

SHALLOW TV ADS MORE SUITABLE TO COVERAGE OF HORSE RACES THAN CANDIDATES OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST DEMOCRACY



As the election campaigning enters the last stretch, the number of ads is escalating. They are flooding every available ad space. Most of these ads lack mature content and are mostly on tit-for-tat basis, with the most bizarre and absurd allegations being traded between the campaigners. Instead of stressing their own strengths and telling voters, "please vote for me," the ads are telling what a rascal their opponent is and asking people to "vote against him." Most people are shocked and concerned about the millions splurged on the ads, surely they could have been to better use argue people for whom such extravagant spending borders on the outrageous. They say let us restore some sanity. Economy and unemployment are playing havoc with people's lives. Millions of Americans are on food stamps and they are becoming poorer by the day, yet there seems to be no dearth of money to lubricate political advertising. Civil people bemoan the conduct of the campaigns and say that they undermine and demoralize any respect for the democratic election process – moreover, they are hardly reflective of the great country we live in, widely perceived across the world as one of its most powerful. We are losing respect in the eyes of the world, who feel our democracy is a sham. They find our ad invasion is extravagant, undignified and duplicitous. Most agree that the ads contain distortions and campaigners knowingly spread canards and obfuscate facts, knowing that it will be very hard for those affected to refute the false claims and undo the damage. Ads have been found to contain falsehoods about a candidate's conduct, his past record, his views on sensitive issues, on abortions, gay marriages and even his personal life. Consultants say that ads that manipulate the truth or contain downright lies are more effective and they actually "work." There is no tested remedy for the damage these ads cause. Fact-checkers will cry themselves hoarse that the information is incorrect, but who listens. The initial impact of the ad is so overpowering that it leaves a lasting indelible impression on the psyche of the viewer. Both the Republicans and the Democrats and their supporters have spent half-a-billion each on political ads. But what is worrying is that most of the ads are scheduled to come over the next two weeks. Associated Press has cautioned, "Get ready, presidential swing states. Now the campaign ad crush - and TV spending spree - really begins." Now the ads will be focused on the nine battleground states that are expected to decide who breaks the tape. This is where the undecided voters are. It is reported that Gov. Romney is spending \$85,000 per day, telling undecided voters why they should not be voting for Obama. Politicians have lost much of their credibility with the general public a voters are skeptical about what they say. Voters are mocking and critical, but the politicians are led to believe by their consultants that the ads are clicking in a big way. Two-weeks from now this bickering will end, but not before setting many new records, not all good ones. It has already surpassed the number of ads aired in 2008 and there is still some time to go. Never have the ads been so bitter and virulent and fact-checkers say that truth was a scarce commodity in these ads. Perhaps it's time that political campaigning is harnessed and stringiest laws are passed to ensure that a gullible public is not taken for a ride, and that politicians do not mock and undermine the very positions they desire to hold.