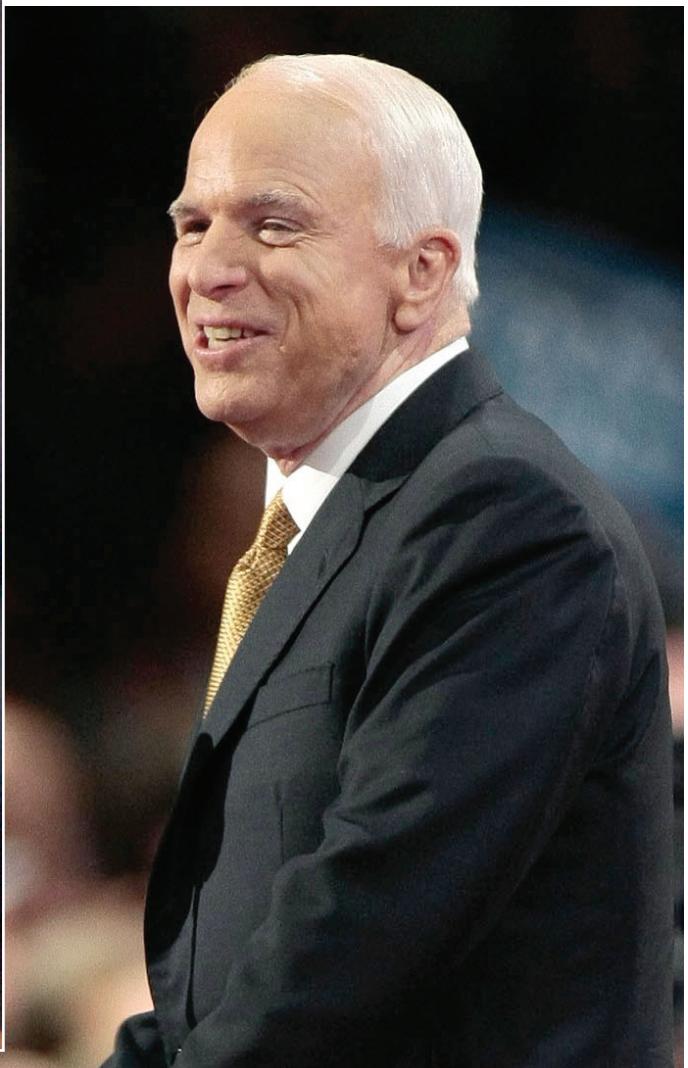


Historic Choices & New Approaches



BY MATT SAYLES — ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sen. Barack Obama



BY WIN MCNAMEE — GETTY IMAGES

Sen. John McCain

INSIDE

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An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

A Word About Historic Choices and New Approaches

Change is the mantra, shibboleth and slogan of the 2008 presidential election. At once invoking the profound and diminishing to a commonplace catchword. It is change in attitudes carried to the voting booth and party conventions that resulted in a historic campaign: a black man chosen as the Democratic nominee for president and a female selected as the Republican nominee for vice president. Both parties promise change in their speeches, ads and Internet communication.

The issues that matter have changed positions of importance. The economy replaced involvement in wars on two fronts as the top issue when the economic crisis demanded congressional attention in September and early October. How might foreclosures, job loss, higher prices on necessities and a “Wall Street bailout” change who voters from “Main Street” choose on November 4?

The activities and *Washington Post* articles reprinted in this guide address the significance of Sen. Barack Obama’s acceptance speech on the anniversary of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s I Have a Dream speech. DeNeen Brown takes a look at how women perceive Gov. Sarah Palin. New approaches to campaigning online are examined through cookies, social networking and privacy concerns. Fact checking of political advertising and speeches is countered with a new study of voters’ receptivity to the facts.

The online guides provided by *The Washington Post* NIE program suggest activities to use with *Post* articles and editorial cartoons and the reproducibles that we have created for you. Many of the suggested activities work together to create interdisciplinary segments of a larger project. We have included a list of past guides that focused on the election process, and we have highlighted activities that are still useful in the classroom.

A reminder to *Post* INSIDE program teachers: If you plan to use articles in this guide in the e-replica format more than three months after their publication date, remember to bookmark them to use this school year.

Lessons: The 2008 presidential election is a time of historic decisions and new approaches. History will be made when either an African American is president or a female is vice president of the U.S. It is also a turning point in new uses of technology by candidates to attract donors, to communicate their message and to organize campaign workers and by media and citizens to examine financial contributions and to fact check the candidates.

Level: Low to high

Subjects: Social Studies, Government, Journalism

Related Activity: Computer Science, Women’s Studies, Art, Mathematics

NIE Online Guide

Editor — Carol Lange

Art Editor — Carol Porter

Contributing to this guide: Steven King, Shepherd Elementary School, Washington, D.C., provided the “Internet Access: Online Campaigning” activity. Social Studies Dept. Chair Christopher Smith, Centreville (Va.) High School, shared his “2008 Presidential Election Campaign Finances” activity.

Send comments about this guide to:

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Historic Choices & New Approaches

Whether John McCain or Barack Obama wins the 2008 presidential election, history has already been made — the Republican Party has a female nominated for vice president and the Democratic Party has the first African American leading a major-party ticket. Use the following activities with the articles in this guide and in your daily *Washington Post* to discuss the candidates, the contemporary campaign, issues and election process.

Follow the Candidates

Through the coverage of *The Washington Post*, readers go on the campaign trail with the candidates. Read the articles and study the photographs.

- In what states and towns are the candidates visiting in the weeks before Election Day? Why there?
- To whom are they speaking? Young, old, wealthy, middle class? Small or large groups?
- Are they formal or informal in dress?
- Are they alone, with their running mate, with family members?
- Are the running mates targeting different states?
- What topics are they addressing?

Although some voters are taking the option to vote early, many voters say they are undecided. In what ways do students think the candidates' personal appearances are important to helping voters make that important final decision?

In what ways does *Post* coverage inform voters about target states, plans for voter turnout, and public reaction to candidates' appearances and statements?

Understand the Issues, Kids

Review the "KidsPost Election" sidebar in this guide. Key issues of this election are presented for younger students. The September 23 focus on the economy is included in this guide. Read the article and discuss the charts. Questions for discussion might include:

- What is an "economy"? Give examples of goods and services.
- Why is the economy an important campaign issue?
- What are some reasons for the economic problems in the U.S.?
- What are taxes? Why do we pay them?
- How are U.S. taxes structured? (See the chart.)
- Which candidate's family-tax proposal do you prefer? Explain.

On November 4, students may vote online. The *KidsPost* page that day will be a large map of the country with the number of electoral votes in each state. *KidsPost* will explain the electoral college and how 270 is the magic number and why it's that way. They'll also run a small map that will be colored in blue and red to show how states are leaning.

After the voting has concluded and the results are announced, students are encouraged to color in the states. Using the electoral vote count of each state, students could keep a running tally of the electoral votes. (Yes, *KidsPost* is encouraging kids to stay up past their bed time by using the "But, mom and dad, this is HISTORY" line.)

Know Your World Leaders

A matching activity ("Who Do You Know?) is provided to put the selection of Gov. Sarah Palin

KidsPost Election

Each Tuesday Sept. 16 to Nov. 4, *KidsPost* will provide kid-friendly coverage of the issues addressed in this year's presidential campaign.

www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/kidspost/election08/

KidsPost Election 2008

Archive of PDFs covering the following topics:

Environment
Economy
War
Education
Healthcare
Energy

Bios of the candidates and a Voters Guide are also included. Each page is available at www.washingtonpost.com/kidspost in the Election 2008 box. On Nov. 4, students may participate in an online vote at kidspost.com.

www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/kidspost/pdf/candidates012908.pdf

Getting to Know the Candidates

The personal side of the major 2008 candidates running to be their party's presidential nominee

www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/kidspost/pdf/election010208.pdf

The Race Is On

An explanation of the caucus, primary process and party conventions. Includes Q and A about party colors and mascots.

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on the Republican Party national ticket into perspective. How many previous and current American and world female leaders do students know? If time allows, students could be asked to explore further to find more current female leaders in the world.

Check the Facts

Use *The Washington Post's* "The Fact Checker" column by Michael Dobbs to verify the accuracy of political advertisements and statements. Dobbs uses several sources (see sidebar "Get the Facts") in a collaborative effort to "focus on issues that are most important to voters." Pinocchios are awarded to shading of the facts, significant omissions or exaggerations, errors and whoppers. A Geppetto Checkmark is awarded to statements that "contain the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth."

You may also find these columns and accompanying videos online at <http://blog.washingtonpost.com/fact-checker/>. E-replica users could bookmark these columns for use in the classroom.

Check the Facts, 2

During the presidential and vice presidential debates, both candidates will state different facts — and the opponent will likely disagree with some of the assertions. So who is right?

As students listen to the debates (or candidates' speeches) and read *Post* coverage have them record three statements where disagreement took place. Do their own online research or go to one of the fact checking Web sites. Transcripts of the debate or speech

could be used for accuracy of reporting what was said.

Post reporters have an obligation to report what each candidate said. These are NEWS articles. Point out to students the articles that are labeled ANALYSIS. These are written by a *Post* reporter with experience covering the topic area, in this case politics, to provide a perspective on the subject. In addition, a team of reporters and researchers provide a FACT CHECK of statements and political ads.

See *The Post's* Fact Checker examples that were published in *The Post* and posted online after the debates of the vice presidential candidates. Students could write their own fact checker report (based on research) that could be posted in the classroom or on a Web site created for your class.

Have students report the statements that interested them and what they discovered. Discuss to what extent a candidate's use of misinformation or half-truths influence their view of the candidate.

Psych Out Political Misinformation

Do people want to hear corrections or have rumors debunked? Is good information the antidote to misinformation? For this activity, use "The Power of Political Misinformation," a column that addresses a recent study of political misinformation.

Before reading this article, have students write their political leaning and/or the candidate for whom they would vote. View a political ad. Have students write down the main idea conveyed in the ad. What assertions have been made about

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Get the Facts

<http://blog.washingtonpost.com/fact-checker/>

The Fact Checker

Recent and archived check of statements in articles, debates and campaign advertising. "The Art of Meaningless Spin" stimulates discussion of rhetoric.

www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/interactives/campaign08/issues/Issue_Coverage_Tracker

Includes positions of presidential candidates from all political parties on nine issues. Information from a wide variety of sources.

<http://factcheck.org/>

FactCheck.org

A "consumer advocate" project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center. Monitor TV ads, debates, speeches, interviews and news releases. Classroom Tools for "Seeing Through the Spin" included.

www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/

PolitiFact

St. Petersburg Times fact check uses truth meters: True, Half True, Pants on Fire. Also Flip-O-Meter.

www.opensecrets.org/
OpenSecrets.org

Center for Responsive Politics guide to campaign finances. Includes presidential and congressional races, industry, lobbying, PACs and 527 committees. The Historical Elections section provides data for comparisons.

www.cqpolitics.com/wmspage.cfm?parm1=29

CQ Politics

Fundraising finance reports of candidates and political parties. See Political Toolkit for election maps and races to watch.

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the opponent? Discuss the content. Have students viewed the same ad?

Next provide either a video or written statement that provides the facts, revealing the misinformation or half-truth conveyed in the ad they saw. Are students convinced by the facts?

