

Greenspun Graduate Research Forum

**“Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton and the
Use of Presidential Surrogacy in Foreign Policy Discourse”**

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Abstract

Through a case study utilizing the rhetoric of President Barack Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, this essay reveals the value of investigating the rhetoric of presidential surrogates in conjunction with presidential discourse. Support for this argument is derived from a close analysis of the combined rhetorical tactics of Obama and Clinton, illuminated by dramatic criticism, value analysis, and mode of argument. Although an essential foundation for an analysis of an administration’s foreign policy rhetoric, the president’s discourse is not the only data that merits attention. For foreign policy rhetoric, this essay elucidates both the importance and utility of examining the discourse of Obama and Clinton together, rather than in isolation. Based on this analysis, it is reasonable to contend that Clinton’s “human rights drama” operated *within* Obama’s “war and peace drama,” rather than competed with it for acceptance, and the two speakers utilized similar tactics in terms of drawing on audience values and utilizing mode of argument to support the cases they presented.