

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. article	The Triumph of Hillary Clinton re: SSN [Personally Identifiable Information] [partial] (1 page)	00/00/0000	b(6)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
First Lady's Office
Lissa Muscatine
OA/Box Number: 21402

FOLDER TITLE:

Vogue 12/98

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RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
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COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

October 15, 1998

Dear Marsha:

Here's the essay I sent to Vogue on the
first lady. I enjoyed doing it.

Best,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ann Douglas", with a long, sweeping horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ann Douglas

The Triumph of Hillary Clinton by Ann Douglas

During Hillary Clinton's four-day "Save America's Treasures" tour to various historical sites in the eastern United States last July, large crowds of people, "presidential-size crowds," as one reporter put it, packed every place she stopped. On July 14, in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, where the first lady visited the Colonial Theatre, a 19th century architectural jewel now fronted by a paint store, about three thousand people had already gathered in the street outside the theater by noon, though she was not due until 4:30 p.m. One man I spoke to said he was happy to wait. "She's my girl," he explained, a "phenomenal person." A woman who expressed concern about jobs leaving the region was confident that "Hillary's visit will be a shot in the arm for Pittsfield." Earlier in the day, at Newburgh, New York, headquarters to George Washington for 18 months during the American Revolution, I talked to various members of the African American community as they cheered her arrival. "She looks much better and younger than on TV," one woman commented. Several young men were more outspoken: "Mrs. Clinton got it going on!" "She's the Chief!" "She can have me anytime!"

People lined the roads in and out of the towns Hillary Clinton visited, holding up their babies, eager to get a glimpse of her. Near Auburn, New York, a small girl outside D.B.'s Drive-in ice-cream store waved a sign at the first lady's bus, "Please stop here!" To everyone's surprise, the bus stopped, Hillary Clinton got out, bought an ice-cream cone (a small vanilla-chocolate twist), and chatted with Marilyn Biss, the proprietor, a widow with five children. She insisted on paying for her cone, though Mrs. Biss tried to dissuade her: "It's totally inexpensive, and you've been great for my lunch hour business." A boy with a blonde crew cut rode his bicycle up to the store and looked through the window to see what all the excitement was about.

“Holy cow!,” he exclaimed. “It’s Hillary Clinton!”

Once outside the Washington area, there was only one reminder of the Monica Lewinsky scandal afflicting the presidency. A small plane circled over the historical site of the Kate Mullany house (Mullany was a pioneering 19th century union organizer) in Troy, New York on July 15, with a trailer reading, “Who’s Watching Bill?” None of the bystanders I talked to about Hillary Clinton brought up the scandal. When I asked a woman in Troy her opinion, she dismissed the whole thing as “nonsense” and “no one’s business,” adding that men, including her own husband, “have been unfaithful since the beginning of time.”

In an interview in Washington two weeks later, Hillary Clinton told me that she wasn’t as comfortable speaking before a TV screen as in person. “I like live audiences, with real people—virtual reality is no substitute.” When I asked her if the tour had tired her, confessing that it had exhausted me, she said that getting out and talking with people, especially people who are “struggling against great odds but have hope and optimism and the feeling that they can make progress together” was “invigorating,” even “thrilling.” Attending a fancy dinner party, however, “where everyone sits around being cynical and pessimistic while they’re enjoying the highest standard of living known in the history of humankind—*that* I find exhausting.”

The photographers on the tour, most of whom had been covering the White House for a decade or more, were ardent fans. Campaigning with Reagan or Bush or even Clinton got boring, they said, because the speeches were always the same. But Hillary Clinton kept surprising them, deserting her text, emphasizing her themes at each stop, yet always adding new thoughts and words, responding to the particular audience she was addressing.

At Victor, New York she met with the Clan Mothers of the Iroquois nation for a roundtable discussion. When she addressed the Ganondagen State Historical Society near the

burial place of Jikohnsaheh, known as the “Mother of Nations,” an hour later, she invited them to imagine what the “*first millennium*” in America was like, when there were no white people in the land. This, too, is the American heritage, she said, and she ruminated on the Iroquois modes of decision-making that the Clan Mothers had just discussed with her—will this decision be one that leads to peace, honors mother nature, and holds good for seven generations? Speaking in Auburn at the home of Harriet Tubman, an escaped slave who became a leader of the underground railroad, she picked up on a line the Reverend Paul Carter, the custodian of the site, had used in introducing her: “It’s better to live for a cause than to just live because.” She likes wisdom literature, the shared insights built up from a long collective experience within a community, and she seconds Eleanor Roosevelt’s observation that “there is not one civilization . . . from which we cannot learn.”

