

Undermining character

Warning—this is a political commentary.

We are in full swing into the political campaign season and for sure we will be seeing many ads tagged as “I am (fill in candidate’s name) and I approved this message.” In the past few days I have seen many anti- Obama ads approved by John McCain. About a month or so ago, McCain said he would steer clear of personal attacks and talk about the issues. So now, he is attacking Obama personally. There is a story on Yahoo about this. The question is whether this tactic will backfire. To me the question is why McCain has chosen this route. We will probably always see attack/negative ads during political campaigns. But to me, it is a mark of desperation. McCain’s campaign knows that Obama has more personal appeal than McCain, and they also know that people are not always convinced by the issues but more by personality. McCain’s attack on Obama highlights what I have been noting about the Republican candidate—he’s a bit rough around the edges.

For those who are 100% in McCain’s camp and/or are Obama haters, these ads will serve to bolster their position. They will feel even better that Obama is whatever adjective they want to use. However, for those that are undecided, this tactic is so old-fashioned that I do think it will backfire. It doesn’t give anyone reasons to think McCain will have better policies.