

“Sex, Lies, and Videotape”: Attitudes toward the Clinton Impeachment

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***Abstract:** Students in an undergraduate Political Science class at Kent State University performed a Q sort concerning the Clinton/Lewinsky scandal, and each administered it to two other persons, for a total of n=47. Another n=26 Q sorts were obtained from students at Westminster College. The two sets of Q sorts were analyzed separately, the Kent sample producing four factors, the Westminster sample producing three. Refactoring the data indicated that the three Westminster factors matched three of the Kent factors almost exactly. Factor A provides an anti-Clinton, Conservative “spin” on the scandal. Factor B is willing to hold Clinton responsible for his actions, but maintain that those seeking impeachment are overreacting to the situation. Factor C, a bipolar factor, represents an indignation-cynicism dichotomy, with those at one end of the factor reacting moralistically, while those on the other end are cynical toward the political process more generally. Finally, Factor D was found only among the Kent respondents, and was comprised mostly of liberal Democrats. The major theme of Factor D was that Clinton’s private life should be of little concern to the public, and that the President’s political opponents exploited the crisis.*

The study helps to clarify views of the scandal that confounded pundits who seemed confused in reading polling data. During much of the scandal the public expressed dismay at Clinton’s behavior, while simultaneously endorsing his performance as president. These results reveal that the categories of Democrats vs. Republicans are far too crude to capture the realities of the public’s reactions in light of the more subtle and nuanced reactions of the factors in this study.

Introduction

The 1998-1999 impeachment proceedings against U.S. President Bill Clinton provided observers with a plethora of political discourse. Social conservatives railed against the President’s moral code, while progressives tended to rally to

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Clinton's defense, if for no other reason than to deny his political opponents a victory. Yet, through all this philosophical discord, others reacted to these events in a less predictable, more nuanced manner manifested in a string of political polls that consistently confounded the pundits. While most Americans expressed grave reservations as to the President's personal behavior, his job approval ratings soared to the highest point of his presidency. In fact, Clinton's job approval ratings were higher than *any* second term president since the advent of modern public opinion polling (Lauter 1998). These inconsistent reports were used by the media to present a public that was confused by the Clinton spectacle, uncertain of the proper resolution of this difficult situation. These issues have also drawn scholarly attention, as recent papers by Sonner and Wilcox (1999), Stuckey and Wabshall (2000), and Kagay (1999) attempt explanations of these seeming contradictions. Clinton's critics were sure that if the public could just "understand" the seriousness of his offenses they would surely support impeachment. On the other hand, Clinton's defenders often argued that the American people just didn't care about the president's personal indiscretions — it was his job performance that mattered, and the state of the Union was strong.

The Clinton/Lewinsky scandal was a mix of the moral, the legal, the political, and the personal. Clinton was charged by the House of Representatives with having perjured himself in front of a federal Grand Jury and having committed obstruction of justice in a federal suit. The battle was fought, at times, on arcane legal definitions; however, impeachment is, by definition, a political process.

Further complicating the situation was the startling unpopularity of Clinton's chief legal nemesis, Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr. Through Starr's own aggressive tactics, as well as a well-orchestrated White House media campaign, Starr's popularity plummeted. He became a major part of the impeachment conversation — was Starr a dedicated public servant out to expose presidential wrongdoing, or, an overzealous Clinton-hater aiming to destroy a popularly elected leader?

Finally, the nature of Clinton's transgressions made many feel uncomfortable. Issues of sexual behavior, infidelity, presidential esteem, and privacy all entered into the national conversation over the first impeachment of an elected president. In short, this scandal provided a platform for citizens to express a wide-range of views, rooted in many of the cleavages that define American politics.

Impeachment Chronology

At every step of the way, the scandal unfolded in dramatic fashion. In the age of 24-hour cable news and the Internet, Americans followed every twist and

turn. The following chronology will serve as a reminder of the key events in the scandal (Impeachment Chronology 1998).