July 19, the day of our first interview, was the day that President Clinton’s lawyer announced Clinton would testify before Kenneth Starr’s grand jury. As I waited in the White House press room for an aide to fetch me, a group of reporters returned from an event at which the first lady had announced a new stamp commemorating breast cancer research, one of her long-standing causes. A journalist explained to me that they didn’t care about the stamp; they wanted to “see how she’s taking it.” Yet, when I sat down with Hillary Clinton in the Map Room, once Franklin Roosevelt’s War Room and the place where President Clinton would be interrogated on camera by Starr’s aides a few weeks later, there was a sense of enormous, focused energy, and oddly enough, a kind of radiant peace. Crises can throw people onto their best, most fundamental reserves, resources no one taps voluntarily.

Nor was she remote. She asked me questions, too, about my teaching and writing, talking as if we were friends. Her voracious curiosity about the world around her is never sacrificed to

the putative requirements of her position—the personal self isn't buried within the vault of the public persona, but rather appropriates its official role as a fuller means of self-expression.

When you talk to her, there is no rind, no crust of official pretense barring the quick of the person from access. She's right there, alive from the start—the first spadeful comes up gold.

Her ability to respond on the spot to the people she meets doesn't suggest what most of us mean by spontaneity, however; she's not unguarded. One photographer told me that she always knows exactly where the cameras are when she's speaking in public and how to play to them. She is so thoroughly self-disciplined as a public performer and possibly as a private person that she can trust her unconscious impulses to elaborate and vary but not betray her conscious designs. She has the inestimable advantage of being all of one piece, a quality all public officials try to convey, that air of really meaning what they say, promising that what you see is what you get, but which few today actually pull off.

I noticed that if a question I asked her was somehow off target, she'd pause; she couldn't pick up a false lead and manipulate it into plausibility. Though capable of accommodation and open to new ideas, her mind is a truth-telling instrument operating out of a core of convictions that inform every detail of her experience. There's nothing cold or mechanical here—passion organizes the self more completely than calculation ever can.

The news corps, skeptical by profession and currently caught up in what historians will surely consider the supremely irresponsible instance of media madness in the 20th century, has not accurately presented to the public who has not directly encountered her the Hillary Clinton the public who meets her knows. Most of the sites she visited on her "Save America's Treasures" tour commemorated white, black, and Native American feminists, a first for such first lady initiatives, and she repeatedly underscored the fact that less than 1% of our historical

monuments are dedicated to women, yet the mainstream press gave the tour comparatively little coverage. Nor have they paid attention to her ongoing attempt to view women's and feminist issues as diverse and global, to link the achievements of suffragists, abolitionists, and labor organizers in the United States with the struggles of women today for economic and social opportunity in China, Africa, and Latin America. The media have decided that feminism, by which they always mean feminism in the United States, is in decline, and evidence to the contrary seldom interests them.

Speaking on July 16 at Seneca Falls, New York in honor of the 150th anniversary of Elizabeth Cady Stanton's "Declaration of Sentiments" (which officially kicked off the American suffrage movement), Hillary Clinton noted the shrinking numbers of American voters and reminded her audience that only votes can "guarantee results." By not voting, "today, women, we silence ourselves." Yet she has hardly been silent. Rather it is the media that attempt to mute Hillary Clinton, the most extraordinary first lady in our history.

Part of the difficulty is that Hillary Clinton is indeed formidable. In our two interviews in Washington in July and in Westport, Connecticut on October 7, after a Democratic fundraising dinner, I was struck by her height, the level quality of her blue-eyed gaze, her erect carriage, the head held high, the hum of authority that attends her, the confident air of wide intellectual command. Eleanor Roosevelt, the predecessor to whom she is most often compared, possessed a superb moral intelligence but in no sense was hers a trained intellect. Temperamentally, she was "perfectly insecure," as she once described herself, driven by a need to be needed that both opened and at moments blinded her to wider concerns.

When, during World War II, President Roosevelt and his closest aide Harry Hopkins, a longtime ally of Eleanor's as well, turned all their energies to international concerns, Eleanor felt

rejected and impotent. Despite her concern with human rights issues, she had to trust that Franklin and his advisors were right in deciding that no special effort, outside the attempt to win the war as quickly as possible, could be made to save Europe's Jews. She lacked the intellectual ammunition to question, much less fight them.

