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Has Geraldine Ferraro been ethical? 8/24/88

Editor: Where would the Democrats have hidden this election year if they hadn't "found" a gender gap? Certainly not in the economy, which is performing more robustly than ever. Hiding behind the tax issue was out of the question. All Walter Mondale would promise was what Democrats have always promised: to blindly raise taxes whenever a problem arises. Thus, the gender gap was as good a choice as any.

When Mondale chose Geraldine Ferraro as his vice-presidential running mate, he made history. Mondale's choice may become more historic than he ever intended, if she becomes the first female vice-presidential nominee to step down. Yes, the shiny new pearl of the Democratic Party has a flaw. Ferraro, good Christian that she is, appears to have cheated on her taxes.

The chronological facts are as follows: John Zaccaro lent his wife \$134,000 during her first campaign. The Federal Election Commission informed them the most he could lend her was \$4,000 and that the \$130,000 would have to be returned. She promptly sold two parcels of land to Zaccaro's business partner, making a handy profit of (surprise!) \$130,000. Ferraro handed the money to her

husband, which *he* handed to his partner five months later, when he bought the land back. To top it off, Ferraro's income from the first land sale was under-reported by \$29,709.

Still, there are those who would insinuate that the incident has been blown out of proportion because of "latent sexism." Consider: wouldn't a male candidate be subjected to a similar barrage of questioning under the same circumstances? Of course. Nonetheless, Ferraro continues to moan that she wants to get back to the real issues of the campaign.

Thankfully, the American public knows that the ethics of the vice-presidential nominee *are* a real and very important issue in this election. The tables have been turned and the "sleaze factor" has been thrown back into Mondale's face.

So, the Democrats dove headfirst into the gender gap, only to have it close in over their heads. Is it too much to hope they won't crawl out again?

Michael J. Gilftz, IUF