

Letters from readers on the Starr investigation

30 September 1998

To the Editor:

I was told about this site tonight. Thank you so much for a balanced, informative look at these proceedings which are mystifying the world. My question is: Is there anyone who would not lie about an illicit sexual encounter? What does that have to do with us?

MA

Right On!!! We want Starr's resignation. Also when he resigns I believe he should reimburse the peoples tax monies he has WASTED to date. Obviously someone has finally heard us out here. The constitution still states, 'We, the people....' - Not 'We, the politicians....' or 'We, the media....'

GJC

In my opinion the lack of public support for this investigation should be giving Starr and the politicians a message that they refuse to listen to. We are not apathetic to this situation, rather we are disgusted that they went after the President for something that is by rights no one's business but the Clinton's themselves.

Starr and the politicians working to impeach Clinton have succeeded in making our country the joke of the century. I'm sure even the press has seen this to be true as they interview people in other areas of the globe.

I believe we were paying Starr to find a connection with the Clinton's and Whitewater. Most of us expected this to be the subject of his report and were appalled to see alt.sex.stories on Yahoo.com for all our children to read. (I thank god my children are too young to read). I, personally, would rather say the President was impeached for involvement in Whitewater than for trying to keep his relationship with Monica private.

I'm not naive to think that affairs don't happen, nor do I condone such behavior, but as long as it's not thrown in my face I can overlook it. Starr will get the support of the Bible thumpers for the President's conduct with Monica, but not from the common people who know there is no person on this earth who is perfect and never makes mistakes.

You have a lot of public outrage on the amount of money spent on a bad sex story. This being Starr's justification of getting millions of dollars. I would like justice to be served but not the way Starr

has set it out. I think Starr should go back to square one and research what he was paid to research, and this time he should do it 'pro bono'. The American public has paid enough not only in money but in embarrassment and his repeat investigation should be watched closely to make sure that he doesn't stray from the main objective.

HAE

Dear Martin McLaughlin,

As a social democrat, I have the deepest respect for WSWS's ongoing analysis of the right-wing coup currently in progress in the U.S. I have already expressed this in a previous email to your editors. My respect certainly extends to your article on Salon's expose of Henry Hyde. I do, however, think there is some value in Salon's decision to move on the Hyde story because it does have the potential to introduce some disarray into a process which is, at heart, corrupt.

The mainstream media, in concert with the right wing of Congress, have succeeded in shifting the public focus almost completely away from Starr's profoundly unethical investigation by supporting his report as 'the facts' and the only facts in this entire fiasco. The Salon article is at least an attempt to remind Americans of what brought them to the present crisis point in the first place. The desire to be discrete about one's sexual behavior has been successfully criminalized and is being rapidly reconstructed as an impeachable offense. Any attempt to get people to return to the act which set this insidious process in motion is, I think, useful.

As I have said elsewhere, one thing that strikes me as especially incongruous about Mr. Starr's report is that for all his zealous pursuit of 'truth,' he has suppressed the most important truth about Mr. Clinton and Ms. Lewinsky's sexual encounters: PLEASURE. Not surprisingly, therefore, his otherwise meticulously detailed sex report has invoked widespread disgust among its readership--which is, of course, Mr. Starr's intention. If one is to demoralize one's political enemies, one must first demoralize their support base. There is indeed something disgusting about sex without pleasure, and one cannot blame those Americans who experience feelings of disgust in response to the report.

By trying to shift the focus onto similar, if not identical sexual liaisons, Salon may, perhaps unwittingly, get Americans to rethink the process whereby private pleasure gets transformed into public

disgust--which is, at bottom, the process whereby erotica becomes pornography.

There is no One Right Way to expose the corruption at the heart of this inquisition. Indeed, there are many ways, and some ways are clearly better than others. Although I am most in support of the socialist critique as expressed in WSWS reporting, it seems to me that critique must come from many political positions, including the radical liberal position represented by Salon. Salon's analysis of the sexual hypocrisy in play here may be relatively shallow in comparison to your analysis of the deeper political hypocrisy. Nevertheless, the liberal position does contribute something useful to the discourse of resistance against the public crucifixion of a president whose sex life is being made to eclipse his real crimes--and those of his pious enemies--against working Americans.

Once again, I extend my thanks to you and your colleagues at WSWS for your excellent ongoing analysis of this matter. Please keep up the good work, as I look to you to keep me grounded in the real issues at stake here.

DR

I came upon your site quite by accident, and am most impressed by it, and by your insightful reporting. I had independently come to some of the same conclusions as your staff or writers have, that this is part of a plot or scheme to seize control of the government by rabid right-wingers or those of similar ilk. I wonder what has happened to the 'free' press in America, when virtually every major newspaper in the country apparently thinks the same: that the president should resign.

I am amazed at this rather sudden moral indignation over what amounts to an indiscreet dalliance by the president. These are the same newspapers, magazines, television stations that regularly allow advertisements that border on salacious (print materials), or programs and commercials that are all but pornographic, and now are suddenly outraged that someone engages in such activity. I could cite many examples, but one in particular comes to mind, and that is a commercial for a shampoo where a young woman simulates an orgasm (a la Sally in the film, 'Sally and Harry') as she washes her hair with this 'organic' shampoo. This commercial is shown repeatedly during prime time and daytime shows, and I cannot help but wonder how parents or caregivers might explain this to young children, or what young children think of it.

It's hard not to envision the media, its newspaper editors and reporters and TV millionaire CEOs and news anchors, absolutely salivating over the prospect of placing before the public Monica Lewinsky's salacious and detailed version of her encounters with the president. They finally have the opportunity to not only defame their sworn enemy, but also to 'legally' titillate the public with material that in any other venue would never be available. The media is proving to be even more unsavory than lawyers, as I see them.

I suspect though that except for giving themselves more license to denigrate President Clinton, this desperate ploy of the rabid republican right-wingers and its puppet media won't affect many of us. There's nothing new or different in it, and our only expectation is that it provides Ms. Lewinsky's detailed descriptions. While I

obviously can only speak for myself, I am finding that other, ordinary citizens like me feel the same way about these very sad events. I am trying not to fear that if this newest desperate gamble by the President's enemies fails that they will try something even more threatening, that the media would start publishing/posting false figures and information in order to force impeachment hearings.

Again, I want you to know that I appreciate your site, and your stance, and I will recommend it to other concerned citizens. Keep up the good work.

PC

Milwaukee, WI

Your editorials and articles about the 'Starr putsch' and the forces behind it are the most lucid I've read anywhere. How fervently I wish that millions of Americans would find and read them. You are truly 'servants of the people.'

MD

Thank you for reasonable, responsible, and insightful commentary on the political issues of the day. I really enjoyed 'Ringmasters of Political Pornography' and 'Spearhead of a Right-wing Coup.' I sent the former article to Geraldo Rivera at MSNBC.

Please keep up the great reporting. I am spreading the word about this web site and encouraging my students to use it as well (I'm a community college instructor from California).

Thank you.

LA

See also:

The Starr investigation -- WSWS Full Coverage

The American media and the Clinton scandal: Ringmasters of political pornography
[25 August 1998]

The political meaning of the Starr report: Spearhead of a right-wing coup
[13 September 1998]

How not to fight the right-wing coup in Washington: The case of Salon magazine
[19 September 1998]



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