Hillary Clinton loves popular novels by women (*Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood* is a recent favorite) and reads detective fiction, or "cheap thrills," in her words, to relax, but she is also the first first lady who is an intellectual, who has exhaustively researched her goals and can defend them in meticulous detail, who looks to structural analysis as well as description to make her points, finding no arena of policy debate unfamiliar or intimidating. She is simply smarter than any press person she talks to, an experience which Washington's officials do not routinely offer the media personnel who cover them. Because the media get the last word, determining which shot, which sentence of many, will make the evening news, they have confused their short-term power with their long-term qualifications for it, routinely whittling down the people they cover to their own proportions, seldom dreaming that they have left the real story on the cutting room floor.

Today's daily media make their living by violating the traditional line between the public and the private. Anyone who refuses to help them do so, whose life offers little dirt to be dug up, who shows no interest in the confessional mode, becomes in some sense an enemy, particularly if the person is a woman.

As the Monica Lewinsky affair in every sordid detail became public knowledge, even Patricia Ireland, the president of NOW, expressed some dissatisfaction with Hillary Clinton's resolute silence: "At least we want to know she kicked his butt." In the tell-all postmodern age of Oprah Winfrey and Jerry Springer, Hillary Clinton has mounted a heroic, one-woman

campaign to re-establish the boundary line between public and private that the media have erased. The real self always requires a veil among its costume possibilities. Minimizing or distorting coverage of the public Hillary Clinton is in part the revenge the media take for the withdrawal of the private woman from their gaze.

In fact, Hillary Clinton's entire career has been dedicated to a goal in some sense the opposite of the media's. She loved the fact that the people of Newburgh turned out to see her on a sweltering July afternoon at a time when they would ordinarily be off the streets in their homes and offices. She wants to persuade people to be "participants," not "dropouts," "to come back into the public space again," not as confessional subjects but as citizens, a word she values enormously, and to make that space "enjoyable" and "fun."

No one in public life today stresses the importance of families as strongly and in such intelligent detail as Hillary Clinton does, yet she constantly acknowledges that the family, the institution of private life, cannot do the job alone. "We're shaped by our families," she told me, "but we're also shaped by the forces that shape our families," the schools our children attend, the police who guard the streets on which they play, the political bodies which legislate what health coverage and day care will be available to them. While not advocating a return to the full-fledged New Deal state, she has asked repeatedly who benefits from the dismantling of federal programs that has been the political fashion in the last several decades. Certainly not her special constituents, those "struggling against great odds."

Her mother, the child of divorced parents, had "a perfectly miserable childhood" but others outside the family circle stepped in and their help made all the difference. You can't condemn people to the luck of the first draw, not if you have looked, as she has in her work with abused children, into the faces of children for whom the first hand they were dealt was nearly

fatal and seen the “pain they have gone through and the confusion it creates in them.” For the first lady, the public space is not the place where the private dysfunction is to be revealed and exposed for media profit, but the larger, more neutral ground on which the solitary self can be made functional, part of the community, again. Where the media cannibalize and contract the public sphere, she wants to expand it.

In her address at her graduation from Wellesley College in 1969, which got her picture in *Life* magazine, her first moment of national exposure, Hillary Rodham spoke of her generation’s dissatisfaction with America’s public policies and values, of their search for a way of living “more immediate, ecstatic, and penetrating” than that of their elders. Yet she noted a “conservative strain” amid the collegiate protests, a “harkening back to . . . the old virtues, to the fulfillment of the original ideals.” It is her longstanding mix of old and new feminist and political styles that prompted Wendy Wasserstein’s recent protest at what she takes to be Hillary’s “confusing signals” to feminists and compounds the media’s ongoing difficulty in reading and presenting her.

A successful operator in the modern male world of secular power politics, unsentimental, “very sharp, very Chicago,” as an early observer described her, with a wicked sense of humor and a quick laugh that can approach a shout, she is also deeply religious in ways that her reform-minded Victorian predecessors would have instantly understood. Like them, she wants to bring the religious and spiritual values that sustain her into the public discourse, though she knows how difficult that is today. (The Christian ideals advocated by politicians too often bear the “heavy imprint of coercive moralizing and partisan institutional and political aims.”) Lucretia Mott, one of feminism’s 19th century founders, used the habit of prayer as a divining rod to appropriate political action, and prayer is part of Hillary Clinton’s daily discipline, too. It’s “a

multitpurpose kind of experience” for her, “that moment of respite that the entire body gets refreshed from. It’s not just mental, it’s physical and emotional and spiritual.”

