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English 1010

CAMPAIGN STOPS; Why Evangelicals Don't Like Mormons

Rhetorical Analysis

David S. Reynolds is a professor of American studies and English at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. He wrote an article on January 26th, 2012, in the New York Times titled "CAMPAIGN STOPS; Why Evangelicals Don't Like Mormons". During the month of January, candidates running for Republican Primary were in South Carolina harrying voters for their support. Mr. Reynolds notes that the top two favorite competitors have religious backgrounds that set them apart. "Newt Gingrich, a thrice-married Catholic, won twice as much support from evangelical Protestants as Mitt Romney, a Protestant. And among voters for whom religion meant 'a great deal,' 46 percent voted for Mr. Gingrich and only 10 percent for Mr. Romney." Mr. Reynolds makes the argument that it is because Mr. Romney is a Mormon that he lost votes. While Mr. Reynolds seems mildly biased in his article, he makes an effective argument because he uses statistics and history, strong words and examples of religious bias and finally comparisons and timeliness.

Mr. Reynolds utilized the method of Logos to prove his point with statistics and history. He tried to show the country's anxiety towards Mormons by making the points that 86% of American's aren't sure whether Mormon's practice polygamy and the rapid

success of the religions missionaries by visiting 162 countries and establishing 14 million members worldwide. He also used historical events such as the fact that the church temporarily banished blacks from priesthood in 1852 to 1978. He pointed out that Mormonism developed during the Second Great Awakening along with many other widely accepted religions. And lastly he alluded to the greater success of Mitt Romney's father running for office when Mormonism was less widespread.

Mr. Reynold's then used Pathos in the form of strong words and examples of religious bias to further prove his point that the country's religious tolerance has broken down. Some of the words he used were; abysmal, false religion, possessed by God, uneasiness, anxiety, banished, denies, and reject. These words represent the dark and negative feelings most of America has. Evangelicals use many of these words when they refer to the "false religion". They have also accused Mitt Romney of conspiratorial motives and written anti LDS literature such as "Mormonism Unmasked" to give themselves more credibility. They have been quoted as saying that Mormon's do not believe in the holy trinity and therefore deny the divinity of Christ. But Mr. Reynold's goes further to debunk their statement by saying "But the Mormon belief is that Jesus was the first-born child of God and a woman, and that humans can aspire to share his spiritual essence in the afterlife."

Mr. Reynold's uses comparisons to the Mormon Religion to enhance his Ethos. One of his comparisons was that if we were to elect each presidential candidate based on the "...belief in Christ's divinity, many past American leaders would fail abysmally." Another comparison was the fact that when the church banished blacks from the priesthood, it was a reflection of the country's racial attitude. One last comparison is that

the Baptists and Methodists, despite leading the Mormon's in membership, are feeling the heat of competition due to the fact that the Mormon's are now spread out to 162 countries with 14 million members. An additional and final method that Mr. Reynold's uses is Kairos because the topic he is discussing is highly relevant to the populous of America in our current day.

Where our Statue of Liberty stands there is a plaque that has come to symbolize the statue's universal message of hope and freedom. Naming her the Mother of Exiles, who cries with silent lips, "give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore; send these, the homeless, tempest tossed, to me, I lift my lamp beside the Golden Door." Our great country was founded on the principle of freedom of religion because the oppressed saw the New Worlds as a safe haven. The founding fathers begged us to be tolerant but maintain separation of Church and State.