

Obamacans and McCainocrats? Elite Theory and the Red/Blue State Conundrum

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Social capital is a concept used most often in expositions of politicians defined by their lack of wealth. Current politics suggests that while money may be a sufficient prerequisite for success, social capital is the necessary condition for victory. Senators John McCain and Barack Obama are locked in a struggle to gain the most voters in all states, whether those states are red or blue. In the final analysis, their triumph or failure will be defined by how well they build bridges to new constituents while continuing to “bond” with voters they know. *[Article copies available for a fee from The Transformative Studies Institute. E-mail address: journal@transformativestudies.org Website: <http://www.transformativestudies.org> ©2008 by The Transformative Studies Institute. All rights reserved.]*

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By birth or rank, Presidential candidates are part of the elite. Yet in one of the most curious developments in modern American politics, if you are a Presidential candidate and you are defined as elite, your path to the White House grows steep, and your climb perilous. The 2008 primary season began with Senator Obama facing one of the most daunting challenges of his campaign for the Democratic nomination, namely, how to project a knowledge of elite politics, without appearing to be part of elite politics.

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