

## Obama, Clinton debate in Philadelphia

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[PHILADELPHIA](#) - [Hillary Clinton](#) and [Barack Obama](#), in what may be their final debate, hammered at each other's campaign lowlights Wednesday night as Clinton insisted she is the Democrats' best hope to win in November.

First, they traded blows over Obama's controversial comments about small-town Americans, with Obama accusing Clinton of unfairly pouncing on his gaffe to "beat it to death."

"There's no doubt that I can see how people were offended," Obama admitted in the showdown at the [National Constitution Center](#). "It's not the first time that I've made, you know, a statement that was mangled up."

Clinton has called "elitist" Obama's comment that small-town Americans cling to their guns and religion out of bitterness - suggesting it showed he was out of touch and an easy target for Republicans in the fall.

"[The Republicans](#), who are pretty shrewd about what it takes to win, certainly did jump on the comments," she said.

Obama struck back by recalling the uproar over remarks Clinton made in 1992 during her husband's first presidential run - when she infamously said she "could have stayed home and baked cookies" instead of being a lawyer.

"People attacked her for being an elitist and this and that, and I remember watching that on TV and saying, 'That's not who she is,'" Obama said. "The problem is, that's the kind of politics we've been accustomed to and I think Sen. Clinton learned the wrong lesson, because she's adopted the same tactics."

The heated rhetoric came as polls suggest little voter shift over Obama's comments about bitterness. And an ABC/[Washington Post](#) poll highlighted why Clinton needs to argue she's the most electable.

By a 2-to-1 margin, Democrats now think Obama is.

She has been hurt by her exaggerations about ducking sniper fire in [Bosnia](#), with a whopping 58% in the poll saying she's not trustworthy.

Needing to convince voters - not to mention Party superdelegates - that she's still the best bet, Clinton seized opportunities to highlight less savory claims that have been made about Obama's past.

She linked him by association to [Nation of Islam](#) leader [Louis Farrakhan](#) and pointed out his church published an [Hamas](#) manifesto last year.

"These are problems, and they raise questions in people's minds," Clinton said.

She also expounded his association with [William Ayers](#), a member of radical '60s terrorist group [Weather Underground](#) who served on a local board with Obama.

"I know Sen. Obama's a good man and I respect him greatly, but I think that this is an issue that certainly the Republicans will be raising," she said.

Obama shot back that former [President Bill Clinton](#) reduced the sentences of two [Weather Underground members](#), "which I think is a slightly more significant act."

With electability as the underlying theme, Clinton at one point had to concede that she thinks Obama can win the [White House](#)

"Yes. Yes. Yes," she said. "Now, I think I can do a better job."

She added, "I believe I'm the better and stronger candidate against [Sen. McCain](#)."

Asked early in the debate if they would team up to form the Democratic ticket, both demurred.

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