

Analysis of a Campaign Video (2020-09-03 19:41)

A better world is not only possible, it is within our reach.
From mutual aid in our communities to solidarity in the streets, the people of New York have already started to reshape our future.

It's time to bring the movement to the voting booth.

VOTE this Tuesday, June 23rd. [1]pic.twitter.com/boXm0U4sZ4

— Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (@AOC) [2]June 18, 2020

In the article “Backpacks vs. Briefcases,” Laura Bolin Carroll describes rhetoric as “the way we use language and images to persuade” (46). By this definition, this tweet is a good example of rhetoric in a real-world scenario—a campaign ad for Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

According to Carroll, a good place to start when analyzing a rhetorical message is looking at the context of the message. To begin, the tweet that I have referenced is a campaign advertisement posted by Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez to Twitter. In this case, this tweet is responding to the exigence of an upcoming election. As a campaign ad, its purpose is to convince the audience to give her their vote. In fact, in the video AOC directly asks the viewer for their vote. The primary audience, then, is New York voters—the people with the capability of voting in that election. This video is clearly targeted to this demographic because she references her hometown several times because these are the people who will be voting. She even includes potential voters in her video, as well as clips of her walking around the area and handing out groceries to her constituents. This technique makes her seem like one of the people and encourages people to trust her with their vote.

Another thing to keep in mind when analyzing a rhetorical message is the constraints. Carroll quotes Bitzer in her article stating that “the constraints of the rhetorical situation are those things that have the power to ‘constrain decision and action needed to modify the exigence’” (49). In other words, constraints are limitations put on a rhetorical message. One of the constraints of a campaign ad is the preconceived notions of the audience. For example, many voters feel alienated by politicians due to the language they use in their speeches and campaign ads. In order to combat this, AOC tailored her ad to make her seem more appealing to the average voter. She uses simple language in her ad, and she plainly lays out her goals so that anyone could understand. This helps build credibility—she understands the people and what they want because she is one of them. In addition to this use of ethos (“credibility

of the rhetor”), she also uses pathos (emotional appeal) in this ad by showing clips of her handing out groceries to people in her neighborhood (Carroll 54). This may make people feel that she actually cares about her constituents. This use of ethos and pathos together is very effective.

In the chapter, “Finding the Good Argument,” Rebecca Jones claims that arguments should be more of a means of collaboration rather than war (157). I think that AOC managed to do this in her campaign ad. While many campaign ads tend to dig at the opposition, leading to one-sided debates where nothing is accomplished, this ad stuck to its points. She laid out her goals, stayed positive, and did not bash her opponents. This ad came across as professional and respectful.

1. <https://t.co/boXm0U4sZ4>

2. https://twitter.com/AOC/status/1273683661116891136?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw

Blog Post #2 (2020-09-07 00:37)

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When creating a political campaign message, it is incredibly important to think about who you want to target with your message. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and her campaign team definitely put thought into this when creating this advertisement. They likely used the marketing strategies, market segmentation and targeting, to effectively sell their campaign message to the right voter.

Marketing segmentation is defined as “the process of dividing a total market into groups of people with similar traits” (PowerPoint). Audience is very important when it comes to creating a political campaign ad. Dividing the audience/market up into groups of people with similar interests/goals allows you to properly tailor your ad towards that group. According to the PowerPoint, this strategy is important so that “we can design a communication message with those traits at the heart of the message” (PowerPoint). For example, when creating this ad, AOC would want to tailor it towards her ideal potential voters.

I believe AOC's team began by segmenting the market. In doing so, they determined the segmentation variables: geographic, demographic, psychographic, and behavioristic (PowerPoint). Then, they likely began market targeting. “Market targeting involves [...] evaluating the viability of each market segment and deciding which segment or segments to pursue (target)” (Porsche Case Study 4). Obviously, they do not want to waste time and resources advertising to people who are unable to or refuse to vote for AOC.

First, AOC's team likely began by looking at the geographic segmentation variables. AOC is running in New York, so she would want to market her ad towards people living in her district. She did this in her ad by showing clips of New York City in her video. Additionally, she also begins by pointing out the struggles New York is specifically dealing with that she would like to address while in office. AOC also states, “It has been the honor of my life to fight for the Bronx and Queens in the halls of Congress.” In these ways, she is targeting the market she wishes to attract with this message by calling them out directly.