- January 19, 1998: The Drudge Report (Internet web site) reports that President Clinton may have committed perjury and obstructed justice in his denial of an affair with a White House intern, Monica Lewinsky, during his deposition in the sexual harassment suit brought against him by Paula Jones, and that Independent Counsel Ken Starr is investigating charges.
- January 21, 1998: Mainstream news media report the Internet story.
- January 26, 1998: In an angry denial, President Clinton tells the nation "I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Miss Lewinsky."
- August 17, 1998: President Clinton gives testimony to the Grand Jury convened by Starr to hear evidence against the President. Later that evening, Clinton addresses the nation, admitting to an "inappropriate relationship" with intern Lewinsky.
- September 9, 1998: Ken Starr sends a referral to the U.S. House of Representatives contending that President Clinton may have committed "impeachable offenses." The delivery of the *Starr Report* is televised live.
- September 11, 1998: The U.S. House of Representatives votes to release the *Starr Report* via the Internet.
- September 18, 1998: The U.S. House of Representatives votes to release the videotape of President Clinton's August 17, 1998 testimony. The videotape is immediately broadcast. In addition to the release of the videotape, more than 3,000 pages of grand jury material are released.
- October 5, 1998: In a party-line vote of 21-16, the House Judiciary Committee votes to open a full impeachment inquiry.
- October 8, 1998: The U.S. House of Representatives, roughly along party lines (258-176), votes to open a full impeachment inquiry.
- November 3, 1998: Election Day. Democrats pick up 5 House seats in an election that is widely interpreted as a rebuke to those seeking the President's impeachment.
- November 19, 1998: Ken Starr testifies in front of the House Judiciary Committee, which is considering the impeachment of the President.
- December 11-12, 1998: The House Judiciary Committee approves 4 Articles of Impeachment against President Clinton.
- December 16-17, 1998: President Clinton orders a military attack on Iraq for failure to comply with United Nations weapons inspectors. Impeachment deliberations are suspended.
- December 18, 1998: U.S. House of Representatives begins impeachment debate.
- December 19, 1998: The U.S. House of Representatives approves 2 Articles of Impeachment against President Clinton.
- January 7, 1999: The U.S. Senate begins the Impeachment Trial.
- February 12, 1999: President Clinton is acquitted on both Articles by the U.S. Senate.

Reaction to Events: Public Opinion Polls

Throughout the scandal many political observers were confounded by the public's reaction to developing events. Despite the scandalous revelations, the president's popularity remained high. The following figures reveal President Clinton's job approval ratings, as measured by the Gallup Poll, from the delivery of the *Starr Report* through the President's Senate acquittal. As can be seen in Table 1, the President's popularity hovered around 65% throughout the period, and spiked at 73% as the President was impeached by the U.S. House of Representatives.

Table 1. President Clinton's Job Approval as measured by the Gallup Poll

<i>% Approval</i>	<i>Date</i>
59%	January 1998
69%	after scandal breaks
55%	February 1998
66%	March 1998
63%	April 1998
64%	May 1998
60%	June 1998
65%	July 1998
62%	August 1998
66%	after August 17 speech
66%	September 1998
66%	October 1998
66%	November 1998
73%	December 1998 after
67%	January 1999

Clinton's solid job approval ratings surprised many pundits, as did the public's strong reaction against the Republican Congress as it maneuvered toward impeachment.

Almost immediately after the scandal broke, some were calling for the President's resignation. After the initial firestorm had subsided calls for the President to resign were fewer. However, after Starr issued his report, many of the nation's editorial pages renewed the demand. The following major newspapers urged a presidential resignation by mid-September 1998: *USA Today*, *The Denver Post*, *The Atlanta Journal Constitution*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Indianapolis Star*, *The New Orleans Times-Picayune*, *The*

Cincinnati Enquirer, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, *The Salt Lake City Deseret News*, *The Salt Lake Tribune*, and *The Seattle Times*.¹). Yet, as measured by the Gallup Poll, there was little support for the notion that the President should have resigned. Throughout the period, roughly 60% opposed resignation and once again, support for the President peaked during the impeachment vote, as 69% opposed resignation.

The course of action that seemed to be preferred by a majority of Americans was a Congressional censure of the President. Republican leaders argued that the Constitution did not permit censure. Democrats argued that the U.S. Senate had censured President Andrew Jackson, and that action had stained his record. As the politicians argued about the permissibility and impact of censure, the public seemed to support the course as a middle-ground solution. As measured by the Gallup Poll, nearly 60% of Americans consistently supported the censure of the President during the critical impeachment period.

Finally, once the impeachment die had been cast, the public had a strong negative reaction toward the possibility that the President would be convicted and removed from office. Consistently, the public opposed the removal of President Clinton on these charges. Yet again, the highest level of public support for Clinton came as the House voted to impeach, as 68% opposed Senate conviction.

