

The Rashomon Effect...

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The 'Rashomon effect' is defined as the effect of the subjectivity of perception on recollection, by which observers of an event are able to produce substantially different but equally plausible accounts of it. It is named for Akira Kurosawa's brilliant film [Rashomon](#), in which a crime that was witnessed by four individuals is described in four mutually contradictory ways.



As I watched the inauguration unfold from sunny Florida, I was very impressed with all the events - and with the courage, the spirit of adventure and the sheer happiness of the 2 million plus who were in attendance. Bravo! On the television Tuesday, the atmosphere appeared to be quite sunny but I could sense the subtle cold in many of the images that were shown. I was fascinated, not only with the President's inaugural address, but with the way that the media was working overtime immediately after it - and still is - to dissect each word of his speech and to identify to whom each line was being addressed. It was just like I was watching [Rashomon](#), where everyone had seen the same thing differently.

It's a good thing that President Obama is strong because he may have to repeat himself often - as the tabloids and pundits gleefully point to the retaking of the oath of office - to make his message unequivocally clear. His consistency is amazing. During the lead-up to one of the celebrations, I had caught a speech on C-SPAN that he had given in New York at a Barnes & Noble book-signing that made me do a

double-take. As it turned out, that speech was in 2004, after his first book, [Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance](#), and after he had won his Illinois Senate seat when he was contemplating going to Washington for the first time, speaking about what was ahead for him.

Listen to the [Inaugural Address](#) again and instead of reacting like DeNiro's [Taxi Driver](#), "*You talkin' to me? You talkin' to me?*", recognize that Obama's words were meant for everyone; his message hasn't changed. I will watch with interest to see who leads the resistance to the President's attempts to execute his vision for our Nation and with the hope that a more balanced media will do the same. "The stale political arguments that have consumed us for so long no longer apply." The openness of this Internet administration will be what saves us all.

Bob