Read and discuss the article. What did the political scientists discover in the experiments? Is this article dismaying to those who believe getting the facts is important — and certainly a function of the media? To what extent did students' response to the ad and the facts support the research findings?

Follow the Money

In "2008 Presidential Election Campaign Finances," provided by Social Studies Dept. Chair Christopher Smith, Centreville (Va.) H.S., students are directed to OpenSecrets.org. The Center for Responsive Politics (CRP) launched OpenSecrets.org following the 1996 elections; CRP was founded in 1983 by U.S. Senators Frank Church (D-Idaho) and Hugh Scott (R-Pa.). Its goal is to track "the influence of money on U.S. politics, and how that money affects policy and citizens' lives."

Give students "2008 Presidential Election Campaign Finances." This activity focuses on who contributes to presidential campaigns, how much is contributed and the possible influence of contributors. Before giving this activity, teachers may wish to explain PACs, 527s and the function of lobbyists.

Students may be asked to create a chart to collect data found in response to the questions. The horizontal column should indicate the date the site was visited; add

three columns which will be used at intervals to collect data for the same topics in order to compare changes (funding, sources, order) in contributions as Election Day nears. You may wish to look at polls at the same intervals to see if giving in any way may relate to public sentiment.

You may wish to focus on additional campaign financial data. For example, candidates' personal finance reports, companies that contribute to both parties, contributions being made to candidates in key states. Compare and contrast the information based upon the sources.

Translate Online Enthusiasm to Offline Results

Changes in technology have taken campaigns from the front porch (1896, Republican William McKinley) to whistle stops (William Jennings Bryan, McKinley's opponent, goes to the people on train; 1928, Democrat Al Smith's "Ballyhoo Train" has a newsroom on wheels with typewriters, telegraph and darkroom) to radio (1930s and 1940s) and TV (1960, first televised debate) appearances.

In the 2008 campaign, the candidates took Howard Dean's pioneering use in 2003 (Web site, blog and streaming video) to new levels. In 2007 Hillary Clinton announced her candidacy on her Web site. Barack Obama used his campaign Web site and social networking sites to get donations.

Give students "Campaigns Experimenting Online to See What Works." This article was published before Super Tuesday, exploring the impact of the Internet. Before reading ask students to list the

Get the Facts | continued

www.issues2000.org/default.htm

OnTheIssues.org

Includes many candidates on topics, issues; political news, party platforms

www.fec.gov/

Federal Election Commission

Campaign Finance Maps, reports and data

www.cnn.com/2008/POLITICS/10/02/video.transcript/index.html

Biden, Palin Face Off in Debate

CNN Election Center 2008 replays the vice presidential debate with a transcript running parallel to it. Keyword search available.

www.Debates.org/pages/debtrans.html

Commission on Presidential Debates

Unofficial transcripts of many 2008, 2004, 2000 and earlier presidential and vice presidential debates

www.techPresident.com

techPresident

Bi-partisan group blog covering online campaigning. Politickr within the site collects the official blog posts, news feeds, photo streams and video posts of the 2008 presidential candidates.

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ways they “interact” with the candidates through the Internet — news sites, candidates’ Web sites, blogs, advertisements, social networking sites.

- Discuss the use of the Internet before the 2008 election.
- In what significant ways has the Web been transformed in 2007-08 for campaign use?
- Do students think the Internet has had an impact on getting younger people to register to vote and to become interested in candidates? Ask for examples.
- What ways are available to assess the impact of the Internet on the Super Tuesday results?
- In what ways would students “use the Internet to get actual votes” on Election Day?

Explore Innovation

“Internet Campaigning,” a student handout found in this guide, examines the use of the Internet by candidates as both a savvy means to rally supporters and possibly invade the privacy of citizens. Read “A Privacy Shield Against the Campaigns.” Questions for discussion may include:

- Do citizens have a right to privacy?
- Are address, phone number and political party affiliation a matter of public record?
- Are there senior citizens and others who would welcome contact with neighbors?
- Do you agree with Dakin that phone calls and a knock at one’s front door is an invasion of privacy?

Give students “Internet Campaigning.” Steven King, a social studies teacher at Shepard Elementary (DCPS), provided this activity that provides a hands-on look at the information that is

available on the candidates’ Web sites.

After completing the activity and discussing the article, ask students to write their reaction to the use of the Internet for campaign purposes.

Track All Visitors

Another dimension of campaign Internet use is based on the Internet habits of Web users — news articles read, blogs visited, search terms entered — to target voters. Read *Washington Post* Business section article “Candidates’ Web Sites Get to Know the Voters” to learn about “sentiment detection” and the use of tracking.

- What is “marketing” in the business world? Why is it important to the sale of a product?
- How does tracking work?
- McCain’s eCampaign director states, “Without violating any privacy concerns, we try to know as much about our users as possible.” Do you agree that this is not an invasion of privacy?
- Is the use of tracking cookies ethical?
- One advertising executive calls behavioral targeting a “powerful marketing tool.” Do you see it as any different than advertising on billboards or the sides of public transportation?

Span 45 Years

Post columnist Eugene Robinson provides a personal glimpse as well as historic perspective on the day Sen. Barack Obama accepted the presidential nomination of the Democratic party. Martin Luther King, Jr., delivered his I Have a Dream speech on August 28, 1963, at the Lincoln Memorial

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Presidents

Cleveland, Will and Mark Alvarez
Yo, Millard Fillmore! (And All Those Other Presidents You Don’t Know)
 Ages 9-12. Millbrook Press (1997)
 Art and word play help students recall presidential order.

Herbert, Janis
Abraham Lincoln for Kids
 Ages 7-12. Chicago Review Press (2007)
 Reader, storyteller and a president who experienced sorrow; 21 activities for readers

Matuz, Roger and Bill Harris
The Presidents Fact Book
 Ages 12+. Black Dog & Leventhal Publishers (2004) Pleasant layout, documents and photographs add to highlights of political and personal lives of George Washington to George W. Bush.

Miller, Brandon Marie
George Washington for Kids
 Ages 7-12. Chicago Review Press (2007)
 Personal interests and events; book includes 21 activities for readers to try to understand the time period better.

Phillips, Louis
Ask Me Anything About the Presidents
 Ages 9-12. Avon (1992)
 Q and A, answers the question and tells you more.

Rubel, David
Scholastic Encyclopedia of the Presidents and Their Times
 Ages 9-12. Scholastic (2005 update)
 Bios, headlines, historical movements, from Washington to Bill Clinton.
 Photographs, charts and maps enhance the informative text.

Sobel, Sylvan
Presidential Elections: And Other Cool Facts
 Ages 7-12. Econo-Clad Books (2000)
 Elections, presidents’ birthplaces, media goofs

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in D.C. This was 100 years after Lincoln signed the Proclamation of Emancipation.

- Why does Robinson include Rep. John Lewis in the commentary? [In response to this question, you may need to explain the references made to Freedom Rider, SNCC, March on Washington, and Selma-to-Montgomery march.]
- Robinson states that Lewis supported Clinton out of a "sense of loyalty and realpolitik." What does he mean by "loyalty"? By "realpolitik"?
- Why do readers agree when Robinson writes "nothing in John Lewis's biography suggests he knows how to back down"?
- What is the "great leap" to which he refers? Who are the "people"?
- To what do "without racial animus," "resentment," "grudges" and "settle no scores" allude?
- Why was it important that Clinton be the one to ask that "Obama be nominated 'by acclimation'"?
- What does Robinson acknowledge in the second-to-last paragraph?
- In the next-to-last paragraph, Robinson returns to John Lewis to bridge the 45 years from King's I Have a Dream speech to Obama's acceptance speech. What is the significance of Lewis and Obama being together in Denver on August 28, 2008?

Examine the Intersection of Principle and Practice

Gov. Sarah Palin is the first female to be on a Republican Party national ticket. What makes her nomination the same as that of Geraldine Ferraro on the Democratic ticket in 1984? Different from that of Ferraro?

Before reading "Who Do We Think She Is?" do an in-class writing in response to the following questions. There are many ways to frame the issue depending on the preferences of the teacher and the purpose of the class. The point is to have students think and stake out a position before they know the story and how their position is going to be confronted by what Brown writes.

- Should mothers of young children work?
- Is the life of someone who works hard that much different than a politician's life?
- What does it mean to be a successful woman?
- If a mother of young children works outside the home, is she by definition hurting her children by spending less time with them?
- Are women harsher judges of women than men?

After students have read DeNeen Brown's feature, have them revisit what they wrote and see if they still agree, now disagree, have a more complex answer, or just need to write more. You may wish to add questions about stereotyping, making generalizations and sexism. For example:

- How important are the age, work status and number of children of the women interviewed?
- Do students think working women identify more with Hillary Clinton or Sarah Palin?
- Should different questions be asked about Palin than about male politicians?
- To what extent do female candidates (consider Clinton, Pelosi and Elizabeth Dole) use their roles as mothers and/or women to their advantage or as part of their political package?

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Election Resources

Your Vote! Your World!

The Washington Post NIE program will provide **Vote 2008** tabs to teachers to use in their classrooms. The "election scrapbook" provides a place to gather information (registering to vote, roles of the president), collect your thoughts (agree or disagree with candidates on the issues) and get organized to learn (17 pages of charts, maps and forms). **Analyzing Election Results** provides maps of D.C. and Maryland and Virginia to record county-by-county vote results. Contact the NIE program (202) 334-4544.

www.youthleadership.net

Youth Leadership Initiative

Youth Leadership Initiative (YLI) of the University of Virginia Center for Politics has lessons and resources for teachers. Register for student-only Mock Election for national and state elections. Participating teachers can request an election toolkit with stickers, temporary tattoos and beads. Political campaign CD-ROM also available.

www.ciconline.org/cicmagazine-sept08

Cable in the Classroom

PDFs topics include "Campaign Planning," "Light, Camera ... Debate," and "Game of Politics"

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- Should female candidates expect to be under great scrutiny? Palin near the end of Clinton's campaign said, "I think that's reality, and I think it's a given, I think people can just accept that she is going to be under that sharper microscope."
- If students were writing a feature on the selection of a woman as the vice presidential running mate, what focus would they choose? The pregnancy of a teenager? Privacy expectations of children of public figures? Her position on issues?

Journalism and English students could discuss the composing of a feature, using description and quotations and how feature writing both illustrates good examples and falls well short of reaching conclusions

about the population as a whole. In English classes, we gear students toward using just a couple examples to show how something is true or false. In the world outside of literature, things are much more complex. The women in this feature don't come from the same perspective and don't come to the same conclusion.

This feature can lead to discussion of whether stories that describe women as wanting to vote one way or the other are simplistic. The sample size is too small to draw any conclusions about women other than (surprise!) they come in all shapes and sizes, and they don't all think the same way.

React to the Political Cartoon

The Post ombudsman is the liaison between the public and *The Post*.

Readers recently sent her more complaints about a Pat Oliphant cartoon than *Post* coverage of the financial crisis. Tom Toles is the *Post*'s editorial cartoonist so why and how did Oliphant get into the conversation? Read her column to learn about this cartoon and *The Post*'s policy — "against defaming or perpetuating racial, religious or ethnic stereotypes."

Follow Toles' cartoons for a week. What are his topics? His point of view? Have students write a reaction to the group of visual commentary or one that stands out. Do they see any breach in *The Post*'s policy? ■

ANSWERS. Who Do You Know?

