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## HANDOUT ONE, LESSON TWO

# FILM CLIPS TRANSCRIPTS

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### CLIP ONE: DNC 2004

**BRIAN WILLIAMS:** The Democratic party today made it clear they think they have discovered the biggest potential political star of either party to come out of Illinois since Abe Lincoln. His name is Barack Obama, and he's running for U.S. Senate. The party announced today he'll be the keynote speaker at their Boston convention.

**REPORTER:** Democrats could have picked someone more famous, but the pros saw something special in Barack Obama.

**MICHELLE OBAMA:** Barack's candidacy isn't just energizing the Democratic party, but it's energizing people and giving them a renewed hope for politics, period. You know, they're tired of a politics of division, so it's very uplifting to see this wonderful young man who reminds so many people of their own sons and grandsons, regardless of race.

**TIM RUSSERT:** Do you think the Democratic Party selected you in part because they wanted to present an African American, young, rising politician?

**BARACK OBAMA:** Well, I think that John Kerry cares a lot about diversity in the party. And I think that certainly made a difference. I also think that the manner in which we won our primary in Illinois was a hopeful sign, because the conventional wisdom was that I would get the Black vote and then a sliver of White vote, and instead we won in places people didn't expect us to win; in suburban areas, in rural areas. And it indicates that people are really ready for a message for change. What they want is somebody who has a positive message, who has a tone in their politics that says, "We can disagree with the other side without being disagreeable." And I think that's the kind of message that John Kerry is going to be projecting at the convention during this week.

**AL SHARPTON:** The Black caucus of delegates to the 2004 Democratic Convention had their sessions, and they invited me to speak 'cause I was one of the candidates for president that year. And they invited

Mr. Obama. And, he says, "I just want to explain to you, Reverend, that, you know, I'm doing the keynote tomorrow night and I'm probably gonna be more expansive and unifying than a lot of people are used to." And I stopped him then and said, "Don't worry Senator, you do what you have to do tomorrow night because you have to win for the U.S. Senate. I'm gonna take care of the brothers and sisters tonight." And he kind of looked at me the way he kind of cocks his head and he laughed. And I think that began a relationship where he and I understood that we play different roles.

**BARACK OBAMA:** Thank you so much. Thank you. Thank you. Let me express my deepest gratitude for the privilege of addressing this convention. Tonight is a particular honor for me because, let's face it, my presence on this stage is pretty unlikely.

**JELANI COBB:** When I first saw Barack Obama, I was skeptical. And my introduction to him was like very many people's introduction, the 2004 Democratic National Convention where he gave the keynote speech. But I was intrigued, even as I was skeptical.

**BARACK OBAMA:** I stand here knowing that my story is part of the larger American story, that I owe a debt to all of those who came before me, and that, in no other country on earth, is my story even possible.

**DAVID AXELROD:** We wanted to create a movement that inspired people to believe that we could overcome some of these really great barriers in our politics. That we could overcome the cynicism. You know, I thought that this speech was going to have a galvanic effect for Obama. Didn't realize how much until I was in the room in Boston.

**BARACK OBAMA:** This year, in this election, we are called to reaffirm our values and our commitments, to hold them against a hard reality and see how we are measuring up, to the legacy of our forebears, and the promise of future generations. And fellow Americans — Democrats, Republicans, Independents — I say to you tonight: we have more work to do.

## CLIP TWO: E PLURIBUS UNUM

AL SHARPTON: I was sitting up in one of the box seats, and I had some activists with me. And they were like, "Well, why isn't he talking about voting rights, and why isn't he talking about some of our issues?"

BARACK OBAMA: John Kerry believes in America. And he knows that it's not enough for just some of us to prosper.

AL SHARPTON: I understood that he had to deal with a broad range of issues, and that he was running for the U.S. Senate to represent everybody in Illinois.

BARACK OBAMA: If there's a child on the South Side of Chicago who can't read, that matters to me, even if it's not my child.

AL SHARPTON: And, I actually got into arguments defending him. I would say, "Wait a minute. We — we cannot fight to get our best to the mainstream, and then tell them, 'Don't talk to the mainstream about mainstream issues.'"

BARACK OBAMA: It is that fundamental belief, I am my brother's keeper, I am my sister's keeper, that makes this country work. It's what allows us to pursue our individual dreams, and yet still come together as one American family. E pluribus unum: out of many, one.

MICHAEL ERIC DYSON: It's his position. As an American politician, his goal is to represent the best interest of the entire nation from a particular position and standpoint as a Black man, but broadening out, not only what that Blackness might mean, but how it might also encompass and include all of America.

BARACK OBAMA: Now, even as we speak, there are those who are preparing to divide us: the spin masters, the negative ad peddlers, who embrace the politics of anything goes. Well, I say to them tonight, there is not a liberal America and a conservative America; there is the United States of America. There is not a Black America and a White America and Latino America and Asian America; there's the United States of America. The pundits — the pundits like to slice and dice —

JELANI COBB: You know, he made that statement, "There's not a Black America or a White America; there's the United States of America." Now, that's not true; there's totally a Black America and a White America. And there's a Latino America, a gay America, a poor America. There's a America that is disproportionately incarcerated, there are all of those things.

BARACK OBAMA: We are one people, all of us pledging allegiance to the stars and stripes; all of us defending the United States of America.

JELANI COBB: But you also had to understand that he was speaking aspirationally; that people wanted to belong to a country in which those were not permanent and impermeable distinctions.

BARACK OBAMA: In the end — in the end, that's what this election is about. Do we participate in a politics of cynicism, or do we participate in a politics of hope?

DAVID REMNICK: I don't think Obama had any illusion that everybody had transcended race and had transcended historical animosities and all the rest, and everybody was in full embrace of great unity. It was a new kind of American optimism. Voiced by somebody who embodied this melding of identity.

BARACK OBAMA: It's the hope of slaves sitting around a fire singing freedom songs, the hope of immigrants setting out for distant shores, the hope of a young naval lieutenant bravely patrolling the Mekong Delta, the hope of a millworker's son who dares to defy the odds, the hope of a skinny kid with a funny name who believes that America has a place for him, too.

MICHAEL ERIC DYSON: I was there at the convention, and it was riveting, electrifying. It was comparable to King standing at the summit of expectation in 1963 where he identifies a golden thread of the American dream and weaves it into a tapestry of American democratic possibility.

BARACK OBAMA: Hope. Hope in the face of difficulty, hope in the face of uncertainty. The audacity of hope. In the end, that is God's greatest gift to us. The bedrock of this nation.

MICHAEL ERIC DYSON: Now, I'm not saying that the 2004 speech measured up to the "I Have a Dream" speech, in terms of rhetorical eloquence, though it was eloquent.

BARACK OBAMA: Thank you very much, everybody. God bless you. Thank you.

MICHAEL ERIC DYSON: But it did have an electrifying effect in that same way. That was a tremendous coming-out party for Barack Obama.