

## Barack Obama 2008 Presidential Campaign Poster

Barack Obama was the 44th president of the United States, serving two terms spanning from 2008-2016. There were a number of factors that constituted Obama's successful run as president, one being his campaign poster created in 2008 created by Ray Noland<sup>1</sup>. Obama running for president was out of the ordinary. At the time, the United States had never seen an African American in office. It was contradictory to what was seen as typical, however, Obama was able to use this idea in his favor.

The phrase "Go tell mama! I'm for Obama" was a direct appeal to the African American community, which was the target of this propaganda piece. The poster conveyed a sense of familial support and tradition, with the word "mama" used symbolizing community and respect for the African Americans in the country. This phrase carried a cultural significance in that the idea symbolized a wise and respected figure in the household<sup>2</sup>. The reference was seen as relatable which appealed to a wide demographic to the black community, where family is often a central pillar of life. This ultimately was representative of a larger message that Obama's candidacy was not just a political affair, but a deeper rooted sense of a change in social assumptions and family values<sup>3</sup>. Ray Noland also utilized a modern approach in the graphic. Disregarding the wording, the poster was in touch with the social media landscape of the time making it easy to share across social media platforms and gain publicity.

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<sup>1</sup> Norwich University "History of American Propaganda Posters: American Social Issues through Propaganda"

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Ibid