1. I, 2. A, 3. G, 4. E, 5. C, 6. J, 7. H, 8. F, 9. D, 10. B

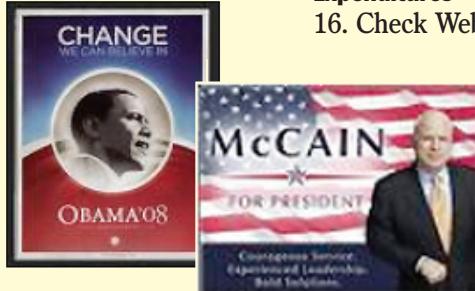
Answers 2008 Presidential Election Campaign Finances

Banking on Becoming a President

1. Check Web site for up-to-date data.
2. Check Web site for up-to-date data.
3. Third party candidates do not win presidential elections; people feel that they waste their vote on these candidates

Contributions by Geography

4. Check Web site for up-to-date data.
5. Illinois is Obama's home state.
6. Check Web site for up-to-date data.
7. California has the largest population of any state in the union.



Top Industries

- 8-11. Check Web site for up-to-date data.

Contributors

12. Individuals who are employed by these institutions/companies
13. Answers will vary.

14. Answers will vary.

15. Republicans tend to give more money for national defense, which benefits employees of the U.S. military. McCain is a veteran.

Expenditures

16. Check Web site for up-to-date data. Answers will vary.
17. Check Web site for up-to-date data.
18. Check Web site for up-to-date data.
19. Broadcast media. Major party candidates are able to spend much more money on TV ads which allows them to have "name recognition" among the voters.
20. Donations guarantee access to politicians; how much influence they have over politicians is debatable.

527's

21. Party building activities, voter registration drives, issue advocacy
22. Employees

Past Post Guides

These Washington Post Newspaper In Education program guides have activities and material that can be used in a study of campaigning, elections and the presidency. All may be downloaded at www.washpost.com/nie/. Select lesson plans. Bullets indicate activities that can be easily used in a study of the 2008 election.

April 8, 2008

Primarily, Images and Issues

Students are encouraged to examine the presidential primary through the candidates, journalists, commentators and editorial cartoonist Tom Toles.

- 20 Toles editorial cartoons (candidates, process, tactics and issues)
- Policy Position charts
- Role Play activity

February 2, 2008

Debate: Face-to-Face Exchanges

Debate is intrinsic to American culture, from debating societies to Lincoln-Douglas debates and televised debates of candidates for president.

- Analysis of a Debate
- Debate a Current Issue

November 23, 2004

Should the Electoral College Count?

Six weeks after voters have indicated their choice for president and vice president, electors meet to cast their ballots. Through activities in this guide students review why the writers of the U.S. Constitution devised the Electoral College and evaluate if electors are still necessary.

- How the Electoral College Works
- Distribution of Electoral College Votes (chart and questions)
- The Electoral College: History, Present and Future
- The Debate About the Electoral College System (Pro-Con activity)

October 20, 2004

What Determines Election Outcomes?

Students examine the influence of the 2000 presidential election results, political parties, issues and campaign advertising.

- Analysis of Campaign Advertising (activity)
- The Country Where Every Vote Counts (activity)
- Whose Vote Really Counts (chart, change date to 2008)

September 27, 2004

Who Has the Right to Vote?

Students examine the right to vote and from whom this right may be taken.

- Get Out the Vote (word find)
- Voting in America (legal background)
- Campaign Committee Challenge (activity)
- Dementia and the Voter (article, discussion)

November 5, 2002

Control of Congress

The 2002 election provides the faces and facts from which students can examine American citizens' involvement in the democratic process, the law-making process, and the power and influence that comes with control of Congress.

- From Bill to Law in 5 Easy Steps
- Word Study—A Look at Congress
- Make Your Choice (activity)

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ELECTION
2008

AT ISSUE

ENVIRONMENT

ECONOMY

WAR

EDUCATION

HEALTH CARE

ENERGY

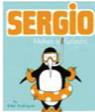


What should be done about high prices, lost jobs and bankrupt companies?



ILLUSTRATION BY EDEL RODRIGUEZ FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

The U.S. economy is complicated. It even stumps many adults! But there are some basics about the economy that kids should understand — especially since it has become one of the most important issues in the presidential campaign.



ABOUT THE ARTWORK | KidsPost asked artist Edel Rodriguez to adapt his character Sergio the penguin for each of our Election 2008 pages. Come back each week to see what Sergio learns about issues such as war, health care and education. If you can't get enough of Sergio, check out Rodriguez's new picture book, "Sergio Makes a Splash!", published by Little, Brown Books for Young Readers.

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What is an **economy**? It is a system that involves buying and selling goods and services. At the center of any economy is money.

When you go to a store for school supplies, you are buying goods. You can also buy services. You do that when you pay for a haircut.

You can buy a part (a share) of a company, such as Microsoft or Toys R Us. That is called buying stock. You don't buy shares of a company at the supermarket; they are bought and sold on the stock market.

Part of what makes the economy complicated is that all of its parts are connected. When the economy is going well, people have jobs and can earn money to house and feed their families. They also can save money.

Lately the U.S. economy — the world's richest — has been experiencing big problems.

Prices are rising. Gasoline has gone up about a dollar a gallon in the past year; and the prices of milk, bread and other foods are way up.

Many people don't have jobs. In August, the government reported that the unemployment rate rose to the highest level in five years. Without jobs, it's hard for people to pay for even basic items, such as food.

People can't afford to keep their houses. Because of the type of loans some people used to buy houses, the amount of money they have to pay each month keeps going up.

The stock market is wacky. When the economy is shaky, people often sell stock because they want the cash (to buy goods and services or to pay bills). When lots of folks do this at the same time, the value of the company's stock falls.

Some financial companies are failing. Some businesses that play a big

role in the economy made bad investments and were going bankrupt. The government let some businesses fail but is moving to save others by buying their bad investments. This is called a "**bailout**" and could cost the government a trillion dollars.

The combination of these factors means that people are less likely to spend money. To stay healthy, an economy needs money moving through it the same way your body needs blood moving through it.

Both presidential candidates say

that part of their plans to help the economy involves cutting taxes. **Taxes** are fees that we pay to the government so that it can provide services, such as building and repairing highways. If people are paying less in taxes, then they have more to spend on goods and services. Cutting taxes is a way to get money moving through the economy again.

The chart below shows what Republican Sen. John McCain and Democratic Sen. Barack Obama would do about taxes if elected president.

2009 FAMILY-TAX PROPOSALS

How your family's taxes would change in 2009 depends on income (below) and on who becomes president. Sixty percent of U.S. families are in groups 1, 2 or 3. The richest Americans are in Group 5.

JOHN MCCAIN

Calls for everyone's taxes to decrease. The wealthiest Americans receive the largest tax cut. Says tax cuts help the economy grow.

BARACK OBAMA

Calls for almost all to receive a tax cut, but wants the rich to pay more. Says people with the most money can pay more taxes.

CHANGE IN YEARLY TAXES

1 0 to \$18,981	-\$21	-\$567
2 \$18,982 to \$37,595	-\$118	-\$892
3 \$37,596 to \$66,354	-\$325	-\$1,118
4 \$66,355 to \$111,645	-\$994	-\$1,264
5 \$111,646 to \$2.87 million plus	-\$6,498	+\$3,017
\$111,646 to \$160,972	-\$2,584	-\$2,135
\$160,973 to \$226,918	-\$4,437	-\$2,796
\$226,919 to \$603,402	-\$8,159	+\$121
\$603,403 to \$2.87 million	-\$48,862	+\$93,709
More than \$2.87 million	-\$290,708	+\$542,882

SOURCE: Tax Policy Center; Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center

THE WASHINGTON POST

Note: The dollar amounts in the five categories are the average for all families in any one income group. Individual families might get more or less depending on their income.

— Valerie Strauss

Name _____

Date _____

Who Do You Know?

Matching. Pair the political leader with a description of her.

- | | |
|--|--|
| _____ 1. Benazir Bhutto | A. U.S. Senator from New York and former First Lady; ran to be her party's nominee for U.S. president |
| _____ 2. Hillary Rodham Clinton | B. Prime Minister of the United Kingdom (1979-1990) |
| _____ 3. Elizabeth Dole | C. Served as prime minister of India (1966-1977, 1980-1984). She was assassinated by a Sikh extremist. |
| _____ 4. Vigdis Finnbogadottir | D. Former Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; first African American female to be U.S. Secretary of State |
| _____ 5. Indira Gandhi | E. First democratically elected woman head of state; became president of Iceland in 1980 |
| _____ 6. Geraldine Ferraro | F. Governor and first female vice presidential nominee of her party (2008) |
| _____ 7. Golda Meir | G. First female Secretary of the Department of Transportation, Labor, U.S. Senator from North Carolina. Wife of a Republican candidate for president; she was the first spouse to have her own full-time campaign travel team, appearing in separate locations from her husband to maximize their contact with citizens and the media. |
| _____ 8. Sarah Palin | H. Prime Minister of Israel (1969-1974) who was born in Russia and lived in the U.S. (1906-1921) and Palestine. |
| _____ 9. Condoleezza Rice | I. Harvard-educated, daughter of a former prime minister; became prime minister of Pakistan in 1988; martyred in Dec. 2007 when running for office |
| _____ 10. Margaret Thatcher | J. First woman vice presidential candidate on a U.S. national party ticket (1984) |

Nominate another prominent female to be added to this list. Include a brief statement of the positions she has held and why she should be considered.

Name _____

Date _____

2008 Presidential Election Campaign Finances

Candidates raised more than \$1 billion in the 2008 presidential campaign. In addition to the contributions by citizens and the political parties, lobbyists and advocacy groups — Political Action Committees (PACs), 527s and others — will spend millions to influence the opinions of voters.

Use OpenSecrets.org to compile current data on presidential campaign finances. The numbers are based on reports to the Federal Election Commission. To begin, select the Politicians & Elections section.

Banking on Becoming a President

Click on the candidates' names under their pictures.

1. How much has Obama raised?
2. How much has McCain raised?
3. Why do you think that the other candidates have raised very little money compared to Obama and McCain?

Contributions by Geography

Select Barack Obama. Then click on Geography in the tab.

4. List the four states in which Obama has raised the most money.
 5. Why is Illinois one of the top fundraising states for Obama?
- On the right side of the Web page "switch to" John McCain.*
6. List the four states in which McCain has raised the most money.
 7. Why do you think that California is the top fund-raising state for both McCain and Obama?

Top Industries

Use the "switch to" feature to toggle between Obama and McCain.

8. Look at the top ten of Obama's "Top Industries." For what "issues" might these groups attempt to gain the influence and support of Obama?
9. Look at the top ten of McCain's "Top Industries." For what "issues" might these groups attempt to gain the influence and support of McCain?
10. What industries/issues do McCain and Obama have in common?
11. In what industries/issues do they differ? Why?

Contributors

12. Where did the money for these contributors come from?

13. How many universities are on Obama's list? Do you think this influences how the students at these schools are educated in regards to politics/government? Explain your answer.

14. Click on Time Warner. Read the summary about Time Warner. CNN is a Time Warner company. In your opinion, can media deliver unbiased news and still donate large amounts of money to one candidate?