Despite these poll numbers suggesting support for the President, other polls were revealing the public's disapproval of the President's actions. A CBS Poll taken during the months leading toward impeachment asked: "Do you think Bill Clinton shares the moral values most American try to live by, or doesn't he?" Fully 63% responded that Clinton *does not* share these values. Only 30% responded that the President does share the moral values most American try to live by.² Similar polls taken by Gallup revealed the same pattern, as only 38% believed the President shared their values in March 1998, and that dipped to 35% in January 1999. Only 31% of those polled by Gallup in August 1998 (the month Clinton admitted his relationship with Lewinsky) found Clinton "honest and trustworthy," yet by a 56-42% majority, in the same poll, respondents were "glad Bill Clinton is president." Taken together, these conflicting poll results were interpreted by some as evidence of a confused public. As Sonner and Wilcox (1999) have noted, "In January 1999, President Bill Clinton was, paradoxically, the most publicly shamed president of modern times and one of the most popular" (p. 554).

¹ Source: <http://www.sonic.net/SCRA/news-resign.htm>.

² Source: <http://www.pollingreport.com>.

The Design of the Study

After the delivery of the *Starr Report* to the U.S. House of Representatives, and the subsequent transmission of that report to the public via the Internet, discussion of the possible resolutions of the Clinton/Lewinsky matter were no longer theoretical musings. Starr's report was filed under that portion of the Independent Counsel Law that called upon the prosecutor to make evidence of an "impeachable offense" available to Congress. In addition to the written report, Starr made available to the Congress Clinton's videotaped grand jury testimony. The House of Representatives voted to release that videotape to the public and it was broadcast to the nation. The specter of impeachment now hung over Capitol Hill.

As the pundits, politicians, and the public began to comment on the scandal in this politically charged environment, the authors set out to exploit the advantages of Q methodology in order to help clarify the various views of the scandal. The measurement phase of Q methodology typically consists of a participant rank ordering a set of stimulus objects (usually written statements) from *agree* to *disagree*, along a continuum of positive to negative numerical values. For example, a set of 30 or so statements about the Clinton/Lewinsky affair might be selected from the media, and each of 25 participants might be asked to reproduce their own view by Q sorting the items in terms of the extent to which they agreed with them. Factor analysis reduces the 25 responses to their basic forms, which may consist of only three or four essentially different viewpoints. The particular advantages of studying public opinion via Q methodology have been described as follows:

Fundamentally, Q methodology is of utility in penetrating a situation in which the self is intimately involved, whether in political or other matters. It is therefore pertinent in the study of public opinion and attitudes... Where individuals are involved and can be expected to entertain viewpoints with respect to things going on around them, however subjective these viewpoints may be, Q technique and its methodology can illuminate in broad outline the major effects that are operating. (Brown 1980, 58)

The authors gathered a set of approximately 200 statements of opinion concerning the scandal from the popular press: e.g., *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Time Magazine*, *Newsweek Magazine*, *U.S. News & World Report*, local newspapers, etc. These statements were edited where necessary and then categorized into pro- and anti-Clinton and neutral categories, and 10 from each of the three categories were selected, for a Q sample of 30 (see Appendix). Students in an undergraduate Political Science class at Kent State University (Ohio) performed the Q sort first and then each administered it to two other persons, for a total of 47. Another 26 Q sorts were obtained from

students at Westminster College (Pennsylvania). The statements were sorted under the condition of instruction, *most agree* to *most disagree*. The two sets of Q sorts were analyzed separately using the QMethod statistical program (Atkinson 1992), the Kent sample producing four factors, the Westminster sample producing three. Similarities in the factor structures led to a refactoring of the data. The second-order factor analysis revealed that the three Westminster factors matched three of the Kent factors almost exactly as the following refactoring in Table 2 indicates.

