos, R K. 2002. 'The other other: when the exotic other subjugates the familiar other', *Journal of Analytical Psychology.* vol 47, issue 2, pages 163-188.
- Vatz, R E. 1973. 'The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation', *Philosophy and Rhetoric.* vol 6, issue 3, pages 154-161.

Online Sources:

- Anderson, S. 2008. 'Raise High the Rafters' (online). *New York Magazine*. Published on 22/06/08. Accessed on 17/11/08. Available from World Wide Web: <http://nymag.com/guides/summer/2008/48007/>
- Borger, J. 2008. 'What Obama's victory means for US foreign policy' (online). *The Guardian*. Published on 05/11/08. Accessed on 17/11/08, Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/nov/05/uselections2008-barackobama6>
- Brown, C B. 2008. 'Clinton, Obama spar over hope' (online). *Politico.com*. Published on 07/01/08. Accessed on 17/11/08. Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0108/7787.html>
- Chomsky, N. 2003. 'The Ideology of Polyarchy' (online). excerpted from Chomsky, N. *Hegemony or Survival*. (Penguin: New York) Accessed on 15/01/09. Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.chomsky.info/books/survival01.htm>
- Chomsky, N. 2008. „Is there any truth in Obama“ s advertising?“ (online). *Democracy Now!* Retrieved by *Alternet.org*. Published on 28/11/08. Accessed on 17/12/08. Available from World Wide Web: http://www.alternet.org/workplace/108964/chomsky%3A_is_there_truth_in_ob?page=4
- Erwin, J. 2008. 'How they grew Brand Obama' (online). *Advertising Age*. Published on 27/02/08. Accessed on 29/01/09. Available from World Wide Web: http://adage.com/campaigntrail/post?article_id=125377
- Gallup. 'Presidential Approval Ratings: Gallup Historical Statistics and Trends' (online). *Gallup.com*. Accessed on 15/03/09. Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/116677/Presidential-Approval-Ratings-Gallup-Historical-Statistics-Trends.aspx>
- Harris, P. 2008. 'Why America will not turn to the Left' (online). *The Observer*. Published

on 09/11/08. Accessed on 13/01/09. Available from World Wide Web:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/nov/09/barack-obama-change-liberal-radical>

- Hill, M L. 2008. 'Not My Brand of Hope: Obama's Politics of Cunning, Compromise, and Concession' (online). *CounterPunch.org*, Published on 11/02/08. Accessed on 11/17/08. Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.counterpunch.org/hill02112008.html>
- Honderich, T. 2008. 'What is the Meaning of Obama's Election' (online). *Counterpunch.org*. Published on 28/11/08. Accessed on 29/01/09. Available from World Wide Web: <http://counterpunch.org/honderich11282008.html>
- Klein, J. 2008. 'Inspiration vs Substance' (online). *Time.com*. Published on 07/11/08. Accessed on 17/11/08. Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.time.com/time/politics/article/0,8599,1710721,00.html>
- Lee, C E. 2009. 'Obama gets personal' (online). *Politico.com*. Published on 30/03/09. Accessed on 31/03/09. Available from World Wide Web: <http://mobile.politico.com/story.cfm?id=20636&cat=topnews>
- Malbin, M. 2008. 'Reality Check: Obama received about the same percentage from small donors in 2008 as Bush in 2004' (online). *The Campaign Finance Institute Analysis of Presidential Candidates' Donor Report*. Published on 24/11/08. Accessed on 15/12/08. Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.cfinst.org/pr/prRelease.aspx?ReleaseID=216>
- Miyazaki, H. 2008b. 'Sen. Obama's Policy of Hope'. *Ithaca Journal*. Quoted in Stanford University Press Blog. 'Policy vs. Hope' (online). *Stanford University Press*. Published on 04/03/2008. Accessed on 17/11/08. Available from World Wide Web: <http://stanfordpress.typepad.com/blog/2008/03/policy-vs-hope.html>
- Obama, B. 2009. (online). *BarackObama.com*. Accessed on 15/03/09. Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.barackobama.com/index.php>
- Pariser, E. 2008. 'People-Powered Politics 2008, Post-Election Report' (online). *Moveon.org*. Accessed on 29/01/09. Available from World Wide Web:

- http://s3.moveon.org/pdfs/moveon_postelectionreport_ah14.pdf
- Rawsthorn, A. 2008. 'Brand Obama, A Leader in the Image War' (online). *International Herald Tribune*. Published on 06/04/08. Accessed on 17/11/08. Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.iht.com/articles/2008/04/04/arts/design7.php>
 - Street, P. 2008. "'Brand Obama', 'Brand USA', and 'The Audacity of Marketing': Some Candid Reflections at Advertising Age' (online). *Znet.org*. Published on 19/11/08. Accessed on 15/12/09. Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.zcommunications.org/znet/viewArticle/19692>
 - Tabbai, M. 2007. 'Obama is the best BS Artist Since Bill Clinton' (online). *RollingStone.com*. Published on 14/02/07. Retrieved from *Alternet.org*. Accessed on 29/01/09. Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.alternet.org/story/48051>
 - Tomasky, M. 2008. '12 months that changed the world' (online). *The Guardian*. Published on 15/12/08. Accessed on 16/12/08. Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/dec/15/1>
 - Uhlenbeck, M. 2008. 'Shifting Landscapes: Obama and the Movement' (online). *Zmag.org*. Published on 03/12/08. Accessed on 29/01/09. Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.zmag.org/znet/viewArticle/19826>
 - Von Drehle, D. 2008. 'Why History Can't Wait: Person of the Year 2008' (online). *Time.com*. Published on 17/12/08. Accessed on 29/01/09. Available from World Wide Web: http://www.time.com/time/specials/2008/personoftheyear/article/0,31682,1861543_1865068_1867013,00.html
 - Washington Post. 2008. „Campaign Finance: A victim of president-elect Obama“ s success“ (online). Editorial. *WashingtonPost.com*. Published on 15/12/08. Accessed on 17/01/09. Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/12/14/AR2008121401783.html?reffer=emailarticle>
 - Weltman, E and Lachelier, P. 2008. 'Obama and Beyond' (online). *Truthout.org*. Published

on 02/12/08. Accessed on 29/01/09. Available from World Wide Web:

<http://www.truthout.org/120208A>

Images:

- Morris, C. 2008. 'Billboard' (online), in 'Obama's Nation of Hope', *Time.com*. Accessed on 15/03/09. Available from World Wide Web:

http://www.time.com/time/photogallery/0,29307,1866257_1814261,00.html