15. Review McCain's contributors. Why do you think that members of the U.S. Army overwhelmingly contribute to McCain?

16. Among the top donors for each candidate, how many were in the financial sector? In your opinion, do donation of large amounts of money by these companies contribute to favorable legislation for these companies getting passed by Congress and signed by the President?

Expenditures

17. How much has McCain spent on media?

18. How much has Obama spent on media?

19. What category of media expenditures is the largest for both McCain and Obama?

20. What advantage does this give McCain and Obama over third-party candidates?

527's

Click on "Influence and Lobbying," then select 527's and advocacy groups.

21. For what activities do 527's raise money?

22. From whom do PAC's collect money?

Name _____

Date _____

Internet Access: Online Campaigning

The Internet is the new way of campaigning in the 21st Century. Ads are posted daily by the candidates, PACs, lobbyists and other organizations in the hopes of influencing the voter. And the candidates themselves have become very efficient in using their supporters to the best of their abilities.

In the old days, a person had to go down to the campaign office where he or she would sign up and be given a task to complete. Now, with the advent of the Internet, people don't even have to leave their homes to be politically active. This is how it's done. But be careful and mindful. Americans may be losing their privacy in the pursuit of better campaigns.

Read a guest commentary by Shaun Dakin entitled "A Privacy Shield Against Campaigns" (The Washington Post, Sept. 13, 2008). Dakin is the chief executive and founder of Citizens for Civil Discourse, a nonprofit group that has launched a National Political Do Not Contact Registry at StopPoliticalCalls.org.

Follow these steps to find out if the candidates are giving out too much information.



1. Log onto www.myBarackObama.com and register. As a teacher, you may want to register once and let students use this as a way of examining the Web site.

2. After logging into the site, select Community and Contact Voters. Select Neighbor to Neighbor. Choose the button that says "Get Started" in one of two categories:

Make Calls: A list of numbers will be generated for you to call.

Canvass: Read the canvassing guidelines and resources.

Visit the Resource Center. A list of homes will be generated for you to visit.

Are these acceptable approaches?



Visit the official McCain campaign Web site (www.mccain.com).

In what ways does this campaign staff gather information on visitors or collect e-mail addresses to use?

Check the appropriate box of personal information listed on this page.

Information	Yes	No
Name of Voter		
Age of Voter		
Voter ID Number		
Phone Number		
Address		

1. As American citizens, we are supposed to have a right to privacy. Do you think this violates a person's right to privacy? Why or why not?

2. Do you think it is appropriate that the campaign is using personal information this way? Would you or your parents want to be called by a stranger in your neighborhood for the purposes of hearing about a particular candidate?

3. What other information is contained on the candidates' Web sites?

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Campaigns Experimenting Online to See What Works

BY JOSE ANTONIO VARGAS

Washington Post Staff Writer

• Originally Published February 3, 2008

Super Tuesday isn't just draining campaigns of much-needed money and challenging their organizational mettle. Feb. 5 also is turning out to be a "big test," campaign aides say, of the reach and power of the Internet.

"We can only buy so much TV time, we can only physically go to so many states, so we need to rely on the Internet to get our message out and engage with our supporters," said Christian Ferry, deputy campaign manager for Republican Sen. John McCain.

For months, candidates have posted hundreds of videos on their YouTube channels, created profiles on social networking sites and revamped their Web sites. Independent of the campaigns, supporters have rallied online to mobilize, donate money and build buzz around candidates, from long-shot Rep. Ron Paul, whose candidacy

has been largely fueled by his rock star status on the Internet, to Sen. Barack Obama, who is only now catching up to fellow Democratic Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton in national polls but easily trumps the former first lady in online popularity.

Obama set an online record raising more than \$28 million in January. Howard Dean, known as the first Internet candidate, raised \$27 million online in 2004 during his whole campaign.

But the Web is about more than just raising money. In many ways, it has become a force multiplier, aides said, more fully integrated in the whole campaign operation and affecting each of its facets: fundraising, communications, research and field organizing. It certainly doesn't supplant traditional door-to-door canvassing, as proven by the results in Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina, relatively small states where on-the-ground organization was as crucial as ever. But for Tuesday's contests, when a total of 24 states

will vote, the Web is the easiest, not to mention cheapest, way to reach supporters.

To Joe Trippi, who spearheaded Dean's online strategy and served as senior adviser to former senator John Edwards before he dropped out of the 2008 race, the difference from 2004 cannot be overestimated.

"Four years ago, we had pretty primitive tools. We had MeetUp, and that was it. Folks on MeetUp got together all across the country, but we at the campaign headquarters didn't know what they did," Trippi said. "Now, with GoogleMaps, people can pinpoint where they are. They can pinpoint their polling places. They can go online, get voting lists and hit the ground. And the campaign can know all of this."

It has been a year of experimentation on the Internet, all with one goal in mind: translating online enthusiasm to offline results. The rush to find new ways to

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The campaigns of, from left, Hillary Rodham Clinton, John McCain and Barack Obama all have a major presence on the Web. But on the Internet, one size definitely doesn't fit all.

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use the medium to boost candidates has resulted in a “free-for-all” in which most campaigns “throw whatever they can on the wall to see what sticks,” said Tim Tagaris, who led Sen. Christopher J. Dodd’s new media team before the Connecticut senator dropped out of the race last month.

Peter Daou, Clinton’s Internet director, said the campaign’s strategy has depended on the candidate’s needs at a specific time. Clinton’s early use of YouTube, most notably her widely seen “Sopranos” spoof, was an effort to show her lighter side. Tomorrow night, hours before polls open on Tuesday, she will hold a national interactive town hall meeting that will be streamed on her Web site. “We can only do that online,” Daou said.

Republican Mitt Romney’s online features, including a customized peer-to-peer robo-call, have been singled out for their sophistication. But for most of last year, more eyes were going to sites for Paul and for Mike Huckabee, who has a loyal following among Christian evangelical bloggers. Mindy Finn, Romney’s chief online strategist, said traffic to Romney’s site last month — when Romney won Michigan — has increased tenfold since the site began in January 2007. “Ultimately, our online popularity comes down to Mitt Romney himself,” she said. The tools are there. We’ve built what we can. It’s up to him to excite voters.”

The lesson for everyone: All the bells and whistles, all the innovation, don’t necessarily guarantee an audience. Success online is a combination of timing, message and candidate.

“They’re learning as they go along. What’s been so striking about the past year is that no candidate, definitely no major candidate, . . . looked at the Internet warily. That doesn’t necessarily mean everything that they’re doing has worked,” said Lee Rainie, director of the Pew Internet and American Life Project. “What it does mean is that most have a video strategy, a social networking strategy, a donation strategy. Everyone’s trying to do everything, for better or worse.”

Michael Turk, who ran President Bush’s online operation in 2004 and worked as a consultant for former senator Fred D. Thompson, is generally disappointed with most of the online operations of Democrats and Republicans alike.

“From the outside looking in, it’s hard to tell if the campaigns have coherent online strategies. Yes, the technology’s out there. But I’m not really sure if the campaigns have moved the ball forward,” he said. Turk doesn’t place blame on online advisers, most of whom aren’t prominent in the campaign hierarchy. In every operation, he said, “there’s a big difference between what the online team is trying to do, what it’s capable of doing and what’s it’s actually allowed to do.”

One size hasn’t fit all in online cam-

paigning, and the experimenting has resulted in a few notable hits and misses. Some tactics worked, such as embedding videos in e-mails. Others, such as trying to figure out how to integrate text messaging into online mobilization, fizzled.

The rise of social networks, or “soc-nets” to the Web-savvy, was the big story last year. McCain and Obama built McCainSpace and MyBarackObama, to contrasting results. From the start, McCainSpace was viewed as “a total disaster,” as David All, a GOP online strategist, wrote last March on techPresident, a bipartisan group blog that covers the ins and outs of online campaigning. MyBarackObama, meanwhile, was seen as a success, now with more than 350,000 supporters signed up.

And then there’s Paul, whose “Paulites” easily rival the “Deaniacs” of four years ago. But his considerable online popularity notwithstanding, Paul has consistently trailed far behind McCain and Romney in primary votes.

“Great as it is, the Web isn’t everything. It has its limitations,” Paul campaign manager Lew Moore said. “Fact is, you still have to turn online activity to offline activity.”

Added Ferry of the McCain campaign: “It’s the question everyone always asks, right? ‘Can you actually use the Internet to deliver actual votes?’ Next Tuesday is a big voting day, so we’ll have to see.” ■

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Shaun Dakin

A Privacy Shield Against the Campaigns

• Originally Published September 13, 2008

While John McCain and Barack Obama have plenty to fight about, there is at least one thing that they agree on: Voters who interact with their campaigns have no privacy rights.

What does this mean?

It's simple: Voters do not have the right to opt out of unwanted campaign communications, either online or offline. Voters don't have the right to decide who will contact them or how they will be contacted by the presidential campaigns.

This invasion of the voters' privacy is bipartisan. Republicans do it. Democrats do it. Heck, even Libertarians do it.

This week, I received an e-mail from the Obama campaign that had the subject line: "Your Neighbors." Intrigued, I opened the message and learned that the campaign was launching a sophisticated program called "Neighbor-to-Neighbor" that makes "it easier than ever to connect with potential supporters in your community by phone or door-to-door." It continues: "Neighbor-to-Neighbor gives you the option to make phone calls or knock on doors — the choice is yours."

The choice may be yours, but what about your neighbors, who may not want you to bother them at their homes?

This new program is both tech-cool and privacy-rights-scary. When I clicked through to myBarackObama.com, I was able to create "walk lists" using a Google map showing me exactly where potential Obama supporters near me live. The Web site provided the names, addresses and phone numbers of these targeted neighbors and offered a prompt

for printing out the list. The last step? Log back in and record the results of your "door-to-door" conversations with voters.

I don't know about you, but I do not want my neighbors knocking on my door asking me whom I'm going to vote for. I certainly do not want my name, address and phone number printed on a Google map for the world to see. And, without a doubt, I do not want anyone calling me at home during dinner.

This is an invasion of privacy, because these voters never explicitly gave their permission to have themselves targeted in a database that invites their neighbors to walk "door to door" to try to persuade them to vote for a particular candidate.

When I tried to opt out of this tool, I learned that while I could opt out of campaign e-mail spam, there was no way that I could quickly, securely and comprehensively opt out of voter communications that I do not want to receive.

John McCain's Web site is much the same: It provides no mechanism for voters to opt out of unwanted communications other than e-mail.

What can be done?

As a spokesperson for millions of voters inundated by political campaigns, I have testified this year before the Senate Rules Committee in support of the Robocall Privacy Act. Our members report receiving as many as 15 robocalls a day during election season. Mothers have their babies awakened from naps. Night-shift workers who sleep during the day can't get the rest they need. Seniors and others fear that a health emergency could occur while their phone is tied up.

While commercial organizations are required by law to respect the privacy rights of consumers, politicians at the federal level and in all but a few states have exempted themselves from these laws. More than 160 million phone numbers have been placed on the National Do Not Call Registry, which requires commercial organizations to stop calling consumers within 30 days of those consumers listing their numbers. Political campaigns will call many of those 160 million numbers with impunity this fall. Why should commercial companies be required by law to stop invading the privacy of potential customers while politicians are allowed to do whatever they wish to reach potential voters?