Her avoidance of the language of pop psychology or psychoanalysis, her habit of situating every aspect of her experience in what she calls “the larger context of faith,” her constant emphasis on being “positive” and “optimistic,” have something in common with the turn-of-the-century mind-cure movements that produced Mary Baker Eddy’s Christian Science. Like many 19th century women before her, she keeps a commonplace book, though she doesn’t get much chance to write in it these days, filled with quotations she finds helpful, “to derive support from what somebody else has gone through and how they articulated it.”

Uninterested in fashion before she came to the White House, Hillary Clinton has learned to dress with style, often in smart pant suits by Oscar de la Renta, large hats, and practical but chic heels. Yet she’s not a trend setter. On the tour, her daytime wear didn’t vary much except by color--beige one day, peach or blue the next--and the pearl strand and brooches she favors as accessories are familiar to any woman who remembers the 1950s. She’s settled on a look that’s good for her, extremely becoming but serviceable, a kind of uniform or habit, designed as much to deflect attention as to catch it.

People in habits don’t have to resemble nuns or postmen or lack sex appeal. The cabdriver who took me from the Washington, D.C. train station to the White House, an emigrant from Nigeria, described himself as a love-struck fan of the first lady, adding, “You’d be surprised how many men in Washington have crushes on her.” Watching her on tour, talking to her in person, I knew exactly what he meant. It’s not just her good looks, the strong classic features, the generous mouth and blonde hair, the trim yet maternal body, though she’s in that small select group of women who are far more beautiful at 50 than they were at 30. It’s also the public power

so easily carried in her person.

Power as an aphrodisiac, as sex appeal, is generally associated with men because they long monopolized it, but when a woman wears it, as increasing numbers do today, it works just as effectively, on other women as well as men, perhaps more so because we're not trained to expect it. Hillary Clinton has charisma, an inescapable aura magically altering the atmosphere she occupies. Habits don't connote abstinence or Puritanism. A habit is simply the badge of a chosen role, advertising a life of service to something larger than the person who wears it, an allegiance to a tradition that predates and outlasts her. Her clothes work, wonderfully, but they work for her, never the other way around.

By its design, Hillary's "Save America's Treasures" tour was a mercy trip to the dying, to parts of the American heritage that have fallen into disrepair because their communities no longer know how to use them. The home for the elderly colored population that Harriet Tubman established in Auburn is open to the public and eloquent with Spartan simplicity, but Tubman's private residence on the same plot of ground is in such complete disrepair that the local Methodist pastor, Richard Stuart, told me it would take a minimum of \$200,000 to restore it; Bitsy Folger's \$10,000 donation, announced that day by the first lady, could barely begin the job.

By saving such landmarks and living with them daily, Hillary Clinton believes that "you begin to tell yourselves and your children the story [of your town]. That makes America more real." She has pledged the proceeds from her new book, *Dear Socks, Dear Buddy: Kids' Letters to the First Pets* (Simon & Schuster), to the National Park Foundation within whose purview many of the monuments she visited fall. But the task of preservation is a hard one, particularly in a country where its funding has always been largely private, and where, as Roberta Brandes Gratz, author of *Cities Back from the Edge: New Life for Downtown* (John Wiley & Sons, 1998),

puts it, restoration of monuments like Tubman's home, which "happens in small increments, hasn't gained the star status that big stadium and casino projects have."

And what has become of the feminist legacy the "Save America's Treasures" tour dramatized and honored? Various commentators have suggested that the committed feminist has been replaced by the shallow, self-centered, Allie McBeal-style narcissist. For Princeton feminist historian Christine Stansell, writing about Elizabeth Cady Stanton in the *New Republic* on August 10, 1998, young feminists like Katie Roiphe and Elizabeth Wurtzel look "whining and self-indulgent" next to their great predecessors, "unable to grasp the requirements of the world outside the self."

