

# The New Criterion

## The Media

February 2009

### The club of cool

by [James Bowman](#)

On the marketing of the president.

It was one afternoon when I was on my way to an exhibition at the Folger Shakespeare Library called “Breaking News: Renaissance Journalism and the Birth of the Newspaper” that I caught my first glimpse of the revolution in advertising. I saw it on the side of a Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority bus: a long, clean, pastel-blue rendering of the words “Yes You Can” with the *o* of the word *you* filled in by a version of the long-familiar, red-and-blue, yin-and-yang logo for Pepsi-Cola, now redesigned to look as much as possible like the hopeful-sunrise-on-a-ploughed-field Obama logo. There was no mention of Pepsi that I could see, but then I wasn’t looking closely at the words. I seem to remember something about deliciousness—was it?—or maybe youth and excitement in what amounted to a screen crawl at the bottom of the ad, but I didn’t bother trying to read wha ...

**James Bowman** is the author of *Honor: A History* (Encounter Books) and *Media Madness: The Corruption of Our Political Culture*, also published by Encounter (2008) .

[more from this author](#)

This article originally appeared in The New Criterion, Volume 27 February 2009, on page 60

Copyright © 2009 The New Criterion | [www.newcriterion.com](http://www.newcriterion.com)

<http://www.newcriterion.com/articles.cfm/The-club-of-cool-4018>