To answer this question, candidates usually cite the First Amendment — the right to speak freely as part of the our nation's vital democratic process. That might be a legitimate criticism of an outright ban but not of a system in which voters are given the choice to opt out of unwelcome communications.

Thus, the real reason for their personal exemptions is obvious: Politicians write the laws, and politicians like regulation only when it applies to someone else.

The time has come for a Voter Privacy Bill of Rights built on a single, straightforward principle: Voters should have the right to opt out of all direct political communications that they do not want to receive. Period. ■

The writer is chief executive and founder of Citizens for Civil Discourse, a nonprofit group that has launched the National Political Do Not Contact Registry at StopPoliticalCalls.org.

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Candidates' Web Sites Get to Know the Voters

Presidential Campaigns Tailor, Target Ads Based on Visitors' Online Habits

BY PETER WHORISKEY
Washington Post Staff Writer

• Originally Published August 30, 2008

Any two people interested in whether Amanda Beard is dating fellow Olympian Michael Phelps, and who clicked on the *Boston Herald* tidbit that raced around the Web last week, got the same piece of gossip.

Rumored galpal Amanda Beard on Phelps: No Thanks!

What was different was the political ads that appeared — or didn't — beside the story.

Readers who had visited Barack Obama's Web site received as many as three Obama ads alongside the gossip. "Help Elect Barack Obama President of the United States" and "Visit the Barack Obama Website," the ads said.

Readers who hadn't visited his site didn't see a single Obama pitch.

How did the campaign know which readers to send ads to? Although both the Obama and John McCain campaigns are reluctant to discuss details, the ability to identify sympathetic voters based on their Internet habits, and then to target them with ads as they move across the Web, is one of the defining aspects of the 2008 presidential campaign.

Digital advertising networks and large Web companies such as Yahoo and Microsoft are using Web behavior — which news articles people read, which blogs they visit or what search terms they enter — to target voters who may be sympathetic to a certain cause. Using a method known as "sentiment

detection," some companies even boast that they can tell whether the blog you go to is for or against the Iraq war.

"During a get-out-the-vote drive, you don't want to get out the wrong vote," said Diane Rinaldo, political advertising director at Yahoo, which has worked with both campaigns. With these techniques, the candidates "can reach who they want to reach without wasting their incredibly valuable media dollars, and reach them with the right message."

The advertising techniques, known as "behavioral targeting" and "retargeting," have raised alarms from some privacy advocates, who say no one should unwittingly have their political leanings analyzed as they use the Web, or be tracked for the delivery of political ads. Congress has begun looking into the use of such techniques for commercial advertisers.

"The Web has been hailed for creating new opportunities for political expression, but there is this dark underside to it," said Jeffrey Chester with the Center for Digital Democracy. "Yes, you can reach everyone — but you can track, target and profile them as well, and none of this is disclosed."

Advocates of the practice, which is common in commercial marketing, say its use in the political world is comparable to traditional direct-mail campaign practices. Direct mail efforts, they note, combine voter registration and other records to identify targets. They then send tailored pitches to their homes.

By contrast, most of the online targeting

is directed to a Web browser, and the name and home address of the target is unnecessary.

"Both campaigns are embracing online targeting ad technologies," said Michael Bassik, vice president of interactive marketing at MSHC Partners, a leading Democratic communications firm. "It sounds scarier, but it's less intrusive than direct mail ever was."

Guessing how a person might vote — and whether they might be receptive to a pitch — has long been part of the science of political marketing.

But the Internet creates many new ways for campaigns to gather data about potential voters, and then to reach out to them.

Both presidential campaigns are using "retargeting" to send ads to people who visited their Web sites but who didn't leave their name or e-mail address.

To track those visitors even after they've left, the site places a small file, known as a cookie, on the visitor's Web browser. When that person visits another site, an advertising system can send a tailored ad after detecting the cookie, which indicates that the person is a potential voter for the given candidate.

That's how the Obama campaign can send an ad to a person long after they've visited the Obama site, even when their mind is on something far afield from politics — like Phelps and Beard.

The cookie might even indicate a user's interests, allowing the campaign to further tailor an ad. For example,

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looking at the cookies from McCain's site reveals that a person who visits looking for information about gas prices is tagged that way.

Using that information, the campaign could send the user an ad about McCain's energy policy.

"If you responded to a certain kind of ad, we could hit you with a similarly themed ad at another time," said Michael Palmer, the eCampaign director for McCain. "Without violating any privacy concerns, we try to know as much about our users as possible."

Identifying potential supporters is also increasingly easier with the Internet, because what a person reads or browses on the Internet can reveal their political leanings.

Specific Media, a company that has worked with both sides in the presidential race, combines data about users — some of which it buys and some of which it receives from partners — to create profiles on about 175 million people, according to the company's senior vice president David Jakubowski.

The data it collects includes information about what articles the person has read on some newspaper sites, what blogs and forums the person attends and what other sites are visited.

Using sentiment detection, Specific Media can judge whether a blog about the Iraq War or tax cuts is generally in favor or opposed to those policies. That helps them determine the political leanings of a visitor.

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How Tracking Works

- 1** Some readers of this gossip item last week got as many as three ads from the Obama campaign. Others got none at all. How did the campaign select who should get their ads?

Rumored galpal Amanda Beard on Phelps: No thanks!

By Herald wire services | Wednesday, August 20, 2008 - Updated 22h ago

INSIDE TRACK By GAYLE RYAN and LAURA RAPALA

HELP ELECT Barack Obama President of the United States

JOIN US

Visit the official campaign website

FAIR OR BY GOD'S OWN WAY

PHOTO COURTESY OF AP

CURRENT TEMP: 77°F | Traffic

SEARCH

Log in | Register | Thu, August 21, 2008

Home | News & Opinion | Sports | Entertainment | Business | Homefront | Jobfind

The Inside Track | Star Tracks | Celebrity News | Hollywood in the Hub

RUMORED GALPAL

Amanda Beard on Phelps: No thanks!

By Herald wire services

Wednesday, August 20, 2008 - Updated 22h ago

Printable **(14) Comments** **Text size** **Share** **(0) Rate**

Olympic swimmer and *Playboy* covergirl Amanda Beard yesterday denied she is dating 14-time Olympic gold medalist Michael Phelps, with a rather insensitive "Ew, no!"

"I am not dating Michael Phelps! I have never, ever in my life hooked up with Michael Phelps," the pool princess told a Phoenix radio show.

When asked if she was in love with Phelps, Beard replied, "Ew, no."

Michael Phelps on the cover of a Corn Flakes cereal box.

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By Colleen Sypnieski

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By Associated Press

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First Phelps, then Bolt in Olympic greatness

PNC LEADING THE WAY

Get \$75 with a new PNC Checking Account and qualifying direct deposit.

Hurry, offer ends August 31, Learn more

SPF \$75

Photo by AP

- 2** People who had previously visited the Obama Web site — indicating an interest in his campaign — were tagged with a tracking cookie in their browser. When they hit the gossip item, the advertising system knew to serve them an Obama ad. People without such a cookie were served other ads instead.

Get Local! Create Your MyOB Account (or login) Email Address Zip Code Get Notice EN ESPAÑOL

OBAMAO8

I'M ASKING YOU TO BELIEVE.
Not just in my ability to bring about real change in Washington... I'm asking you to believe in yours.

GET INVOLVED NOW

FIND AN EVENT NEAR YOU GO

DONATE NOW

ORGANIZE FOR CHANGE

Host or attend a house party in your neighborhood on the night Barack accepts the Democratic nomination

LEARN MORE

***Seven* TV ad**

Organize for Change

New Energy for America

Fight the Powers: Spread the Truth

WHO WILL BE BARACK'S VP?

OBAMA & BE THE FIRST TO KNOW

SIGN UP NOW

THE WASHINGTON POST

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Gathering data on all the Web visits people make, the company can then present a political campaign with “buckets” of voters described as Republican or Democrat, conservative or liberal, and by what specific issues the person — identified by a cookie on their browser — may be interested in.

“You look at the patterns — you take known Democrats and say, ‘How do they behave on the Web?’” Jakubowski said. “One data point doesn’t put you in a data bucket. If you read a lot of U.S. politics, whether it’s blogs or news or opinion, and you tend to read more of the stuff about conservative policies, you

will then end up in a more conservative bucket.”

He said that when the company identifies someone’s party affiliation, the information proves to be nearly 100 percent accurate.

Similarly, Yahoo collects information about the 140 million unique monthly visitors to its sites. The company records what kinds of stories a user has read at Yahoo News — one of the most popular news sites, as well as what search terms a person has entered in the company’s search engine.

Yahoo began a year and a half ago, creating sets of Web behaviors that matched any of the potential candidates — even former vice president Al Gore,

who never entered the race but was a long-rumored possibility.

The “buckets” that Yahoo offers to candidates indicate a voter’s interests. There are categories for the Iraq war, energy and the economy and also whether they are “Obama-interested” or “McCain-interested.”

“To see the two presidential campaigns using behavioral targeting is very telling of how powerful a marketing tool it is,” said Mike Zaneis, vice president of policy at the Interactive Advertising Bureau. “There is a growing level of awareness that there is a certain level of tracking going on online. But they may be surprised how prevalent its use is in political campaigns.” ■

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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR

By Shankar Vedantam

The Power of Political Misinformation

• Originally Published September 15, 2008

Have you seen the photo of Republican vice presidential nominee Sarah Palin brandishing a rifle while wearing a U.S. flag bikini? Have you read the e-mail saying Democratic presidential nominee Barack Obama was sworn into the U.S. Senate with his hand placed on the Koran? Both are fabricated — and are among the hottest pieces of misinformation in circulation.

As the presidential campaign heats

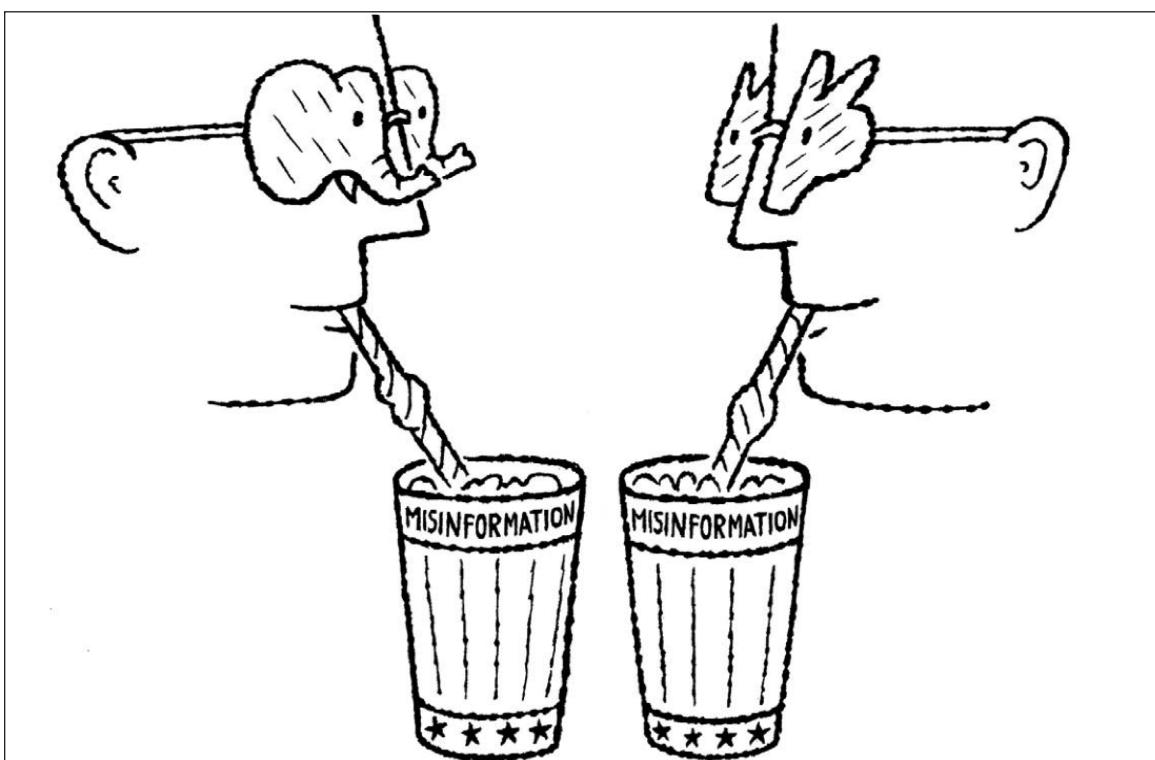
up, intense efforts are underway to debunk rumors and misinformation. Nearly all these efforts rest on the assumption that good information is the antidote to misinformation.