Hillary Clinton, who believes that feminism is in "a time of transition," is not discouraged. In today's world of constant change and "fatigue with analysis," "it's natural for people to fall back on themselves, and think they have to work through their own issues before they can take them to the public arena The real *grace* of this period is that we have so many options to choose among with respect to our individual lives. The key will be how we take those individual decisions and turn them into a new kind of community. It took time for the women of 1848 to reach their clarity of purpose, as it will today to find out what we really want to stand up and fight for, but I think that is coming."

She may well be right. Feminism today has not fully formulated its positive goals, but it seems to be in the process of correcting some of its past errors, an indispensable step in the process, and the presidential sex scandal, strangely enough, is serving as catalyst.

In the first half of the 19th century, when white middle-class American women began collectively to formulate their grievances and seek to redress them, they built their case on the argument for universal human rights imbedded in the Declaration of Independence and the

Constitution. "We hold these truths to be self-evident," the Seneca Falls "Declaration of Sentiments" boldly states, "that all men *and women* are created equal." Yet side by side with this argument, another line of reasoning developed, one based on special gender privilege rather than universal equality.

The only recognized authority the Victorian lady had rested on women's putative moral superiority to man—"Man the murderer, woman the mourner," "a fiend and an angel," was the way Sarah Josepha Hale, editor of *Godey's Lady's Book*, described the sexes in 1835.

Understandably, women sometimes argued that they should have the vote on the grounds that they alone could rescue society at large from the contamination of the inherently masculine preoccupations with money-making and sex. The early feminist movement's sometimes shrill commitment to the prohibition cause, its outspoken resistance to civil liberties for "inferior" African Americans, and its over-zealous crusade against prostitutes and their male clients were part of this purity tactic. Women's real business was punishing masculine immorality.

In the last several decades, amid successful efforts to revise laws that offered little recourse to female victims of rape, sexual harassment, and economic discrimination, the same self-righteous, blinkered tone has occasionally been sounded in white feminist ranks as women ask both for equal rights and special protection in their exercise. The Paula Jones and Monica Lewinsky cases have not prompted feminist leaders to call for a return to yesterday's legal and social sanction of male irresponsibility, but a number of feminists have recently made strong statements about what does and does not constitute actionable male conduct in the work place, and about the limits of male culpability.

Appearing on Larry King on September 22, 1998, Patricia Ireland, despite her expressed dislike for President Clinton's sexual behavior, could not be bullied into condemning the public

official for the sins of the private man, insisting that she was more offended by the attempt to overturn the results of a national election against the wishes of two thirds of the American people than by the President's being "serviced," as Larry King provocatively put it, by an intern. Even when a clearly frustrated Larry King told her that her position was equivalent to supporting Hitler because he built the Autobahn, Ireland remained cool. Clinton's policies have helped women, she pointed out, and as a grown-up participant in the political process, that fact is important to her and the women she represents.

Jean E. Howard, a leading academic feminist and head of the Institute for Research on Women and Gender at Columbia University, told me that the focus on the personal aspects of the Jones and Lewinsky scandals, the emphasis on a private act rather than its public consequences--did either women lose a job? was either forced into unwanted sex? did the president's private acts of themselves hamper or corrupt his performance of his public duties? To Howard, the answer is clearly "no" on all three counts--was a "grotesque trivialization of real feminist issues." Feminists, Howard says, are refusing to take up the old role of "sex police" or play into the hands of those whose interests it would serve if they did so. They are drawing much the same distinction between the public and private realms that Hillary Clinton exemplifies.

Howard has nothing but admiration for Hillary Clinton's achievements and conduct, though she doubts that even Clinton can succeed in modernizing the first lady role. Only when we have a woman president, Howard believes, and see a "first gentleman" forced to renounce the policy-making authority to which his brains and training entitle him, becoming a hostage or handmaiden to the state, will Americans grasp how outdated the first lady position now is.

Yet Hillary Clinton's finest achievement over the last six years has been to do what *is* possible, finding a productive middle ground as first lady, using the symbolic powers of her

office to work for broad-ranging yet concrete change in the face of what sometimes seem nonstop right-wing opposition and willful media obtuseness. Her enchanting new book, *Dear Socks, Dear Buddy*, which at first glance seems a spin-off of Barbara Bush's book on her dog Millie, is, in fact, a perfect example of this mix of the symbolic and pragmatic.

