

## ABSTRACT

Research about America's first presidential debate is going to know what Bush and Kerry's *image* about invasion to Iraq by their presenting in their first presidential debate. This *image* will show by their verbal and non verbal communication while answering the question from moderator. First, researcher investigates candidate's symbols that they bring from their verbal and nonverbal communication in debate. Then, researcher find the meaning of their symbols. Their verbal and non verbal things will analyze by using semiotic theory by John Fiske. This symbols will be put in three levels semiotics theory; reality, representation and ideology. From that theory, researcher found that Kerry act more confident as an opponent, give his best critics for Bush administration. Kerry calmer even though Bush always judges him as a flip flopper. Meanwhile Bush act more emotional when answer Lehrer's question. Look peevish and angry. Bush can not show the accuracy data about Iraq that Kerry accused to him. Toward the end of debate, Kerry made a point that crystallized the fact that this is an election that poses a choice of temperaments and personalities. The 90-minute encounter was particularly crucial for Kerry, a Democratic senator from Massachusetts, who is trailing slightly in the polls and struggling for momentum less than five weeks before the election. Kerry faced the challenge of presenting himself as a credible commander-in-chief after a torrent of Republican criticism that he was prone to changing his positions. But, eventhough Kerry seen more tough and smart than Bush, Bush still have the essence of the debate. Kerry never meant his position in Iraq clearly, But Bush does. It makes Kerry as a flip flop as Americans thought.

Keywords : politic, media, television, political communication in media, political debate, message and *image* candidates.