Next, she likely looked at demographic segmentation. “Demographic segmentation is a form of market segmentation involving dividing a market on the basis of descriptive elements.

[...] Demographic segmentation is based primarily on income, age, gender, education, occupation, and social class” (Porsche Case Study 2). I would say that AOC’s typical voter is young, middle class, and educated. In order to gain the attention of this voter, she has marketed herself as being someone from a humble background—someone from the working class. She has also gained attention from younger voters because she herself is very young. These are things she uses to her advantage. For example, by posting this video to Twitter, she is trying to gain the attention of younger voters who are more likely to be on that platform. It is a deliberate choice to put this video on Twitter rather than Facebook.

Finally, AOC likely used psychographic segmentation to her advantage. “ Psychographic segmentation uses psychology to increase understanding of consumers’ wants and needs. Porsche uses a psychographic segmentation approach dividing the segment based on behavioral elements, such as psychology, lifestyle, personality traits, and values to gain deeper insight of the consumer” (Porsche Case Study 2). This is a big variable when it comes to political campaign ad because most people vote based on their values and the traits they would like to see in their representative. For example, many people vote based on party values. AOC is a democrat, so she obviously would like to target Democrats with her campaign ad. To do this, she includes the things she would like to accomplish while in office in her video— “Medicare For All, a federal jobs guarantee, and the end to mass incarceration.” She also mentions wanting to fight against racial injustices. These are all very value-based issues and ones she chose specifically to target her ideal voter.

AOC and her team used market targeting to determine her audience for this campaign advertisement. The end goal in doing this was to get the audience to vote for her. She ends the message by directly calling the audience to action, asking for them to vote for her during the next election.

1. <https://t.co/boXm0U4sZ4>

2. https://twitter.com/AOC/status/1273683661116891136?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw

Representative Democracy (2020-09-13 01:30)

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— Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (@AOC) [2]June 18, 2020

The United States is a representative democracy, meaning that elected officials represent groups of people (i.e. politicians representing their constituents within the government). According to the article “Dynamic Representation,” “Representative governments respond to— meaning act as a consequence of—changes in public sentiment.’ [...] We may say that if, by knowing about earlier changes in public sentiment, we can improve the prediction of public policy over what we could have done from knowing only the history of public policy itself, then opinion causes policy, and this is dynamic representation ” (Stimson 543). Essentially what this means is that in a representative democracy, public policy is guided by public sentiment. It changes to fit the needs and wants of the public over time.

Because of this, politicians and government officials often shape their plans and actions according to this idea of dynamic representation. Officials are representatives of the people, and as the people's wants change, so must these officials, primarily because they would like to be reelected in the future. In the article mentioned above, the author states, “The public makes judgements about current public policy most easily that government's actions need to be enhanced or trimmed back. These judgements will change as policy changes, as real-world conditions change, or as ‘politically colored’ perceptions of policy and conditions change. And as the simple model indicates, politicians and government officials sense these changes in public judgment and act accordingly. Thus, when public policy drifts away from the public's demands for policy, the representation system acts as a control mechanism to keep policy on course” (Stimson 544). As the world changes, public policy, along with government officials and politicians, change with it. It's what makes representative democracy work.

Alexandria Ocasio Cortez recognizes this, so in her campaign ad—and in her day-to-day work—she tries her best to understand what it is that the public wants. Clearly, because this is a campaign ad, she would like to be reelected. As such, she needs to appeal to the public and change her policies to match those that the general public wants. This is why in her campaign ad, she clearly explains the goals that she would like to accomplish based off of the needs of New York, the area she is running in. She states, “New York is experiencing three concurrent crises: a crisis of health with COVID-19, the economic crisis of mass unemployment, and the crisis of racism in our systems of law enforcement.” All three of these issues are very current and direct issues within the world today, which is why she methodically chose to discuss these

specific issues within her campaign ad. She shaped her campaign ad, and will shape her policies, on the wants and needs of her constituents.

In the Stimson article, the author talks about the expediency point. As he describes it, the expediency point is the “position most likely to optimize future reelection chances” (Stimson 544). In AOC’s case, these three issues that she chose to discuss in her campaign ad are her expediency points. These issues are very important to New Yorkers at the moment, so by resolving to address these issues, she is trying to win the reelection. In her ad, she could have chosen to talk about the environment—an issue she is very passionate about. However, her best bet in creating a successful campaign was to touch on the topics that the people care about rather than what she cares about. This is a prime example of representative democracy at work in the real world.

