

What would you say if given five minutes to comment on the Starr-Clinton duel? I'm so given, & here's what I'll say:

ELLIOTT THINKSHEETS 2952
309 L. Ellz. Dr., Craigville, MA 02636
Phone/Fax 508.775.8008 3.7.99
Noncommercial reproduction permitted

A WORLD-STORY OF TWO -SIDED UNRESTRAINT

1 A world-story is not just something to think about, it's something to think with: that's why we call it a paradigm. For us Christians, the control-world-story is the full canonical biblical "Story," which we capitalize....From another angle, a world-story is an event that stimulates the world to thinking & talking. Clinton/Monica is a sex story that's got the whole world at least talking, & doing some thinking. Starr-Clinton is a duel story that's got "the many" around the world to thinking-talking about law & ethics.

2 Let's get our stories straight. Clinton started the Monica thing that led to some 70 million Americans watching the NBC Barbara-Monica conversation (or perhaps that's a sexist remark: Monica claims *she* started it, seducing Bill [in her words] to "fool around"). Starr started the duel by dredging up a sexual embarrassment out of Clinton's past (yes, he'd broken off with Monica before Starr came on the scene).

3 Like Monica, Eve started it, the primal sin of unrestraint, & Adam (the weaker sex) went along. Our world-Story begins with God's commanding (1) the world to come into being & (2) people to restrain themselves. By the third chapter of our Holy Book, we come to see that a world-duel (between God & an anti-God called variously the devil & Satan) is the occasion for humanity's temptation to join the devil in resistance to the divine restraint: refusing to restrain himself in counter-claiming against God, the devil (as Lucifer, Is.14.12: the Day Star's pretension to rise higher than all the other stars) aspired to cosmic supremacy. So Satan (Hebrew, "adversary"), could be called Unrestraint, for he makes it his business to violate all the limits God sets (& so human beings [Peter, e.g.: Mt.16.23 & parallels] can be Unrestraint, "Satan"). (Violating divinely set limits is a meaning of some of the Bible's words for sin.)

4 Which brings us to this Thinksheet's theme:

Clinton was unrestrained in his lust & his high skills at smoke-screen, squidlike obfuscation.

Congress was unrestrained, in 1976, in setting up an Independent Counsel of almost unlimited power to pursue-prosecute-persecute a federal official in hope of finding something fatally wrong with him (i.e., something fatal to his/her continuing in office)--in the case of Starr, no limit on time (more than four years!) or money (somewhere between \$40 & \$50 million).

The Supreme Court was unrestrained in ruling that a sitting president could be legally pursued in a civil case involving behavior prior to becoming president. This diversion of the president's attention from the people's business to personal business not only mired us down in a case (Paula Jones') thrown out of federal court after an agonizing struggle, but also opened Clinton to his political enemies' Monica-attack on him.

The Attorney General, Janet Reno, was unrestrained in letting Starr, desperate to find something to hang on Clinton & hang him with, muck around in Clinton's sex life. (Using the low tactic of exposing Congress-members' sexual past, pornographer Larry Flynt said he could shoot down eight of them-- & succeeded in unseating the designated Speaker of the House, Bob Livingstone. Power, unrestrained power!)

5 What was/is God doing in & through all this? He's calling for repentance (Hebrew, "turning," as in Jer.3.22: "Return, O faithless [unrestrained] children, and I will heal your faithlessness"). No evidence that the Supreme Court or the Attorney General has repented. Convincing (to me) evidence that Clinton has. As for Congress, have you noticed the line-up of members penitent that they voted in 1976 to set up what came to function almost as a fourth branch of the federal government?

6 Look on the bright side, folks. (1) After almost a year of horror, Clinton is

more determined than ever to be a good president, & has high gifts to help him do so. (2) In June, Congress will severely restrain if not eliminate the Independent Counsel statute. (3) The nation & the world have seen our federal government in action roughly within the limits (!) of certain principles derivative from the whole heritage of "the West" (Jews, Greeks, Romans, Teutons, Celts, Slavs). (4) Matters that matter most--love, truth, honor, trust, right, good--have gotten, as we say, "a place at the table" of daily conversation, conversation that "normally" is superficial (weather, entertainment, commerce, petty interpersonal squabbles, gossip). (5) The media, besides maximizing & milking the (sex) scandal, have had to delve with some seriousness into morals (how we human actually live), ethics (how we should live), & law (how & what we should force things on the citizenry). Every major problem we face in our country & on the globe requires more than ordinary-daily superficial attention & pain. Thanks to all the characters in the Big Soap (Clinton, Monica, Starr, et al), we've been getting some unrequested training toward more serious thinking-talking-acting. (6) Our children have heard/seen a cautionary tale of the costs of unrestrained behavior. (Did Clinton "get away with it"? Of course not! He was humiliated, impeached, his legacy permanently stained [though his character, his virtue as a caring human being, has not been reduced]).

7 We human beings don't live long enough to get all the wrinkles (flaws) ironed out. The flaws this Thinksheet's dealing with are unrestraints. Clinton's personal unrestraints were forced up against the federal government's jurisprudential unrestraints--two partly stripped gears contiguous at their strippings, so work stopped. Repairs needed: flaws-control (1) in Clinton, by true repentance-renewal of life, & (2) in the federal government, by observing afresh the Constitutional restraints (yes!) on itself (can you imagine another more "big government" than the Starr Event?). As for the religious right's refusal to **forgive** Clinton, it's a poor ad for the gospel of the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

ELLIOTT THINKSHEETS
309 Lake Elizabeth Drive
Craigville MA 02632