The kids' letters to the first pets printed here are full of questions-- "How do you like being a dog, Buddy? I like being a person." "Do you have a secret service agent?" The children have thrown their imaginations out into space to land on a cat and a dog. In her introduction, Hillary Clinton notes that at 5, her daughter Chelsea wrote a letter to a politician but received no answer—she never wrote such a letter again. The letters to the first pets are answered, by the veterans in the U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's House in Washington, D.C.; they've been heard. Kids love their pets because they know their pets won't hurt or betray them—pets provide a safety zone for the affections, a first step toward the larger, more dangerous "public space" Hillary Clinton is recreating.

The philosopher William James thought the "will to believe" a distinguishing mark of the American character, and what Hillary Clinton gives the people who hear her is her own form of evangelical purpose, fresh contact with the ideals on which America was founded. Without blinking the violations to which they've been subjected—ideals which exist on paper only "can be a cruel hoax"—she knows that most Americans, no matter how disillusioned and disinherited they sometimes feel, are waiting to be given the chance to believe in them too.

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Ann Douglas is Parr Professor of Comparative Literature at Columbia University. She is the author of *Terrible Honesty: Mongrel Manhattan in the 1920s*, and is working on a book about cold war culture.

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NO. OF PAGES (INCLUDING COVER PAGE): 7

Here's a copy of Ann Douglas' recent piece on the media for The L.A. Times; since the direct copy from The newspaper is of so poor quality, I'm also sending a hard copy from our files.

freed new pol. fem. search facilitator - moving to new + priv. Michael Mallick what did I mean by
Asst. to Ann Douglas
4. Book
1. Goals - the campaign
2. Crucial role of women - election
3. election that is critical moment + feminism
comes of age - acting like adults - imp. for pol. interests + goals
Come to event

Political Riptides

Searching for solid information in the media's sibling rivalry.

By Ann Douglas

NEW YORK

The most prolific periods of public scandal and sensational trials in 20th-century American history have been the 1920s, the 1950s and the 1970s; the three decades that witnessed the birth of a new medium. New media technology multiplies the possibilities of attention; the media "struts in trade" when people invent new tools. They will maximize the situations in which they can best test and display them.

The rise of media development has always been sibling rivalry. Unlike the traditional arts, all the media from movies to radio to television and now the Internet, have aimed for something like a universal audience, an assurance that, by definition, any newer medium displaces. Silent movies lost audiences to radio as radio subsequently did to TV.

Yet before the advent of television, no single medium dominated the market. TV's protruded hegemony coincided with America's post-World War II superpower status, McCarthyism and a particular kind of mass media, whose duration exactly paralleled that of the Cold War. Just as online is dwarfing secondary news syndicates with the age of free-trade journalism that succeeded in media when not reputation at the horror.

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Ann Douglas, who teaches cultural history at Columbia University, is the author of "Feminine Mystique: Margaret Mead's Mission in the 1920s." She is working on a book about Cold War culture.

Media

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ical moment when a new contestant upsets the media order. In the 1920s, radio and the tabloids challenged the older print press, which responded by allocating almost as much space to coverage of Leopold and Loeb, the Hall-Mills murder case and the Scopes trial as the newer media did. It was a Daily News reporter, however, who in 1928 snatched, with a secret camera strapped to his ankle, a picture of convicted murderer Ruth Snyder being electrocuted. It was published on the front page, under the headline "Ruth Dies."

The 1950s brought the sensational trials of Alger Hiss, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg and the Kefauver hearings on organized crime. Virginia Hilder, believed to be a courier for the underworld, appeared before the Kefauver Committee in New York dressed in a silver mink stole and matching coat, a silver thirty-million TV news-woman's jet contraption. At the photographers' whim, blocked her with "You bastards, I hope a goddamn atom bomb falls on every goddamn one of you." Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy, a firm believer in conspicuous shows of exposure, document, and witness, would have hourly appeared in independent counsel Kenneth W. Starr's delivery of 20 boxes of evidence to Congress before a host of cameras, and in 1970, and only in the media at once, playing piano and radio off against their new, new television.

Let the accusation have a look continued next in the 1950s. Despite the fact that McCarthy brought in and out, as charges of communism against them, newspapers admitted their coverage policies to circumvent him. In 1964, Edward R. Murrow exposed McCarthy on the CBS show "See It Now," and the large major network stopped granting him live air time to answer his opponents. The most shocking word, the loudest voice, the most flamboyant image, did not automatically win.

last January, when Linda R. Tripp's tapes of Monica S. Lewinsky's telephone conversations about her affair with the president were allegedly leaked by Starr's office to the news media, the media made a momentous decision, namely to grant a story founded at that moment in rumors and ill-gotten second- or third-hand information—soft news by any previous definition—the kind of saturation coverage usually accorded at least by the media elite, only to hard news. An undeclared war between the news media and their audience began. The media insisted that they determined what was real news, that this was information which should change public views about President Bill Clinton's fitness for office.