1. <https://t.co/boXm0U4sZ4>

2. https://twitter.com/AOC/status/1273683661116891136?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw

Collaborative v. Combative Conversations (2020-09-20 17:38)

During the Braver Angels training, it became clear that many Americans usually stick to their own party's beliefs and fail to consider the values of the other party. In fact, we often tend to villainize the other side, creating hurtful labels for them, which as we saw in the training, are not necessarily truthful. This is harmful for two reasons: it leaves people tied to their party's beliefs to the point that they fail to see the problems within their own party *and* they fail to see the similarities between their party and the other. This situation leaves no room for compromise between the two parties and creates an environment in which nothing productive can be accomplished.

For example, in this political cartoon that I found, these two individuals are imprisoned by the party system and locked in by the values/beliefs of their parties. They are too busy fighting against each other to realize that they actually have several values in common, as can be seen on the walls of values. During the Braver Angels training, we were able to look past our own party's beliefs and see what the other side actually believes beyond the negative stereotypes we place upon them. In this way, we were able to see some commonalities between the two parties. These commonalities are the way in which to find a common ground where we can begin to make compromises in order to progress our country.

I believe that the Braver Angels training was really helpful for me personally, as well as for others in the class. In my personal life, I find myself having very difficult conversations with friends and family, especially in today's political climate. Typically, these conversations end with a lot of arguing back and forth. For the most part, I believe that this is because none of us know where the other is coming from. We are so blinded by our own beliefs that we fail to consider those of the other person. This training was very helpful in opening my eyes to the other side. At first, I was a bit resistant when I was listening to the other side because I disagreed with some of what they were saying. However, once I really listened to their point of view, I began to understand where they were coming from, at least a little bit.

I believe that there is value in trying to understand the other side without trying to convince them that your side is in the right. When you try to convince someone of something, the conversation typically becomes combative, and this is unproductive. However, when you take the time to truly understand where the other person is coming from, you begin to see some commonalities. This common ground is very important because you can use this to have a collaborative discussion rather than a combative one. We all want the same thing—a better America. Once we understand this, it can make working together a lot easier.

That's a Sweet Message! (2020-09-24 17:36)

IFRAME: [1]<https://www.youtube.com/embed/ehbZkNY6Ssw>

[2]<https://www.benjerry.com>

In the United States today, our political views are shaped by our worldviews. It is becoming increasingly clear that the worldviews of the two parties are so drastically different that it can often feel as if we are on separate planets from each other. Not only do these worldviews shape our political views, but they also shape our everyday decisions.

In the book, *Prius or Pickup?*, the authors delve into these differences. According to the authors, “Many of the decisions Americans make in their everyday lives—where to live, what kind of work to pursue, where to go to school, where to worship, what to watch on television, where to eat, what to drink—are influenced by the same worldview that informs their political opinions. [...] Americans make these decisions not because they are Democrats or Republicans but because the *same worldview that influences their political views also shapes their lifestyle choices*” (Hetherington 61). So, not only do individuals have their differences in political views to surmount, they have to surmount all of these little differences in lifestyle choices that, when added up, equal out to a mountain between the two parties. Things that you would think might bring people together—food, music, entertainment—only further separate the two parties.

For example, let’s take a look at ice cream. Republicans, conservatives, people with a fixed worldview —whatever you chose to call these individuals—will naturally prefer their ice cream to be simple without a bunch of added ingredients. Their go to will likely be store-brand

ice cream in classic flavors—chocolate, vanilla, or strawberry. Nothing fancy for the fixed worldview. Additionally, it's cheaper, so they can get more bang for their buck, something conservatives look for when it comes to their food preferences according to *Prius or Pickup?*.

On the other hand, Democrats, liberals, those with a fluid

worldview —again, whatever you choose to call this group—will want ice cream that is a bit more exciting and different, probably a brand with a variety of options. Additionally, this group tends to care more about the ethos of a company. Does this company make their products ethically? Are there GMOs in the ice cream? Are there vegan or gluten free options? What does this company stand for? They won't care as much about the price, as long as they view the product as worth the extra cost. In this case, Ben and Jerry's is definitely the right brand for this party, and this company even markets themselves as such.

