

# NEW YORK POST

## CLOSE WIN FOR CLINTON A LOSE-LOSE

By DON KETTL



April 20, 2008 -- AFTER six weeks of frantic campaigning, the odds in Pennsylvania point to the worst of all worlds for Democrats: Hillary Rodham Clinton winning by a nose - which would deny Barack Obama a knockout punch but make it tough for her to raise enough money to fight on.

Clinton's last hope was to prove she could win the big one. But she never got her campaign to cruising speed.

Obama played the race not to lose big - however, clumsy comments about bitter Pennsylvanians clinging to their guns and religion, along with a decidedly poor debate performance, have stirred bigger worries.

Things to consider while watching the returns Tuesday night:

**Just how big is Clinton's margin?** Anything less than 8 percent would be embarrassing, and there's a (tiny) chance Obama could win it outright, with support from young, black and late-registering suburban voters whom the polls haven't picked up.

**How well does Obama do in the suburbs around Philadelphia, full of middle- and upper-class voters who used to vote Republican?** The yard-sign count suggests Obama's pulling ahead there. That would hurt Clinton and worry Republicans, who need to win these voters in the fall.

**And who wins the white-guy vote in central Pennsylvania?** They're the key "undecideds." If Obama's "bitter" comment turns them off, it could boost Clinton's margin and give her just enough juice to keep her campaign going.

**Pennsylvania isn't likely to make Obama or break Clinton - unless he squeezes her margin, wins big in the Philly 'burbs and pushes the "bitter" comment aside. Stay tuned - Pennsylvania voters love to be unpredictable.**

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[Home](#)

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