But a series of new experiments show that misinformation can exercise a ghostly influence on people's minds after it has been debunked — even among people who recognize it as misinformation. In some cases, correcting misinformation serves to increase the power of bad information.

In experiments conducted by

political scientist John Bullock at Yale University, volunteers were given various items of political misinformation from real life. One group of volunteers was shown a transcript of an ad created by NARAL Pro-Choice America that accused John G. Roberts Jr., President Bush's nominee to the Supreme Court at the time, of "supporting violent fringe groups and a convicted clinic bomber."

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Studies showed misinformation could be damaging even after being debunked among those predisposed to buy into the bad information to begin with.

BY LEWIS SCOTT FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

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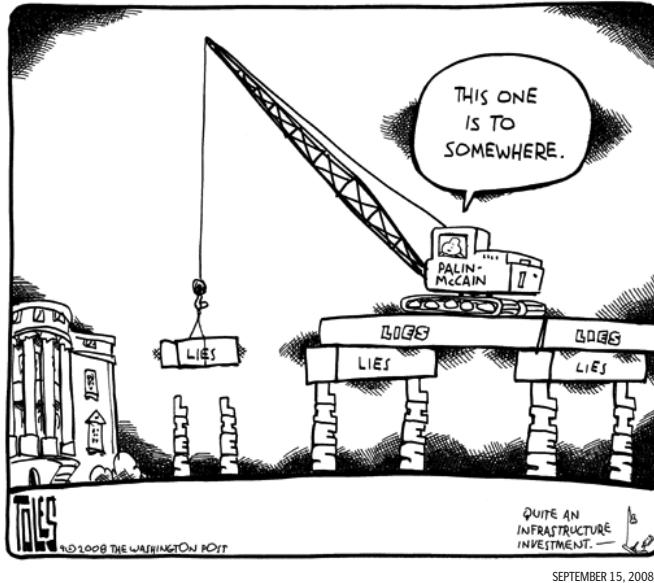
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22

A variety of psychological experiments have shown that political misinformation primarily works by feeding into people's preexisting views. People who did not like Roberts to begin with, then, ought to have been most receptive to the damaging allegation, and this is exactly what Bullock found. Democrats were far more likely than Republicans to disapprove of Roberts after hearing the allegation.

Bullock then showed volunteers a refutation of the ad by abortion-rights supporters. He also told the volunteers that the advocacy group had withdrawn the ad. Although 56 percent of Democrats had originally disapproved of Roberts before hearing the misinformation, 80 percent of Democrats disapproved of the Supreme Court nominee afterward. Upon hearing the refutation, Democratic disapproval of Roberts dropped only to 72 percent.

Republican disapproval of Roberts rose after hearing the misinformation but vanished upon hearing the correct information. The damaging charge, in other words, continued to have an effect even after it was debunked among precisely those people predisposed to buy the bad information in the first place.

Bullock found a similar effect when it came to misinformation about abuses at the U.S. detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Volunteers were shown a *Newsweek* report that suggested a Koran had been flushed down a toilet, followed by a retraction by the magazine. Where 56 percent of Democrats had disapproved of detainee treatment before they



were misinformed about the Koran incident, 78 percent disapproved afterward. Upon hearing the refutation, Democratic disapproval dropped back only to 68 percent — showing that misinformation continued to affect the attitudes of Democrats even after they knew the information was false.

Bullock and others have also shown that some refutations can strengthen misinformation, especially among conservatives.

Political scientists Brendan Nyhan and Jason Reifler provided two groups of volunteers with the Bush administration's prewar claims that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. One group was given a refutation — the comprehensive 2004 *Dulfer report* that concluded that Iraq did not have weapons of mass destruction before the United States invaded in 2003. Thirty-four percent of conservatives told only about the Bush administration's claims thought Iraq had hidden or destroyed its weapons before the U.S. invasion, but 64 percent of conservatives who heard both claim and refutation thought that Iraq really did have the weapons. The refutation, in other

words, made the misinformation worse.

A similar "backfire effect" also influenced conservatives told about Bush administration assertions that tax cuts increase federal revenue. One group was offered a refutation by prominent economists that included current and former Bush administration officials. About 35 percent of conservatives told about the Bush claim believed it; 67 percent of those provided with both assertion and refutation believed that tax cuts increase revenue.

In a paper approaching publication, Nyhan, a PhD student at Duke University, and Reifler, at Georgia State University, suggest that Republicans might be especially prone to the backfire effect because conservatives may have more rigid views than liberals: Upon hearing a refutation, conservatives might "argue back" against the refutation in their minds, thereby strengthening their belief in the misinformation. Nyhan and Reifler did not see the same "backfire effect" when liberals were given misinformation and a refutation about the Bush administration's stance on stem cell research.

Bullock, Nyhan and Reifler are all Democrats.

Reifler questioned attempts to debunk rumors and misinformation on the campaign trail, especially among conservatives: "Sarah Palin says she was against the Bridge to Nowhere," he said, referring to the pork-barrel project Palin once supported before she reversed herself. "Sending those corrections to committed Republicans is not going to be effective, and they in fact may come to believe even more strongly that she was always against the Bridge to Nowhere." ■

An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

Eugene Robinson

So Many Miles From Selma

DENVER — “I cried on Monday when Michelle spoke,” Rep. John Lewis told me Wednesday at the Pepsi Center, “and I know that on Thursday night at the stadium I’ll cry again.”

Lewis, as every schoolchild should know, is one of the few lions of the civil rights movement still with us. As a Freedom Rider, he was pummeled by white Alabama mobs in 1961. As chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, he spoke alongside Martin Luther King Jr. at the March on Washington in 1963. His fate is scarred from a brutal beating administered by Alabama state troopers at the Edmund Pettus Bridge during the first Selma-to-Montgomery march in 1965. Lewis has earned the right to shed tears of amazement and joy.

A Democrat who represents Atlanta, Lewis fretted for months over whom to endorse in the primaries. Last October, he joined much of the black political establishment in backing Hillary Clinton — out of a sense of loyalty and realpolitik. But as it became clear that Barack Obama might actually win the nomination, Lewis seemed increasingly agonized over the choice he had made. It wasn’t just that he was catching hell from his African American constituents; nothing in John Lewis’s biography suggests he even knows how to back down. Rather, he began to feel that he was on the wrong side of history.

“Something is happening in America, and people are prepared and ready to make that great leap,” he said in mid-February. Two weeks later, he switched his endorsement to Obama.

We haven’t heard much about race during the Democratic convention. That’s clearly by design, and in terms of Obama’s prospects it’s probably a good thing. A

recent New York Times-CBS News poll found that 16 percent of white voters feared an Obama administration would “favor blacks over whites.” Obama has taken great pains to reassure voters that as president he would act without racial animus or resentment — that he bears no grudges and intends to settle no scores. His success to date has depended largely on his ability to be seen as a candidate who happens to be black rather than as “a black candidate.”

Still, this is an amazing, unbelievable moment.

Wandering around the convention hall, I kept running into people with a kind of “pinch me, I’m dreaming” look in their eyes. I saw Spike Lee, who seems to be everywhere; in a television interview earlier in the week, he grandiloquently divided American history into two epochs, “B.B.” and “A.B.” — Before Barack and After Barack.

I saw New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin, who was hoping he’d have the chance to witness Obama’s acceptance speech before rushing home to prepare for the likely landfall of the evil-looking storm named Gustav. I met black delegates from Florida, California and various points in between, and they all said basically the same thing: Do you believe this is



HARAZ N. GHANBARI — ASSOCIATED PRESS
Rep. John Lewis



PRESTON KERES — THE WASHINGTON POST
Sen. Barack Obama

happening?

When Clinton came to the convention floor during Wednesday’s roll call and asked that Obama be nominated “by acclamation,” I got a lump in my throat. I knew that it wouldn’t be official until Obama had given his acceptance speech, according to party rules, but there was something about the word “acclamation” that hit me. It implied an acceptance of leadership, a recognition of merit. African Americans have been an integral part of this nation since its birth and certainly don’t need anyone’s validation. Still, it feels as if this obvious historical fact has finally been acknowledged in a way that many of us felt we’d never witness in our lifetimes.

A black man is running as the Democratic nominee for president of the United States. Can you believe that?

Whether Obama wins or loses in November is important, to say the least; this feels like one of those potential turning-point moments for our nation, full of both peril and possibility. The campaign won’t really even begin in earnest until next week, after the Republicans have held their convention. The debates are still to come; events

surely will intrude; the polls will start to mean something; and what looks now like a squeaker of an election could turn into a landslide either way.

But let’s not let this moment pass without fully appreciating what we’ve just seen. All Americans, regardless of race or party, should think of John Lewis bleeding on that Alabama bridge — and then think of him at Invesco Field, watching a black man accept his party’s nomination.

Tears are entirely appropriate.

— August 29, 2008

An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

By DENEEN L. BROWN

Washington Post Foreign Service

• Originally Published September 12, 2008

Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin's nomination as the Republican vice presidential candidate has stirred the hypocrite within us. Women judging women.

We watch the polls while examining her stockings. We listen to her speech while calculating how many bobby pins hold up her hairdo. We parse her record while commenting on the shade of her lipstick. We measure our child-rearing skills against hers. She's a hockey mom. We are soccer (or swimming or softball) moms. We can give a pretty good PTA pep talk, and nobody asked us to be vice president.

But wait. In her circumstances — five children, one a baby with Down syndrome, one a pregnant, unmarried teenager — would we want to be vice president? We gather at the playground or in office cubicles and question her choices, knowing that to do so is sexist, the very thing so many women have fought against. "We never have these conversations about men," said Kavita N. Ramdas, president and CEO of the Global Fund for Women, which promotes women's rights worldwide.

Still, women are debating, partly because Palin herself injected motherhood into the campaign.

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WHO DO WE THINK SHE IS?