All you have to do is look at their website. Ben and Jerry's has a ton of different flavors, and they are constantly creating new ones. They have options for a variety of food restrictions. They use Fairtrade ingredients, ethically-sourced products, and do not use GMO's. Finally, they are heavily involved in fighting for social justice, climate change, and democracy. They have created several ice cream flavors to raise money for different charities, and they even have their own foundation. They are a company that really gives back, something that liberals are very interested in.

This company uses its brand to recruit supporters for their many causes. They know that they have a primarily liberal demographic and use their brand to gain more supporters. For example, they create specialty ice cream flavors to raise money for different organizations, knowing that their liberal demographic is likely to purchase their product and support their cause. Additionally, they create advertisements such as the one that I have linked above to promote their causes to the people who support their brand and/or to draw more people to their brand. In the video, they are trying to mobilize their supporters to get out and vote and fight for democracy for all. These videos only work because of brand/product preference. They are specifically targeting a liberal audience; they know a conservative consumer is not likely to buy or support their products. Within this video, they also cleverly include subtle marketing, such as clips of people eating Ben and Jerry's ice cream, clips of ice cream trucks, and clips of the owners themselves. In this way, they are attracting a liberal audience to support their cause, as well as to purchase their products.

1. <https://www.youtube.com/embed/ehbZkNY6Ssw>

2. <https://www.benjerry.com/>

Simulation Speeches (2020-11-22 16:46)

Why Some Metics Should Be Given Voting Rights

Hello Fellow Athenians,

My name is Lysias, and I first wanted to start this speech by saying that I am incredibly grateful to be speaking here today. It is truly an honor.

I am here at this meeting to express my belief that certain metics who have served with Thrasybulus should have the right to vote within this very assembly. Myself, and others within Athens, may not yet be citizens of this great city, but we hold a deep respect and appreciation for it. Personally, my father instilled a love for Athens within me from a very young age. Although my father was not born here, he chose to make this city his home. I, myself, have grown up within these walls, and I choose to call this city my home, as well. This is not a baseless claim either. When it came down to it, my brother, Polemarchus, and I made the decision to stand with Athens against the Thirty. My beloved brother lost his life as a result. Even then, I continued to fight for my city by sending weapons, lending my mercenaries, and loaning a large sum of money to Thrasybulus who was then able to liberate the city from the Thirty. Without my help, and without the help of some other metics within Athens, I do not think he would have been able to do so, and we all would not be here today holding this debate.

That being said, I believe that myself and others deserve to have at least some say in how this city is run, so on the behalf of myself and my fellow metics, I am requesting that some of us be given the right to vote within this assembly. In my humble opinion, we have proven ourselves worthy of this honor through our individual contributions to Athens and to the war efforts. Please take what I have said into deep consideration and remember always that no matter what is decided upon within this assembly, I will always hold a great love for Athens. Thank you again for allowing me to speak here today.

Why All Metics Should Be Given Voting Rights

Hello Fellow Athenians,

My name is Lysias as many of you may already be familiar. I would just like to state that I am incredibly grateful that you have gifted me with the right to speak and vote within this assembly. It is an honor for which I will always be thankful.

I would like to use my own privilege to speak on the behalf of those who have yet to receive the same honor, my fellow metics within Athens. You all have already been gracious enough to gift a few of us with the right to vote within this assembly; however, I believe that all metics within this city deserve this same right, as well, if I may say so.

This assembly is a testament to the power of democracy. You all represent the citizens of Athens, and yet, as I look around, I do not see true representation. Is this really a democracy if such a large portion of people within this city do not have the same rights as everyone in

this room? I would say not. Metics are Athenians, as well. I, as well as so many others, call this city our home. We live and work on the same streets. We pay the same taxes. Actually, let me correct myself. Metics pay higher taxes, as we are obligated to pay extra. In addition to this, we contribute special liturgies to help in the development of this great city. We are subjected to military service, the same as you all. We perform all of these services in order to ensure the success of our great city, which we all call our home. However, despite making all of these contributions, we are still not gifted the rights to attend assembly meetings, vote, hold office, or serve on juries simply because we (or our parents) were not born here. How is that just?

I, and my fellow metics, are as much Athenians as you all within this room. We deserve the right to represent our interests and the interests of this city, our city, in this assembly. For the sake of this great democracy. Thank you for allowing me to speak my piece here today. I hope you all think about what I have said with deep consideration.