Table 2. Clinton/Lewinsky Affair Second-Order Factor Analysis

Factor	Second Order Factors			
	A	B	C	D
Kent 1	(0.97)	0.04	0.12	-0.08
Kent 2	-0.12	(0.95)	-0.09	0.04
Kent 3	-0.25	0.24	0.09	(0.83)
Kent 4	-0.04	0.15	(-0.74)	0.52
Westminster 1	(0.96)	-0.07	0.07	-0.17
Westminster 2	0.10	(0.90)	-0.13	0.28
Westminster 3	0.16	-0.10	(0.84)	0.29

Factor A: Conservative Spin

Factor A might be characterized as the Conservative Spin on the scandal. The major theme of Factor A is that Clinton committed impeachable offenses, and that he must be held accountable. In addition, Factor A believes that Clinton is "solely responsible" for his predicament, and has demeaned the office of the presidency. The following statements are ranked most positively in Factor A:

+4 Statements

18. It is my belief that if the president lied under oath before the grand jury, that is an impeachable offense.
24. How is it a private matter when the president of the United States, a man who has sworn to uphold the Constitution and the laws of the land, turns out to have lied for seven months?

+3 Statements

28. Clinton's actions constituted a critical lapse in judgment and a personal failing on his part, for which he is solely and completely responsible.

17. Clinton acted as if he does not recognize what it means to be president of the United States. This office he sought all his life, for what? To hit on an intern about the age of his own daughter?
19. As a matter of fact, he did have sexual relations with “that woman, Miss Lewinsky,” and no amount of hair-splitting as to the exact variety of sex can erase that fact.

+2 Statements

3. The president should resign.
9. Impeachment would be difficult and painful, but the courage to do what must be done is the price of remaining free.
14. I wonder about the country’s children. What do we tell them? What will they think?

Factor A rejects the claim that the Lewinsky scandal involves a private indiscretion on the part of the President and also dismisses the notion that Clinton’s definition of “sexual relations” clears him of the charges of perjury. Resignation or impeachment are seen by Factor A as appropriate resolutions of the crisis. These themes can also be seen when examining the statements that were most disagreed with.

-4 Statements

12. The matter is between Clinton, his wife, and their daughter. It’s nobody’s business but theirs.
8. He’s a human being. So what if he had some indiscretions.

-3 Statements

27. Clinton has admitted to a personal failing, but that does not constitute treason, bribery, and high crimes and misdemeanors that would justify impeachment.
15. I don’t condone lying generally, but I don’t blame a president for lying to protect the privacy of his family.
30. I don’t really care who Clinton is sleeping with. I expect him to be president, not a national saint. As far as I’m concerned he’s running the country well. He’s just not running his life very well.

-2 Statements

1. The videotape and other materials are a one-sided account of what’s happened: It’s the prosecutor’s version.

20. We know enough of the squalid details already. Rehashing them in impeachment hearings is really just an excuse to torture both Clinton and the country.
10. Whatever Clinton’s personal or moral failings may be, they are almost surely no worse than those of many of his predecessors.

In addition to supporting action against the President, Factor A rejects the idea that Clinton’s political opponents are exploiting his behavior, or, that Clinton’s behavior is no worse than those who preceded him in office. In short, the results of Factor A should not be surprising to those who followed the impeachment saga. Factor A essentially endorses the view of those most committed to the notion that the President’s behavior was serious enough to warrant impeachment and removal from office.

Factor B: Let’s Move On

Factor B, while far from condoning Clinton, felt that the Republicans had made a mountain out of a molehill, and urged getting beyond this event and on with more important things. The following statements were most agreed with by Factor 2:

+4 Statements

6. The Republicans now need to put the Lewinsky matter behind them and focus on issues that concern the typical American. The Congress needs to put people first.
18. Our obsession with this is totally out of proportion.

+3 Statements

23. This has gone on too long, cost too much, and hurt too many innocent people.
14. I wonder about the country’s children. What do we tell them? What will they think?
2. I don’t want him ousted, yet censure seems an empty penalty. Somehow we need to find a compromise that ends this madness without condoning the president’s behavior.

+2 Statements

16. The media, which have assigned packs of reporters and photographers to pursue the presidential scandal, have no space for the real crises facing us – of a world economy teetering on the brink.

28. Clinton's actions constituted a critical lapse of judgment and a personal failure on his part, for which he is solely and completely responsible.

Factor B is disgusted with Clinton and Republicans alike. "A pox on both your houses" might be its battle cry. The Republicans are taken to task for focusing on the Lewinsky matter at the expense of other public issues. Clinton is rebuked for a "critical lapse of judgment," and censure for his actions seems an "empty penalty." Factor B demonstrates a willingness to hold Clinton responsible, but a reluctance to elevate the situation to a matter of cosmic importance. The statements that are most disagreed with in Factor B also point to the theme of holding both Clinton and the Republicans responsible for the poisoned political atmosphere in Washington.

