

**U.S. HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT  
HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS  
DUE FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2008**

**Remember:**  
Vocabulary Quiz  
on Wednesday  
**STUDY!!!**

## I. Complete Last Week's Homework

Because of scheduling issues for last week's lessons, you are allowed to turn in last week's homework by this Friday without any penalty. ... You're welcome!

## II. News –The Vice President and the 2008 Election

*The Vice Presidency of The United States*

**JOYCE S. ANDERSON** Special to the Jewish Times (excerpted from <http://www.jewishtimes-sj.com/news/2008/1017/columns/007.html> October 17, 2008)

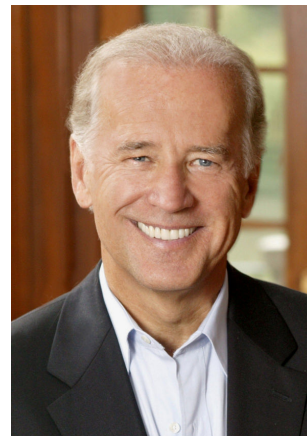
The United States Constitution barely mentions the Vice President. In Article I, devoted to the Legislative Branch of the federal government, one sentence appears in Section 3, "The Vice President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no Vote, unless they be equally divided." Article II, the Executive Branch, includes the following brief paragraph in Section 1, "In Case of the Removal of the President from Office, or of his Death, Resignation, or Inability to discharge the Powers and Duties of the said Office, the Same shall devolve on the Vice President...."



Today, we are nearing the finish line of the race for the presidency between John McCain and Barack Obama. History tells us that the person at the top of the ticket is the main consideration of how people vote. However, this election has certain unique factors that may alter that long held belief. John McCain, 72, is the oldest person to run for the highest office in the land. Barack Obama is the first person of color to run for the presidency. And Sarah Palin, chosen by McCain to be his running mate, is the first Republican woman to be on a national slate. This has been the most dramatic campaign in decades with most Americans agreeing that the 2008 election on November 4 is of critical importance to the future of the country.

There was only one debate between Senator Joe Biden of Delaware and Governor Sarah Palin of Alaska. It drew over 73 million viewers, who watched and listened to both candidates field questions on the economy, Iraq, health care, energy and the duties of the Vice President. It was clear from the beginning that Sarah Palin was not going to follow the usual structure of the debates, when she said, "I may not answer the questions the way that either the moderator or you want to hear... I'm going to talk straight to the American people."

After the debate, polls from listeners across the country said that Governor Palin had reversed the negative results of her interviews on CBS with Katie Couric. She had come across as having learned certain "talking points" and using them whether they fit the question or not. She was strong in her positions, smiling, winking and using colloquial language



throughout, "I betcha," "darn right," "doggone." Did this go over well with the listeners? Did she connect? It was interesting that one network had a focus group with meters that showed their approval or disapproval for both candidates' statements. The folksy language and demeanor that Palin used throughout brought consistent down turns of their meters. All polls, except the Fox News poll, rated Senator Biden as the winner of the debate on the substance of his answers, the broad sweep of his knowledge and the experience he has had in six terms in the senate.

There are two "elephants in the room" in this election campaign. One is the number of



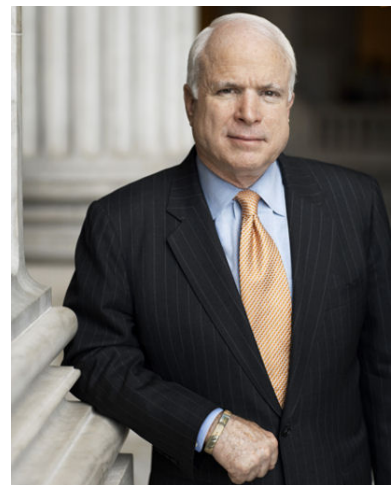
Americans who will not vote for Obama because he is seen as a black man. The fact that his mother was white and his grandparents who raised him were white is submerged in the color of his skin. Racial prejudice is a phenomenon that is extremely hard to combat or change. Polls have shown that there are voters who state this as their reason for voting for John McCain or reply that they know "others who feel that way." The number will not be known until November 4. During the Democratic primary contest between Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, the question of "race" as important in their vote ranged from 9 to 15 percent in certain states.

The second "elephant in the room" is the question of John McCain's age and health and the possibility that Sarah Palin might become President of the United States. ...

On Friday, October 3, the day after the Vice Presidential debate, a full page ad in the New York Times was headlined, " 2,768 doctors call on Senator McCain to issue a full, public release of his medical records." A thousand names appeared in fine print with the notation that "For the full list of names, visit: [www.therealmccain.com/doctors](http://www.therealmccain.com/doctors)." In the center of the page, there were four doctors' pictures with a brief statement by each. Richard Sagebiel M.D. former director of the Melanoma Center at the University of California, San Francisco: "Allowing 20 reporters three hours each to go through 1,200 pages with no cell phones, internet access or copying machines is not enough to render a serious judgment on this incredibly important matter." Rachel Clark. M.D. , Ph.D. Assistant Professor of Dermatology, Harvard Medical School: "I feel it is critical that people understand how quickly and fatally melanoma can recur, sometimes with decades of remission preceding a rapid decline. I think it is absolutely essential that Senator John McCain release his medical records in full, without restraint."

In bold print, under the four pictures: "SENATOR McCAIN: ISSUE A FULL, PUBLIC RELEASE OF YOUR MEDICAL RECORDS. AMERICA DESERVES TO KNOW."

We do not know who will win the election on November 4. There is little question that Joseph Biden, who ran in the presidential primary himself, is viewed by the public as capable of stepping into the daunting position of President of the United States. The second "elephant in the room" is the important matter of John McCain's age and health - as well as his judgment in choosing his running mate. The American people have to consider the real possibility that Sarah Palin could become President of the United States. When they vote this year, the top of the ticket may not be the deciding factor as it has been in the past.



*Joyce S. Anderson's articles have appeared in the New York Times, the Philadelphia Inquirer and other national publications.*