

Theme: American Dream Revisited – Governor Elect Arnold Schwarzenegger

Source: A) Extract from *Demonstration of Power*, blog by Steven Den Beste, 8 Oct 2003, http://denbeste.nu/cd_log_entries/2003/10/Demonstrationofpower.shtml
 B) Arnold's First Act, The Denver Post, 13 Aug 2003, Mike Keefe

- Immigrants are usually much more fervently patriotic than the average citizen born here. They don't take the virtues of our system for granted, especially since many of them came from places which were far different, and far worse, and may have made great sacrifices to come here. They don't think America is perfect, but they don't obsess on our faults. Their American glass is 90% full, not 10% empty, and it's usually a damned sight more full than the one they left.
- Schwarzenegger certainly chose to come here and chose to naturalize in 1984. Turning my analogy upside down, he's sort of like an adoptive child deliberately choosing new parents. I think that the fact that he is a naturalized citizen may actually have increased his credibility with some voters. He came here and embraced the American dream.
- Acts speak louder than words. His history shows that he likes what America stands for, and he doesn't take it for granted.
- [.....] we don't really elect leaders on the basis of specific programs, though that often comes up as part of the campaign process. We select our leaders primarily on the basis of their philosophy and political attitudes, and then provide them with a significant degree of autonomy in working out the details. [...]
- When viewed on that basis, I think it's clear that what made Schwarzenegger the most popular candidate was his clear embrace of the American Dream. His is the fairy-tale story of the American Dream; the penniless immigrant (well, sort of) who came here wanting only the opportunity to do his best. Like so many immigrants, he didn't blame others for whatever problems he might face and demand that others make his life better. Rather, he got off his butt and he worked.
- He started his own successful business and became wealthy, and then decided he wanted to pursue a career in show business, where he became even more successful. (And even more wealthy, recently earning \$25 million per film.) He married a beautiful wife who was part of a powerful family. He's smart, he's witty, he's hard working. Yeah, he's overmuscled, but even in that he demonstrated his character. He is still regarded as having had the most perfect body-building body of all time, and that isn't something which just happens (even if one uses steroids, which he did).
- He's confident. He's positive. He sees opportunities and doesn't obsess on barriers; he works to achieve instead of sulking in self-pity. He's also totally assimilated. (It's arguable that as with many such immigrants, cause and effect are backwards and assimilation takes place before immigration, and inspires immigration.) And he's been known to grope a woman now and then; he's politically incorrect.
- I don't care where he was born. He's one of us, in all the ways that matter most.



Assignments:

- 1) Extract relevant information from text A to show why Schwarzenegger won the California recall election according to Den Beste.
- 2) Describe and analyse the cartoon to point out Mike Keefe's image of Schwarzenegger.
- 3) Compare the different views of Schwarzenegger and say which you find more appropriate. Do not forget to give reasons for your view.