BY BRIAN SNYDER — REUTERS

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For Sherma Farray, a Frederick mother of three young children, the internal argument went like this: "How is she going to run for vice president with five kids? . . . Then I said to myself, 'She is doing it already in Alaska, she can do it in the White House.' Then I saw the picture of that baby, and I thought, 'She is going to need a lot of help.' The vice president goes all over. Makes big decisions. Then she will have a grandbaby on the way. That's a big responsibility."

Finally, Farray concluded, "I just cannot see myself sitting around the meeting table when my family is going to need attention."

Maureen Carrington, a 40-year-old mother of three who runs a business from her Silver Spring home, came down on the other side of the question. "This lady seems to be a powerhouse. I don't think there's anything she can't do" — including raising children and holding the nation's second-highest office.

Like many women, Carrington admires and identifies with Palin. "I'm not a member of the NRA," she said, "but I've had to do a lot by myself. I learned to be independent. I get up at 5 a.m. every day. I work my tail off like a lot of women. I see that in her. I think she works her tail off."

Heather Maurano, 35, is excited by Palin. "I'm a mom of three small daughters," said Maurano, who lives in Silver Spring. "I think it is great to have a role model for them. At this point, I'm staying home with them. I respect the fact she is doing it all, and it's great."

So it appears that we have a superwoman running for vice president, soaring above other mothers who are trying to balance work and family. Pro or con, the discussion about Palin's choices is a process of comparison for women, because that's what so many

of us do: measure ourselves against other women, contrast our lives to theirs, compare our careers with her meteoric rise. Would we choose as she did? Could we do what she's doing? How does she do it?

But there is another component to the conversation. Palin has burst onto the political scene from a state far away, geographically and culturally. Suddenly she has become the symbol of Everywoman, the working mother who broke the glass ceiling that so many women have tossed stones at. Standing on their shoulders, she has emerged on the other side.

Now many women are trying to square Palin's sudden status as the most famous female politician since Hillary Clinton with her political views about women. On some level, we despise ourselves for judging the first GOP vice presidential nominee among us. On another, we feel entitled to scrutinize her choices because she would like to dictate many of ours.

"It's ironic that the party that tends to be less supportive of women has managed to get a woman in as their vice presidential candidate," said Linda M. Hahn, 49, a Potomac mother of four ranging in age from 8 to 25. "But her private views and her voting views hurt women. It's like she doesn't make sense to me."

But why should she have to? "We would never dream that a male candidate would have to reflect the fears and worries of all men," Ramdas says. "So now it's Sarah Palin. Before that, it was Hillary Clinton. What will she do for women? How will she represent women?" She says the term "women's issues" is misleading: "It is as if we don't care about war and peace. Or we don't care about education. Or we don't care about the environment."

Still, women's rights are at the core of the election for some women. Nancy Bagwell, 65, a retired nurse who lives



CAROLYN KASTER — ASSOCIATED PRESS

in Arlington, sees Palin's candidacy unraveling everything her generation fought for. "She wants to impose her views about reproductive rights on everybody. She has this idea that ... God says even with incest or a genetic defect, you have to have this child. I certainly wouldn't want to have that imposed on women. It doesn't affect me. I'm way over reproductive age. This is not my question. This is a question of women who are poor ... and under the thumb of male dominance. All of a sudden, they get pregnant and have to have this child. It's about poor people. ... Those are the women I'm speaking for."

While many women celebrate Palin's decision to have a baby with Down syndrome, and her daughter's decision to keep her baby and marry her boyfriend, as living proof of her anti-abortion position, others see a moral gap between her commitment to "family values" and the projected picture of her family.

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"She does have a child who is about to have a child," said Tonda Bean, a Silver Spring mother of two, who stays home with her daughters, 11 and 15. "There is attention that could have been paid. ... The research I've read says you can circumvent some problems if you are with them enough. You can keep them out of certain activity."

In view of Bristol Palin's pregnancy at 17, Bean is concerned by Sarah Palin's stance favoring abstinence-only sex education. "What is missing," Bean said, "is to tell them about contraceptives.

I wonder whether she will reform her position on that."

So while we probe Palin's conservatism, we also question how she could expose her daughter to national scrutiny, and wonder whether somebody else's pregnant daughter would be similarly embraced by a religious right that has not hesitated to criticize other famous unwed mothers, real (teenage pop star Jamie Lynn Spears) or imagined (TV sitcom character Murphy Brown).

"If it was the other way around, and it was Barack Obama's daughter," Farray said, "you would not hear the end of it."

Three women sat in an Indian restaurant in Gaithersburg last week, talking business, talking about Palin.

"The fact she has a pregnant teenage daughter when preaching abstinence, why is that okay?" asked Laura Levengard, a personal trainer who has two children.

"Some would say putting herself in the public eye was not fair to her daughter," Linda Hahn said. "That subjects her daughter to public shame."

"Why does a 17-year-old have to be married?" Levengard wondered.

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BY SCOTT OLSON -- GETTY IMAGES

U.S. presidential nominee U.S. Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) (2nd R) joins Republican U.S. vice presidential nominee Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin and her family, daughter Piper (3rd R), Willow (4th R), husband Todd (center back) holding baby Trig, Bristol (2nd L) and her boyfriend Levi Johnston, and Track Palin (L) at the Republican National Convention on September 3, 2008, in St. Paul, Minnesota.

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The conversation turned inward and became an examination of their own lives.

"I've always done what I wanted to do: stayed home and watched the kids Monday through Friday and run my business on the weekend," Levengard said, recalling her former occupation. "I think you can do it all."

Then she told a story about mentioning to her brother that she had an out-of-town business opportunity. Her brother's response caught her off guard: "But who will watch the kids?"

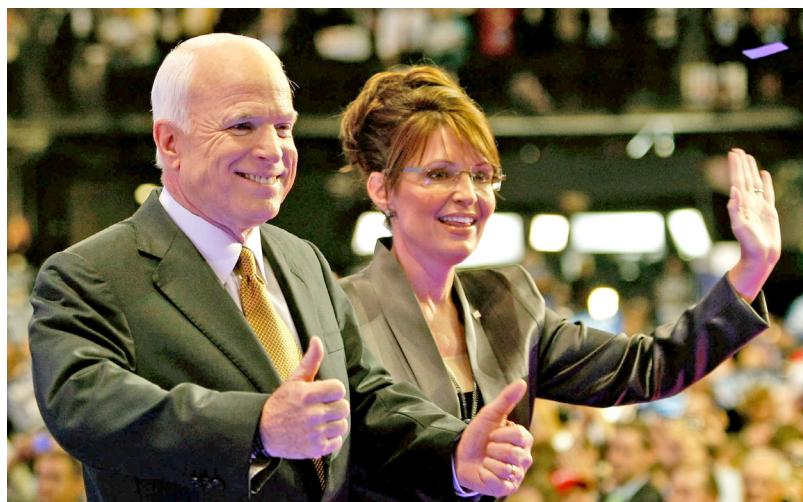
"The same question wouldn't be asked of your husband," said Hahn, who has a business training company. "Who's going to watch the kids?"

"The personal choice we make — our choices are because our lives are what they are," said Sylvia Henderson, another business owner. "That's life. We choose to be married or single. We choose to have kids or not. They are personal choices I've had to make whether someone likes them or not. My personal choices are made to feel comfortable with me. In my skin. I resent the fact we have to explain our choices."

But we want Palin to explain hers.

On Urbanmamas.com, a Web site for mothers, one posting absolved us of our curiosity: "It's ok to judge the mothering decisions of a vice presidential candidate," this mother wrote, "as it opens a window to her decision-making process (and after all, we're supposed to judge her as she's a politician and we get to vote)."

Then she raised The Question: "Would you run for a major office while your children were young?"



BY JOE RAEDLE — GETTY IMAGES

U.S. presidential nominee U.S. Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) (L) stands with Republican U.S. vice presidential nominee Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin.

Palin has reignited the never-resolved mommy wars — not the old ones between mothers who stay home and those who work, but the ones inside every mother who has a choice. Should a woman nourish her personal ambitions to succeed at her career while trying to raise a family? Was it selfish or superhuman of Palin to go back to work almost immediately after her son's birth? Was it fair to her constituents, the residents of Alaska? After all, most mothers remember barely functioning from lack of sleep when they had new babies. Is it anybody's business?

"The recent debate about Sarah Palin's choice to go back to work three days after her fifth baby was born (and what that means for the 'little' people's parental leave rights) ... have got me thinking about selfishness," a mother said on Urbanmamas.com. "When do we cross the line between caring for ourselves (whether that be reading a good book or furthering our career) and giving our children appropriate attention? Must good parenting be about entirely sublimating our own interests to focus every moment on our progeny? I think most of our behavior rides the line, not entirely healthy for our kids, but not entirely servicing our sanity either."

Jill Miller Zimon, 46, mother of three and a contributing editor at BlogHer.com, wants to know how Palin rides that line.

"There is no evidence in how she does the juggling," Zimon said. "... There's no way to know how she does it all. We don't know how she juggles. I want to know, because I juggle. ... I would love to see inside Sarah Palin's house because I know what my house looks like at 6:15 in the morning when I'm trying to get my kids off to school."

We think about this as we fly from our downtown office to pick up the kid from day care, fry up some chicken, fold a load of laundry, clear the dining room table, wash the dishes, scrub the frying pan, get the kid to bed, finish our office work by midnight and drag the body to bed. And get up to do it all again another day. Can women do it all?

Levengard has decided: "We can do it all."

Hahn disagreed. While other mothers hurried off to get their children from school, she and Levengard remained at the table, picking over the question of Palin and the election and the choices women make.

"You literally can't do everything," Hahn said. "We can say we can do it all. We've had to say that to break in and have careers. But in reality at a certain point, no matter how smart or intelligent you are, you max out. There are only so many hours in a day."

Levengard pressed her point: "Did you ever not feed your kids dinner [or] bail on the fundraiser? "No," Hahn said, "but sometimes they had crummy dinners." ■

An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

The Power of Political Cartoons

By DEBORAH HOWELL

Washington Post Ombudsman

• Originally Published September 28, 2008

Political cartoonists distill their opinions on power and culture into art and commentary with the sharp points of their pens. They can make readers gleeful — or angry. Readers deserve to know more about this breed for whom being fair is not a virtue.

The timing is apropos because a Pat Oliphant cartoon posted on *washingtonpost.com* Sept. 9 is still generating angry e-mails. The cartoon showed Sarah Palin speaking in tongues, John McCain saying she has a "direct line" to God and God saying that he couldn't understand her "dam' right wing ... gibberish."

More than 750 readers from around the country — more than I heard from about the financial crisis — told me they were mightily offended. Many were Pentecostals, whose worship can include speaking in tongues; complaints also came from mainline Christians and from Charles Martin, a Buddhist in Boulder, Colo., who said "it offends me."