-4 Statements

22. It is one thing to turn the Lincoln Bedroom into a campaign ATM machine, but quite another to turn the Oval Office into a hot-sheet motel.
4. The *Starr Report* makes me feel dirty – as though were someone to walk in on me, I'd want to hide it under the desk.

-3 Statements

3. The president should resign.
13. The details of Starr's report were necessary because Clinton had denied having an affair.
7. The most important element of the punishment should be a requirement that Clinton show up in person to hear the debate over the censure resolutions.

-2 Statements

8. He's a human being. So what if he had some indiscretions?
17. Clinton acted as if he does not recognize what it means to be president of the United States. This office he sought all his life, for what? To hit on an intern about the age of his own daughter?
5. I'm stunned by the picture of the president treating a young woman in such an exploitative way.

In these statements, Factor B continues to reject the idea that Clinton's actions were "much ado about nothing." Yet, impeachment, resignation, and forms of public humiliation of Clinton are rejected as inappropriate remedies.

Factor C: Indignation-Cynicism

Factor C is a bipolar factor and revolves around issues of moral indignation and cynicism toward the political realm. The statements at the positive and negative poles are shown together to help identify the two views in opposition – the one embracing the statements at the positive pole and rejecting those at the negative pole, and the other embracing the negative and rejecting the positive:

Factor C+

+4 Statements

27. Clinton had admitted to a personal failing, but that does not constitute treason, bribery, and high crimes and misdemeanors.
13. The details of Starr's report were necessary because Clinton had denied having an affair.

+3 Statements

21. Americans would give up a lot to preserve their own fragile privacy, and so most will vicariously defend Clinton's.
26. The country has been plunged into a bizarre constitutional crisis — one that raises questions about where Americans draw the line on lying.
14. I wonder about the country's children. What do we tell them? What will they think?

+2 Statements

22. It is one thing to turn the Lincoln Bedroom into a campaign ATM machine, but quite another to turn the Oval Office into a hot-sheet motel.
17. Clinton acted as if he does not recognize what it means to be president of the United States. This office he sought all his life, for what? To hit on an intern about the age of his own daughter.
15. I don't condone lying generally, but I don't blame a president for lying to protect the privacy of his family.

The negative pole disagrees with all this. Factor C- doesn't care who Clinton's sleeping with: He's no worse than many of his predecessors. Those willing to replay the squalid details contained in the *Starr Report* during impeachment hearings are only demonstrating their willingness to torture the country in order to get to Clinton.

Factor C-+4 Statements

10. Whatever Clinton's personal or moral failings may be, they are almost surely no worse than those of many of his predecessors.
30. I don't really care who Clinton is sleeping with. I expect him to be president, not a national saint. As far as I'm concerned he's running the country well. He's just not running his life very well.

+3 Statements

20. We know enough of the squalid details already. Rehashing them in impeachment hearings is really just an excuse to torture both Clinton and the country.
18. Our obsession with this is totally out of proportion.
9. Impeachment would be difficult and painful, but the courage to do what must be done is the price of remaining free.

+2 Statements

4. The Starr Report makes me feel dirty — as though were someone to walk in on me, I'd want to hide it under the desk.
8. He's a human being. So what if he had some indiscretions?
23. This has gone on too long, cost too much, and hurt too many innocent people.

We venture that Factor C represents something of an indignation-cynicism dichotomy, with those at one end of the factor reacting moralistically and with concern for the impact on children (as an expression of moralism), while those at the other end are taking the view that "Well, what do you expect from a bunch of politicians."

Factor D: Leave Clinton Alone

Factor D was found only among Kent respondents (i.e., did not show up at Westminster College), and that fact may reveal something about the two institutions. Kent is a typical state university that draws on students from diverse backgrounds, whereas Westminster is a more exclusive four-year liberal arts college populated mainly by white, upper middle-class students with conservative social viewpoints, affluent lifestyles, and Republican family traditions. It is therefore understandable why the following statements, agreed to by Factor D, were scarce to non-existent among students on the Westminster campus:

+4 Statements

27. Clinton has admitted to a personal failing, but that does not constitute treason, bribery, and high crimes and misdemeanors.
30. I don't really care who Clinton is sleeping with. I expect him to be president, not a national saint. As far as I'm concerned, he's running the country well. He's just not running his life very well.

