

# Sexism or racism: Are both taboo?

NEW YORK (AP) - Expressions of sexism and racism emerging from the contest between Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama have been blatant, subtle and perhaps sometimes imagined, and they are renewing the national debate over what is and isn't acceptable to say in public.

Clinton's camp has perceived sexism in comments about her appearance and emotions. Supporters of Obama have complained about racial overtones in remarks about his Muslim-sounding middle name, Hussein, and his acknowledged drug use as a young man.

Beyond the back-and-forth between a White woman and a Black man seeking the Democratic presidential nomination, the situation has created a snapshot of the nation's sensitivity — or lack thereof — to certain kinds of comments. Is it more acceptable, for instance, to make a sexist remark than a racist remark?

"It's always been easier," said Marie Wilson, president of the White House Project, which encourages women's advancement in politics. "With women, you can get away with it. With race, you can hardly say anything."

Feminist leader Gloria Steinem, argued in a *New*

*York Times* op-ed last week that gender is "probably the most restricting force in American life" — more so than race.

But others involved in politics suggest the situation is more complex and that both race and gender are used to discriminate against people.

Yvonne Scruggs-Leftwich, a board member of the Black Leadership Forum, said that as a Black woman she has experienced both racism and sexism, and she suggested there was little point in ranking them.

"In parts of the country, the racist terms fall just as easily off the lips as they al-

ways did," she said.

"And there are also places that I can't go because I am a woman, and that bothers me just as much."

Kim Gandy, president of the National Organization for Women, said sexist and racist expressions both remain all too common in public discourse, though she said the racism often may be "somewhat coded."

"There's an awful lot of explicit sexist stuff," she said.

Certainly, Clinton's gender has been the spark for criticism, verbal and otherwise, of a sort that Obama has avoided. Available on the Internet are a Hillary nutcracker (the Clinton-like figure cracks nuts between her legs) and a Hillary toilet brush (the sales pitch: "You can have Hillary Clinton as your 'First Cleaning Lady.'")

Clinton's wardrobe, figure, hairdo — even her laugh — have generated detailed and often unflattering commentary.

Radio host Rush Limbaugh said of her: "Will this country want to actually watch a woman get older before their eyes on a daily basis?"

Chris Matthews, host of "Hardball" on MSNBC, has been accused of repeated sexist remarks about Clinton and other female politicians. For example, Matthews suggested that when female poli- (See *Big Question*, Page 11)

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## Your Horoscope Says... Jan. 31- Feb. 6

**ARIES**

You'll have lots of contact with folks you wanted to hear from this week. Your telephone is your best tool, and you'll enjoy talking and listening to many supportive and loving friends. A letter may arrive with an invitation.

Soul Affirmation: I smile and trust in the powers beyond myself.

Lucky Numbers: 6, 10, 14

**TAURUS**

You are too kind this week, and it's a wonderful thing. By doing things for others without thought of a reward, you're racking up beneficial vibrations for your future! Take personal pleasure in what you do for others this week.

Soul Affirmation: Moving slowly is often the fastest way to get there.

Lucky Numbers: 7, 49, 55

**GEMINI**

Change your routine this week. Even a minor change in the way you approach your week will enable you to feel happier and more adventurous. Try something new, and you'll be happy with the outcome.

Soul Affirmation: My life is full of good things that I enjoy.

Lucky Numbers: 18, 28, 46

**CANCER**

Create a map in your mind to chart a course through unfamiliar waters. You'll be as happy as you make up your mind to be. Because you are so wise, you'll be at peace with all outcomes.

Soul Affirmation: I give thanks for who I am this week.

Lucky Numbers: 11, 52, 53

**LEO**

It's a good week to reflect on your personal network of friends and co-workers. You are surrounded by supportive vibrations, and you'll be counting your blessings by the end of this busy week!

Soul Affirmation: It's bad only if I see it that way.

Lucky Numbers: 1, 17, 29

**VIRGO**

Find a way to love the work you do this week. Use your creativity and wonderful sense of humor, and you'll be finished with chores early enough to relax. Use your energy wisely.

Soul Affirmation: I let worry fly away.

Lucky Numbers: 3, 12, 21

**LIBRA**

A romantic partner returns and wants to pick up the past and start over. Friends are good to have, but this particular friend will be best kept as just that — a friend. Enjoy your ability to choose what's best for you.

Soul Affirmation: My spirit gives me limitless possibilities.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 20, 42

**SCORPIO**

Some quiet time could fill the bill nicely for you this afternoon.

You need some space to let your creativity spread out. So keep enjoying the moments of solitude, and make your necessary phone calls later. Relax!

Soul Affirmation: I let myself be the cheerful me.

Lucky Numbers: 25, 43, 54

**SAGITTARIUS**

Take a positive and sensible stance this week where co-workers are involved. Situations could be tricky, but you'll do fine if you don't commit yourself to anything that you really don't want to do.

Soul Affirmation: The earthiness of my being reflects the sunshine of my soul.

Lucky Numbers: 26, 36, 48

**CAPRICORN**

A positive, alert attitude will draw opportunities to you this week. You'll see more of the big picture if you take a mental step backward. You'll hear exactly what you need to hear if you take the time to listen.

Soul Affirmation: Jewelry reflects the beauty of my feelings about myself.

Lucky Numbers: 13, 33, 39

**AQUARIUS**

Guard your words this week, and let peace and harmony rule where they may. It's not the time to point out the character flaws of a higher-up. You can make this a very productive week if you apply your industrious spirit to your work.

Soul Affirmation: Facing down challenges makes me feel good about myself.

Lucky Numbers: 15, 23, 37

**PISCES**

Good deeds are in order this week. Perform all the random acts of kindness that you can. Everything you do this week is going to come back to you in triplicate, so enjoy storing up some future blessings!

Soul Affirmation: Another week in which to rejoice is upon me.

Lucky Numbers: 30, 32, 45

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