

Barack Obama cast in the right light

Image/photo analysis portrays new U.S. President as visionary, laid-back, populist

New York, 21 January, 2009 – A photo analysis conducted by renowned photo psychologist Professor Dr. Martin Schuster of the University of Cologne and commissioned by the stock photo agency Shutterstock, reveals new insights about the image that Obama conveys to the public. The results: Obama's body language reflects the visionary, open minded and people-loving statesman which the President presents in his speeches. "Change" – this was the key message of the Democrat and U.S. President Barack Obama, who was inaugurated yesterday. Change needs vision, and photographers often cast the President in exactly this light. Professor Dr. Martin Schuster stated, "Barack Obama is focusing on the distant horizon, he is a visionary who can show the way into the future, but he is also the energetic man of action."

The most important results from the analysis reveal:

Barack Obama...

- is visionary: His eyes are cast on the far distance with arms stretched out forward
- appeals to the ethnic identities of his voters: stark light-and-dark contrasts can be seen
- in many images
- respects religion and moral concepts: white shirt with a wedding ring that is often visible in the photos
- knows how to get the job done: Obama with rolled-up sleeves and with his jacket off
- is powerful and charismatic: face often shown from below
- knows how to listen: fixating, focused gaze
- loves people: Obama surrounded by crowds
- is a leader: Photos show people are shown standing behind him
- has a positive attitude: open, smiling gaze, slightly open mouth
- is cultivated and cosmopolitan: movements of hands, close up of his fine fingers



Jon Oringer, CEO and founder of Shutterstock, followed the U.S. elections with great fascination. "Many people do not know the power of images to communicate effectively. This is what we wanted to demonstrate using the example of Barack Obama." Photos of Barack Obama which were used in the analysis can be found at www.shutterstock.com



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