+3 Statements

8. He's a human being. So what if he had some indiscretions?
25. Most of those urging resignation are long-time Clinton critics — the "red meat guys" of the GOP.
26. The country has been plunged into a bizarre constitutional crisis — one that raises questions about where Americans draw the line on lying.

+2 Statements

6. The Republicans now need to put the Lewinsky matter behind them and focus on issues that concern the typical American. The Congress needs to put people first.
12. The matter is between Clinton, his wife, and their daughter. It's nobody's business but theirs.
28. Clinton's actions constituted a critical lapse of judgment and a personal failing, for which he is solely and completely responsible.

Factor D, like the negative pole of Factor C, distinguishes personality from role and has concluded that whereas Clinton the man is struggling, President Clinton appears to be functioning just fine; therefore, who he is sleeping with is of relatively little concern. But whereas Factor C- appears cynical, Factor D is more realistic in the sense that it sees the president as simply a "human being; so what if he had some indiscretions?" Factor D seems to be politically savvy concerning the "red meat guys of the GOP" and are quick to pick up that "those urging resignation are long-time Clinton critics."

In the statements most disagreed with in Factor D, resignation is rejected as an option, as is censure, and public humiliation of Clinton. These statements also reinforce a theme of the factor that Clinton's "offenses" are private in nature.

-4 Statements

7. The most important element of the punishment should be a requirement that Clinton show up in person to hear the debate over the censure resolution.
3. The president should resign.

-3 Statements

1. The videotape and other materials are a one-sided account of what's happened: It's the prosecutor's version.
4. The *Starr Report* makes me feel dirty – as though were someone to walk in on me, I'd want to hide it under the desk.
2. I don't want him ousted, yet censure seems such an empty penalty. Somehow we need to find a compromise that ends this madness without condoning the president's behavior.

-2 Statements

24. How is it a private matter when the president of the United States, a man who has sworn to uphold the Constitution and the laws of the land, turns out to have lied for seven months?
5. I am stunned by the picture of the president treating a young woman in such an exploitative way.
13. The details of Starr's report were necessary because Clinton had denied having an affair.

Summary

The genesis of this project lay in the pundit's confusion about public reaction to the impeachment spectacle. Conflicting poll results, in many ways unprecedented in nature, suggested to some a public whose mixed emotions meant an undefined view.

The study revealed four factors concerning attitudes toward the Clinton/Lewinsky scandal. Factor A provided a Conservative outlook condemning Clinton for his behavior and endorsing strong action against the President. Factor B thought the scandal to be overblown and consuming too much of the political leadership's attention. However, Factor B did not minimize the seriousness of Clinton's actions. Factor C is a bipolar factor that reflected a moral indignation-political cynicism dichotomy. Finally, Factor D views the President's indiscretion as private in nature, and blame Clinton's opponents for exploiting the issue.

These results are valuable both methodologically and in terms of their contribution to an understanding of recent events in U. S. politics.

Methodologically, the results add to the relatively small numbers of studies demonstrating that coherent points of view can be shown to exist independently of large sample of respondents, and to have generality beyond the locale in which they were obtained. Additionally, the results reveal the pundits' categories of Democrats vs. Republicans, etc., to be far too crude to capture the realities of public reactions of Factors A, B, C+, C-, and D, which are testimony to the value of measurement.

More generally, the study helps to demonstrate the utility of bringing Q methodology to bear on the study of public opinion, a utility first brought to the attention of social scientists by Stephenson (1964a,b,c). As has been noted:

The Q-methodological approach to public opinion remains very close to the actual facts of a situation in controversy and in these respects has affinity with the logic of naturalistic inquiry. The Q sample is composed of statements which persons have actually made in the course of expressing their opinions publicly; although edited, Q items are in no way revamped, as is done with scale items, so as to eliminate the kinds of ambiguities, conflicts, and inconsistencies that naturally occur in ordinary language. The factors are likewise natural, representing actual categories of thinking that are operant with respect to the issues under consideration." (Brown 1980, 70)

Finally, politically, and with hindsight on our side, we can perhaps begin to see why the Republican strategy ran aground in the November 1998 midterm election and why its leadership then came under fire within the Party, resulting in Newt Gingrich's abdication as Speaker of the House. The moral outrage of Factor A, however authentically felt, to a large extent fell on deaf ears outside this factor. Factor B thought all this bombast about impeachable offenses to have been so much hot air; Factor C+ was willing to accept Clinton as the culprit, but did not believe that what he did constituted grounds for impeachment; Factor C- was cynical about Clinton and his critics, hence was inoculated against Republican charges; and Factor D saw Clinton's behavior in personal, private terms.