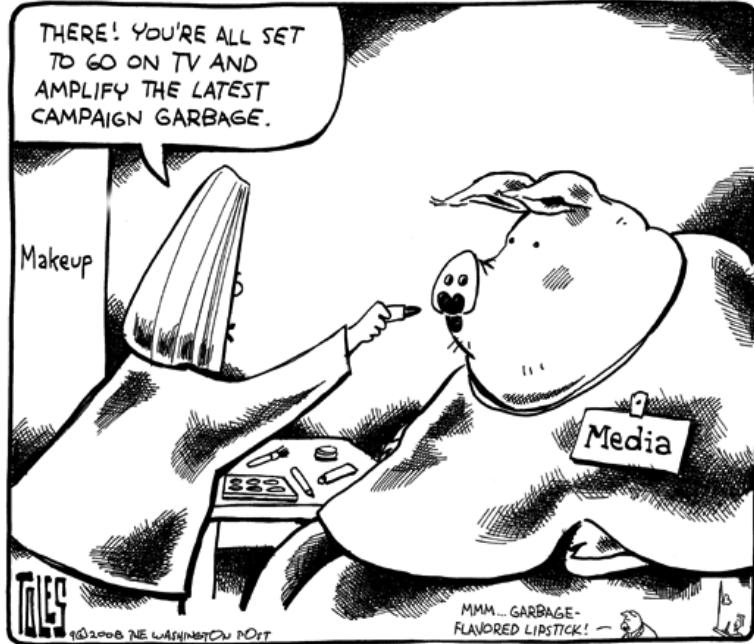
McCain and Palin are certainly fair game, but most of those offended by the cartoon felt it mocked all Pentecostals. Most cartoonists don't go out of their way to lambaste religion. But the pope is a frequent editorial cartoon character, as are God and St. Peter at the Pearly Gates.

Many of Oliphant's peers think that he is the best political cartoonist in the country and the most profound contemporary influence on other cartoonists. Before Oliphant, an Australian, came to work in the United States in 1964, most cartoons were vertical and serious; his were horizontal and funny.

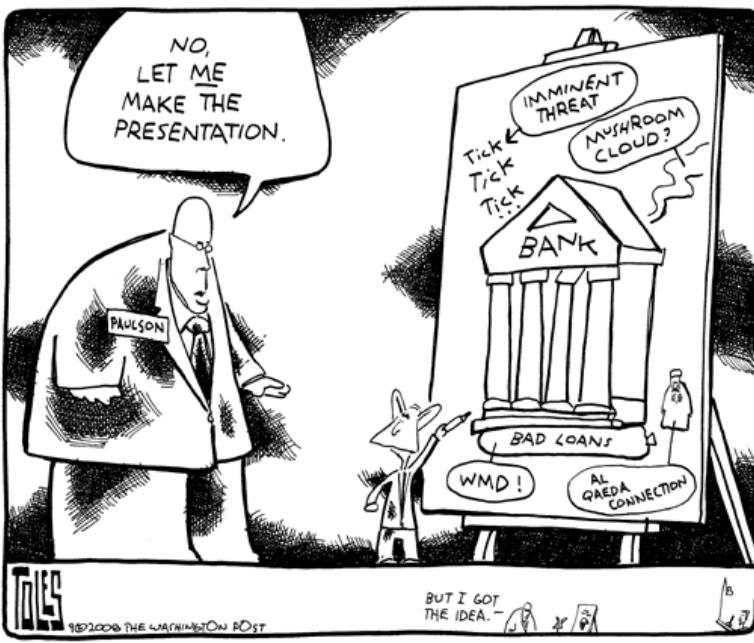
Oliphant's cartoons are sold by Universal Press Syndicate, whose sales materials say: "No one is safe from the acid brush of Pat Oliphant. ... A master of what he calls 'confrontational art,' Oliphant spares neither the liberal nor conservative, sinner nor saint."

Oliphant, 73, delights in controversy and told me that he draws only about what annoys him or "gets my blood boiling. That's the point in cartooning — to draw attention to situations you don't agree with. It's kept

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me alive," he said from his home in Santa Fe, N.M.

He's a political liberal, as are many, though not all, of the better-known political cartoonists. "Cartooning should challenge the status quo," Oliphant said. "Whoever is in power draws the antagonism of editorial cartoonists." So what happens when a new set of politicians takes power? "Then you search for their feet of clay."

Jack Ohman, editorial cartoonist at the *Oregonian*, said that cartoonists are "iconoclasts. You're looking at a profession barely within journalism, let alone any other profession. They're people who are distrustful of those in power and powerful institutions. We have an obligation to be explicable; we don't have an obligation to be fair."

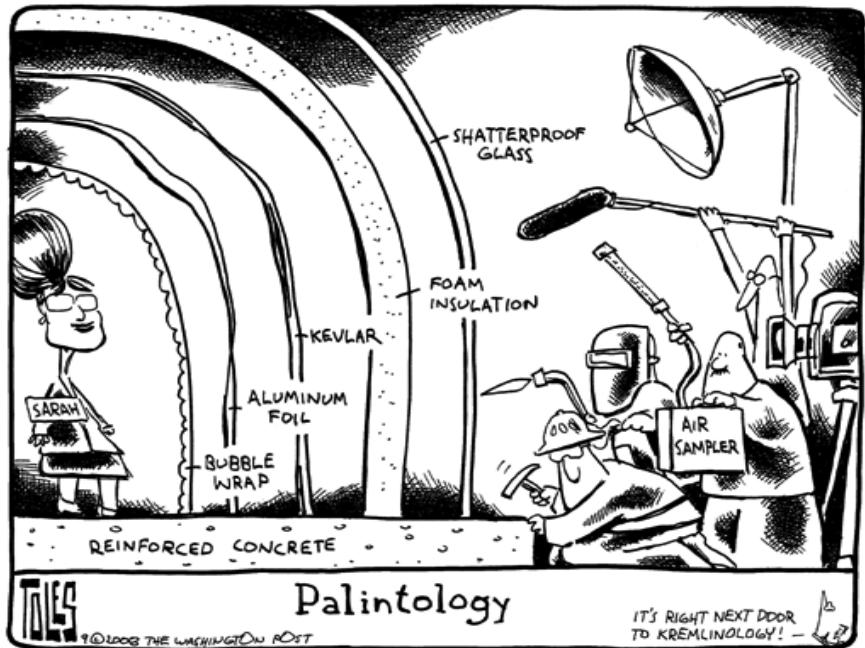
Ohman thinks that *The Post's* Tom Toles is "the most original cartoonist working by far. His drawing looks so different from everyone else. He has his own style, great tone, and he draws deceptively dead-on caricatures. He's not screaming at you all the time."

Toles said that his best ideas come from "a point that needs to be made. I try to see what is out of whack, what's not right, and attack that. Not every cartoon can be fair. I don't expect readers to see them as fair." However, it's "not my agenda to run up against taste issues, especially if it's not germane or it's a hot-button issue that generates more heat than light."

He has three or four ideas every day and runs them past Editorial Page Editor Fred Hiatt. Hiatt gives him some guidance, but Toles decides what he will draw, which is true of most of the best cartoonists. Hiatt hasn't vetoed a cartoon since Toles came to *The Post* in 2002, replacing the venerable Herblock.

Ann Telnaes started in print and is a pioneer in animated editorial cartoons; she does three a week for *washingtonpost.com*. Her cartoons use the voices of the people they're skewering, and the audio drives her cartooning. "We're supposed to criticize people in power," she said. She, too, is a liberal, but sees "a lot of young ones coming up who are right or moderate."

Scott Stantis of the *Birmingham News* is conservative and libertarian; he draws daily political cartoons as well as the comic strip "Prickly City," which runs in *The Post*. "For me, being a conservative-libertarian makes the most sense for



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the life of an artist. Change needs to come from artists and writers. Not the state."

Most complainers thought that the Oliphant cartoon appeared in print. It didn't. I showed it to several *Post* editors. While it was clever in some ways, most editors — including me — would not have run it. *The Post* has a policy against defaming or perpetuating racial, religious or ethnic stereotypes. That was why *The Post* did not run the Danish cartoons about the prophet Muhammad.

Oliphant wasn't surprised that it didn't run in print. "Many publications are too timid" to run some of his work, he said, but "the Web is giving us more of a solid venue."

Hiatt and his deputy, Jackson Diehl, decide what cartoons are run in Saturday's Drawing Board on the op-ed page.

The online world is different. Syndicated cartoons are not chosen at *washingtonpost.com*; they are posted through an automatic feed, said the Web site's executive editor, Jim Brady. "I have always opted for the approach that we should not limit the cartoonist's freedom of speech. We prefer to present the cartoon and allow the reader the choice to read or to express their own freedom of speech if they're bothered or offended by it."

One cartoon aside, I deeply appreciate editorial cartoonists; they are powerful molders of opinion — with either a laugh or a sock in the gut. ■

An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

Academic Content Standards

This lesson addresses academic content standards of Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia.

Maryland

Government: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the historical development and current status of the fundamental concepts and processes of authority, power, and influence, with particular emphasis on the democratic skills and attitudes necessary to become responsible citizens. (Standard 1, Political Systems)

Selection of National and Maryland state leaders: Electoral College and election/appointment processes (1.1.2, Assessment limits)

The student will explain roles and analyze strategies individuals or groups may use to initiate change in governmental policy and institutions

- Political parties, interest groups, lobbyists, candidates, citizens, and the impact of the media on elections, elected officials and public opinion.
- e) Evaluate the reliability and the influence of the media on elections, elected officials and public opinion
- f) Describe the roles of political parties in the United States and how they influence elections, elected officials and public opinion
- g) Describe how citizens, candidates and campaign financing influence the political process in the United States
- i) Analyze how citizens make informed decisions regarding candidates, issues and policies (1.1.4)

The Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum Content Standards can be found online at <http://mdk12.org/mspp/vsc/index.html>.

Virginia

Civics and Economics: The student will demonstrate knowledge of citizenship and the rights, duties, and responsibilities of citizens by

- d) examining the responsibilities of citizenship, including registering and voting, communicating with government officials, participating in political campaigns, keeping informed about current issues, and respecting differing opinions in a diverse society.
- e) evaluating how civic and social duties address community needs and serve the public good (CE.3d, e)

Civics and Economics: The student will demonstrate knowledge of the political process at the local, state, and national levels of government by

- a) describing the functions of political parties.
- b) comparing the similarities and differences of political parties.
- c) analyzing campaigns for elective office, with emphasis on the role of the media.
- d) examining the role of campaign contributions and costs. (CE.5a-d)

U.S. Government: The student will demonstrate knowledge of local, state and national elections by

- a) describing the organization, role, and constituencies of political parties;
- b) describing the nomination and election process;
- c) examining campaign funding and spending; d) analyzing the influence of media coverage, campaign advertising, and public opinion polls (GOVT. 6)

Standards of Learning currently in effect for Virginia Public Schools can be found online at www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Superintendent/Sols/home.shtml.

Washington, D.C.

Social Studies, Government:

Students evaluate issues regarding campaigns for national, state and local elective offices. (12.6, Elections and the Political Process)

- 3. Evaluate the roles of polls, campaign advertising, and the controversies over campaign funding.
- 4. Describe the means that citizens use to participate in the political process (voting campaigning, lobbying ...).

Social Studies, Government: Students evaluate and take and defend positions on the influence of the media on American Political Life. (12.7, Elections and the Political Process)

- 1. Discuss the meaning and importance of a free and responsible press.
- 2. Describe the roles of broadcast, print, and electronic media, including the Internet, as means of communication in American politics
- 3. Explain how public officials use the media to communicate with the citizenry and to shape public opinion.

Learning Standards for DCPS are found online at www.k12.dc.us/dcps/Standards/standardsHome.htm.