

# Opinion

## STARR STRUCK:

### Graphic details in independent counsel's report amount to little more than Internet porn

### Report provides public essential information, educational view of congressional action

Clinton right — the Monica S. affair of Americans at least part isn't. Friday's of the report, the act has been exposed, actually exposed, before the end. Since the report's depictions of Americans have grossed by material that is obviously appropriate only pages of Penthouse, Hustler, and other similar erotica. if you have not succumbed to temptation of reading the report yourself a favor, do not read it. The report is none of these.



JOHN LEMONS

Of course Americans are interested in the lurid details of the president's sex life — lurid details are interesting. But dealing in gossip is unhealthy and bad form. In his Aug. 17 speech to the nation, where he clearly says he was sorry — that he got caught, Clinton said this matter is between himself, his wife, his daughter and God. "It is private, and I intend to reclaim my family life for my family," Clinton said. "It's nobody's business but ours." Actually, the president erred. This matter is between him, his family, God and Congress. Congress will decide whether the president committed any impeachable offenses. The graphic depictions of the president's affair are in the report for a very good reason — they establish that there is substantial and credible evidence that the president perjured himself and obstructed justice. But it is Congress, not the American people, that needs to review substantial and credible evidence of high crimes and misdemeanors. What the American public does need to know is the president very possibly committed acts of perjury, witness tampering, obstruction of justice and abuse of power. These are the allegations the president may face in impeachment for, not kinky sex. Much like a pig, the president cannot conceive of another lifestyle besides the one

that allows him to wallow in his own filth. Moreover, he resents the suggestion that he should be held to a cleaner, purer standard. There is, however, no reason why the rest of the country should be dragged down to the president's level of moral decay. Let Congress sort out the gross-out details of the president's sexual escapades so they can hang him by his own libido. In the meantime, the country would be well-to-do to stay out of the president's pants. Many Americans would not be caught dead reading pornography. That the pornography features the president should not change that fact.

John Lemons is an electrical engineering graduate student.

What an exciting day for America. Special Prosecutor Kenneth Starr's "Referral to Congress" has finally been released, summarizing months of investigation and media hype surrounding President Clinton's alleged wrongdoing. All Americans should read this report because it is their duty, and, as Bill Cosby would say before an episode of "Fat Albert," you just might learn something. Americans do not seem to realize how lucky they really are. Americans are blessed with so much freedom and so many rights that some believe they



STEWART PATTON

have too many rights and freedoms. The whole world sees the United States as an example of democracy that works. An integral part of maintaining a healthy democracy, however, is citizens faithfully fulfilling the responsibilities that go hand-in-hand with their rights. Chief among these responsibilities is the duty to stay informed of the actions of those we have elected to public office. In this manner, the public at large is not just made up of passive citizens; rather, by staying informed Americans act as a check against the power of public officials. Some may argue that by reading Starr's report one would only stay informed of one side of the issue, but this view would ignore the broader context in which Starr's report is situated. First, Starr has a duty to gather all the relevant facts surrounding any wrongdoing under his investigation, not just those facts supporting impeachment. The report is therefore fundamentally different from a prosecutor's case in a normal criminal trial. Second, if Clinton is so eager to present his side of the story, why did he refrain from doing so in the many months between the beginning of the investigation and the release of the report? Additionally, if Starr's report does lead to an impeachment hearing in the House, Clinton will have opportunity to present a defense. Third, since the beginning of the investigation, the public has been exposed only to leaks from Starr's report while we have heard Clinton speak personally on national television; Starr's report even scores. It could also be argued that

Starr's report contains only information of a private nature, and Americans do not have a right or duty to stay informed of the president's private life. However, Starr's report concerns whether the president lied under oath — a very public offense; the subject matter which the president lied about not of any consequence. Additionally, when a president takes the oath of office, he is bound by the constitutional duty to "take care that the laws be faithfully executed." The public has a right to know and a duty to determine if the president has failed to perform this essential task. Americans should also read the Starr report for its educational value. Starr's "Referral to Congress" provides a unique opportunity to see behind the scenes of the impeachment process, a process that does not occur very often. Many Aggies and Americans in general are woefully ignorant of how the justice system works. Although presidential impeachment is different from a normal criminal trial, the Starr report would help Americans understand how a trial proceeds and the burdens of evidence imposed upon each side. Instead of learning about the impeachment proceedings second-hand through news commentators or columnists, Americans should read the report themselves so they can personally judge the president's actions. Sure, the Starr report contains some "salacious and lewd" sections describing the actual encounters between Lewinsky and Clinton (the *Houston Chronicle* even put a "may be offensive to children" disclaimer on the front of the report). However, the report is pornographic only in a detached, National Geographic kind of way. For the average American, reading those parts of the report will be less exciting than watching cable on Friday after 11 pm. For better or for worse, most Americans are so used to raunchiness that the Starr report will be tame in comparison. Additionally, the lewd parts make Starr's report much like a grown-up version of "Barney" or the "Teletubbies". There is some entertainment value along with the educational content. While kids dance around and learn how to love each other, grown-ups can read about oral sex and learn about the constitutional duties of a president. You voted him into office, folks, so you now have a duty to read and learn about what he has been doing. This will hopefully be your last opportunity to personally witness an impeachment proceeding, so get your copy of the Starr report today and read the allegations for yourself.

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GRAPHIC BY BRAD GRAEBER/THE BATTALION

MIKE LUKOVICH



### MAIL CALL

#### Parking situation needs attention

In response to Chris Huffines' Sept. 9 column:

I cannot believe the column Chris Huffines wrote on parking. Huffines must not drive on campus or he would not have written this column. For those of us living in the real world, most of what you said was pure fiction. First, you mentioned the wonderful Texas A&M bus system as an alternative. Wrong. I rode the bus from the Wehner building to the Zachry building lot yesterday, and after waiting 40 minutes for it even to show up, dispatch decided to skip the Zachry lot stop and go straight to the Commons. It took me over an hour to reach the friends I carpooled with. You mention "other mea-

sures PTTS has taken to ensure student safety." But, they can only buy so many scooters. Other universities with populations our size may have similar problems, my point is that we are the largest campus in land size and still do not have enough parking spots. You said students are just too lazy to find the "little lines that define a parking space." From the experiences of myself and everyone I have talked to, there are virtually no spots open in the mornings — anywhere. I have left my apartment an hour before class and still found nothing but more Ags looking for a place to park. PTTS is going to claim there is enough parking in the far lots, but that is only true later in the day when everyone is leaving — and we already covered the "excellent" bus service on campus. It is funny you keep referring

to us as kids who need to act like adults. Almost daily I hear faculty in the guys' locker of the Rec Center talking about how hard it is for them to find a parking spot. The staff is having problems finding parking. Do the math. A lot of cars, few spaces. Grow up.

Patrick Brensinger, Class of '01.

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