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Appendix

Factor Arrays

No.	Statement	Factor Scores			
		A	B	C	D
1	The videotape and other materials are a one-sided account of what's happened: It's the prosecutor's version.	-2	0	-1	-3
2	I don't want him ousted, yet censure seems an empty penalty. Somehow we need to find a compromise that ends this madness without condoning the president's behavior.	0	3	1	-3
3	The president should resign.	2	-3	0	-4
4	The <i>Starr Report</i> makes me feel dirty – as though were someone to walk in on me, I'd want to hide it under the desk.	-1	-4	-2	-3
5	I'm stunned by the picture of the president treating a young woman in such an exploitative way.	0	-2	0	-2
6	The Republicans now need to put the Lewinsky matter behind them and focus on issues that concern the typical American. The Congress needs to put people first.	0	4	-1	2
7	The most important element of the punishment should be a requirement that Clinton show up in person to hear the debate over the censure resolution.	0	-3	0	-4
8	He's a human being. So what if he had some indiscretions.	-4	-2	-2	3
9	Impeachment would be difficult and painful, but the courage to do what must be done is the price of remaining free.	2	-1	-3	-1
10	Whatever Clinton's personal or moral failings may be, they are almost surely no worse than those of many of his predecessors.	-2	0	-4	0
11	It is my belief that if the president lied under oath before the grand jury, that is an impeachable offense.	4	-1	0	1
12	The matter is between Clinton, his wife, and their daughter. It's nobody's business but theirs.	-4	0	-1	2
13	The details of Starr's report were necessary because Clinton had denied having an affair.	1	-3	4	-2
14	I wonder about the country's children. What do we tell them? What will they think?	2	3	3	0
15	I don't condone lying generally, but I don't blame a president for lying to protect the privacy of his family.	-3	1	2	0
16	The media, which have assigned packs of reporters and photographers to pursue the presidential scandal, have no space for the real crises facing us – of a world economy teetering on the brink.	0	2	0	0

Factor Arrays - continued

No.	Statement	Factor Scores			
		A	B	C	D
17	Clinton acted as if he does not recognize what it means to be president of the United States. This office he sought all his life, for what? To hit on an intern about the age of his own daughter?	3	-2	2	-1
18	Our obsession with this is totally out of proportion.	-1	4	-3	-1
19	As a matter of fact, he did have sexual relations with “that woman, Miss Lewinsky,” and no amount of hair-splitting as to the exact variety of sex can erase that fact.	3	2	0	1
20	We know enough of the squalid details already. Rehashing them in impeachment hearings is really just an excuse to torture both Clinton and the country.	-2	1	-3	0
21	Americans would give up a lot to preserve their own fragile privacy, and so most will vicariously defend Clinton’s.	-1	0	3	0
22	It is one thing to turn the Lincoln Bedroom into a campaign ATM machine, but quite another to turn the Oval Office into a hot-sheet motel.	1	-4	2	1
23	This has gone on too long, cost too much, and hurt too many innocent people.	0	3	-3	1
24	How is it a private matter when the president of the United States, a man who has sworn to uphold the Constitution and the laws of the land, turns out to have lied for seven months?	4	-1	1	-2
25	Most of those urging resignation are long-time Clinton critics — the “red meat guys” of the GOP.	-2	0	1	3
26	The country has been plunged into a bizarre constitutional crisis – one that raises questions about where Americans draw the line on lying.	1	1	3	3
27	Clinton has admitted to a personal failing, but that does not constitute treason, bribery, and high crimes and misdemeanors that would justify impeachment.	-3	-1	4	4
28	Clinton’s actions constituted a critical lapse in judgment and a personal failing on his part, for which he is solely and completely responsible.	3	2	-1	2
29	The reckless president and the relentless prosecutor in the end have come to deserve each other, but the country deserves better.	1	0	0	-1
30	I don’t really care who Clinton is sleeping with. I expect him to be president, not a national saint. As far as I’m concerned he’s running the country well. He’s just not running his life very well.	-3	1	-4	4