Frank Rich, was simply another instance of the Bush administration "retrieving the limelight at an opportune moment" (Rich, 88). The purpose of this setting can easily be attributed to the image that resonates in the minds of the citizens of their American President standing on a warship during war-time. It presents the idea that America is clearly winning the war, as the President is standing on an instrument for war feeling completely safe. The theatre involved in this speech not only provides credibility among the masses by demonstrating that Bush was a strong and literal Commander in Chief, but it also reinforces the belief that the Republican Party is the heroic party of defense. This speech, in particular, emphasizes the importance of setting over the actual content of his message. When citizens viewed this speech, they were mesmerized with the banner reading "Mission Accomplished" in the background, and assumed that the content of the President's speech was simply detailing the intricacies of the war effort. Author Robert Draper analyzes the setting of the "Mission Accomplished" speech and provides contextual background to emphasize the theatrics of the event. This was a time in which United States policymakers were being deployed into Iraq to help establish a democratic government, which would seemingly be a major talking point for the President. Draper notes, however, that "the President said nothing whatsoever about policymakers on May 1, 2003, when he stood aboard the *USS Abraham Lincoln*—although if he had, no one would have noticed it anyway, since the theatrics of that event would loom in the months, and even years to come, long after the message of Bush's words had long been forgotten (Draper, 192). This pessimistic, but insightful, view about Bush's speech reinforces the idea that messages embedded in a setting can influence viewers more than the actual words spoken.

The props used in President Bush's speeches are not limited to pictures or banners. In Bush's speech informing the public about the capture of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, he appears standing in front of a podium in the White House dressed in the traditional business attire the Presidents typically wear. One crucial difference between this setting and other speeches he has delivered in the White House is the statue of George Washington over the President's right shoulder. While this may seem like a simple tribute to the United States' first President, its significance is much more than that of a tribute. Bush is indirectly comparing himself to George Washington in the sense that both men were concerned with ridding the world of tyranny and oppression, something Washington did by defeating the British, and something Bush did by capturing a tyrant in Saddam Hussein. This is a demonstration of Edelman's belief that citizens do not always "know" what they think they "know." The layman would view this as President Bush paying homage to one of the greatest men in American history, while a closer look reveals the meaning behind the setting in which Bush conveys his message.

The actor that has become known as the American President uses a multitude

of settings, props, and political rhetoric to create an image of himself that resonates well with the general public. By using more common props such as the American flag and family photos, the President can create an image of himself as a freedom-loving family man, who acts with the concerns of the entire nation in mind. These props greatly assist the President in securing support for domestic policies, but props and settings used for speeches can also gain him popularity when it comes to foreign policy. George Washington's likeness lingering in the background creates a subtle connection between the two men, and President Bush appearing on a battleship while the nation is at war projects a powerful image as well. The use of these settings will not disappear in the near future, as the majority of citizens are unaware of the subtle psychological appeals that politicians use to convey their messages. Because of the use of these appeals to human emotion, the President often seems more like an actor on a stage than a leader in a struggle for continued freedom.

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