

opinion

The final face-off: McCain vs. Obama

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Thursday night's presidential face-off was what many thought to be the coup de grace of the decrepit John McCain, the comically surreal Sarah Palin, and the supposed irrelevant ideals of conservatism. Driving a final spike into the coffin that is a nation built on tradition, capitalism, and a well articulated defense policy, Barack Obama's evasiveness of any negative

the Obama political machine.

The conservative base failed to get excited (aside from the Palin running mate announcement). The biased media who once hailed John McCain as their favorite Republican pointed moderates in the opposite direction. And independents, usually inattentive to the aggravation that is politics during much of the year, are now swaying toward the lure of Obama.

The final presidential debate at Hofstra University was an opportunistic chance for McCain to turn his jabs into a long-awaited

USA, conveyed to the voters that not only rich tycoons and greedy oil barons will be punished by Obama's tax policies, but every day small business owners will also be unfairly scrutinized.

His attempt to connect to the average voter (something McCain failed to do up until then in these debates) was a smart move. However, he failed to close the deal on not only this issue, but the seasoned political veteran allowed Obama to hang around, the debate, resulting in a draw.

Obama erroneously contended that 98% of small businesses make under \$250,000 and therefore would not be subjected to any additional tax burden. He even promised tax cuts to the supposedly majority of small businesses that do drive the workforce.

However, this simply isn't the case.

According to the National Federation of Independent Business, "at least three out of four small businesses that employ ten or more people would

be subject to a tax increase under Senator Obama's plan." In addition these small businesses are the nation's primary job creators. For example, small business created 1.86 million jobs in 2004, 100% of all new jobs created that year.

McCain could have foiled Obama's deceiving argument that only an elite few will be hurt by increased tax rates. He could have fomented his outrage at Biden's suggestion that paying taxes is patriotic, citing that the revolutionary idea of America was founded in opposition to tyrannical taxation and an appreciation for personal responsibility. When asked how the American people would have to sacrifice due to the current financial situation, McCain could have stuck his finger in Washington's face and proclaimed, "How dare you ask the American people to sacrifice! It's time that the government sacrifices!" Unfortunately, he did not.

Another vital issue in which McCain failed to capitalize on was on energy independence.

It was imperative that McCain seized the heart strings of this issue in order to win the presidency. He failed to do so throughout the campaign and in the final debate as well.

Missing the opportunity to emphasize on the pain at the pump that every day Americans are experiencing in their wallets, McCain could have mandated a lift on the moratorium of drilling off the continental shelf, drilling in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge, and extraction of oil shale from the Rocky Mountains. Increasing petroleum production is the only surefire way to immediately lower the burden to the consumer who faces staggering fuel prices on a daily basis. McCain should have pounded Obama's misguided notion that alternative fuels will solve all our problems within the coming decade, as not only impossible, but stupid as well.

Granted, Obama does have a history of being unable to close the deal. His drawn out primary duel with Senator Hillary Clinton should have been over months before it actually was. Maybe, the same voters who failed to carry Obama over the finish line in the primaries will remember just why they were hesitant to name the Messiah their party's nominee in the first place. McCain failed to finish the debate. Maybe Obama will fail to finish his campaign.

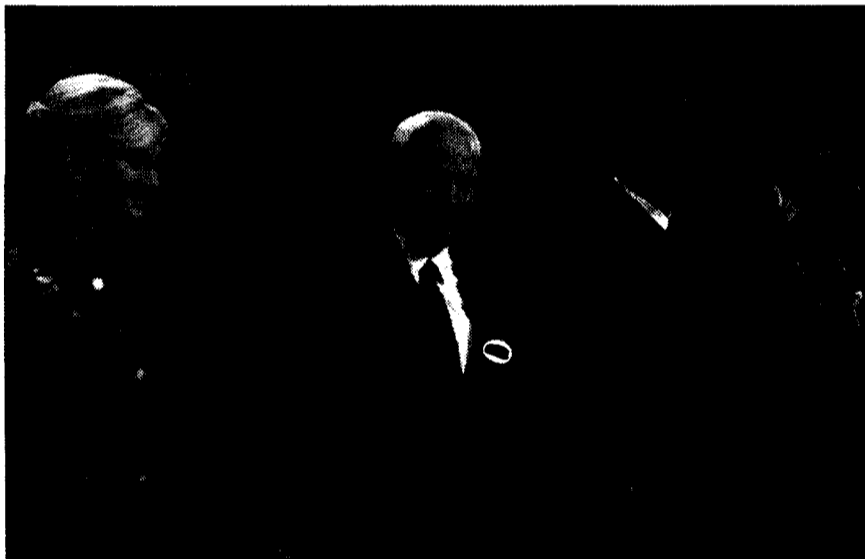


Photo courtesy of msnbc.com

Presidential hopefuls Obama and McCain faced off on Oct 15 for the final debate.

stigma in Thursday night's performance may prove to be the last hurdle in his race for Sixteen Hundred Pennsylvania Avenue.

With approximately two weeks left until disenchanting voters flood polling booths throughout the country, the chances of an "Obama Nation" are becoming more and more likely. McCain's failure to capitalize on the seemingly endless shortcomings, contradictions, miscues, and policy faux pas that have been peppered throughout Obama's run for the White House will undoubtedly lead to the Arizona senator's undoing.

Sure, in an election cycle when the word Republican was almost blasphemous, McCain seemed like the best choice to rally independent, moderate, and ardent, conservative voters under one tent. However, this all too perfect strategy failed to metastasize into anything comparable to

knockout blow. Unfortunately, much to the dismay of many, the newcomer in the presidential boxing match fended off many of McCain's attacks with a smooth resolve, leaving the judges (or in this case the voters) to ultimately decide the victor.

Bob Schieffer, the moderator of the final debate, immediately fired off a question about the public's utmost concern these days: the economy.

Each candidate was asked to convey why their particular plan of action to address the ailing condition of the United States economy would be in the best interest of our nation.

McCain premised his answer around the now infamously known "Joe the plumber." He went on to illustrate the harmful implications of Obama's tax plan on the lowly entrepreneur that is Joe. The maverick, using "joe sixpack" as a symbol of any town

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- Have taken at least 30 minutes to fall asleep at least three times per week in the preceding month

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Study Director: Ravi Singareddy, M.D.

For more information, call Christie Schaeffer, R.N., 717-531-3779.

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This research study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board, under federal regulations, at Penn State Hershey Medical Center, Penn State College of Medicine.

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