With equal tenacity, however, a majority of the public has continued to maintain, via the polls, their only weapon in this uneven contest: that while their view of Clinton the man has softened, their view of Clinton the president has not.

By way of self justification, the media points to the fact that Americans turn in more press coverage than they say they want to see. Because people invariably slow down to look at accidents on the freeway, are we to conclude they want to see things happen so that it is the business of highway authorities to insure similar repeat accidents? Extracting a general moral apology by sanctification is certainly easy, and extrajudicial harassment becomes a far more important, if clearer, alternative to the media and its laws.

Atlanta Americans have been particularly hostile to Ben M. Mingo, a member of the House of Representatives, who last week charged that blacks sympathize with Communism. They don't know what it feels like to be treated like a second-class citizen, he complained. For his actions, Mingo has been censured. Still, he and his supporters in the House and elsewhere want to know how many Americans are well protected from Communism, whether or not they are black or white. With police alert to the danger, the danger is considered a thing of the past, previously unimaginable.

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The West has never renounced its technological advances, nor should it. But the imperative of the 21st century will be to devise genuinely global methods of economic regulation and ethical control for the global system, from the Internet to transnational capital. It has emerged from the 20th. The other media's mindless emulation of their younger, faster online competitor is no more the answer to the problems of the information age than the International Monetary Fund's case-by-case method is the solution to today's global economic crisis—a crisis that not even the congressional and media globalization of the presidential scandal can camouflage indefinitely.

Microsoft is now officially the wealthiest and most powerful technology corporation in the world. A new division of the media pie is irrevocably underway. But if history has anything to teach us, there will be real compensation for the apparent losers. Radio survived in the age of TV by concentrating on what it did best—by focusing on specialist markets and technological advances of its own: clock radios, car radios and transistors. The relative slowness of press and TV coverage allows for fact-checking, reflection and balanced analysis. Omnipresent and omnivorous, online traverses networks and replicates the ever-expanding world we occupy. But print, radio and television, if they do their job, can help in the nearly impossible task of explanation.

Searching for solid information in the media's sibling rivalry.

By Ann Douglas. [published in *L.A. Times* 9/20/98]

The most profligate periods of public scandal and sensational trials in 20th-century American history have been the 1920s, the 1950s, and the 1990s—the three decades that witnessed the birth of a new medium. New media technology multiplies the possibilities of attention, the media's stock in trade; when people invent new tools, they will maximize the situations in which they can best test and display them.

The law of media development has always been sibling rivalry. Unlike the traditional arts, all the media, from movies to radio to TV and now the Internet, have aimed for something like a universal audience, an empire which by definition any newer medium threatens. Silent movies lost audiences to radio as radio subsequently did to TV. Yet prior to the advent of television, no single medium conclusively dominated the market. TV's protracted hegemony coincided with the United States's post-WWII superpower status, imposing a kind of *pax technologica*, a truce in media land, whose duration exactly paralleled that of the Cold War—just as online's dawning ascendancy seems synonymous with the age of free trade globalism that succeeded it.

Technological revolution doesn't necessarily change the corporate picture. Radio financed television, transforming its network structure to the newer medium, as today the entertainment and news industry is buying into online. Both radio and television were tied into the defense industry; online is crucial to the functioning of the transnational corporation, the conquering army of the late 20th century. But however safe the big corporation dollars over the long run, individual media executives, commentators, and performers, the people involved with day-to-day programming and revenues, have every reason to feel threatened by a newer

medium's rise to power. The bottom of the ocean is still as a bank vault, but there's a hell of a storm at sea.

Media ethics get rewritten at just the historical moment when a new contestant upsets the media order. In the 1920s, radio and the tabloids challenged the older print press, which responded by allocating almost as much space to Leopold and Loeb, the Hall-Mills murder case, and the Scopes trial as the newer media did. (It was a *Daily News* reporter, however, who in 1928 snapped, with a secret camera strapped to his ankle, a picture of convicted murderer Ruth Snyder being electrocuted, published on the front page under the headline, "RUTH FRIES!") The 1950s brought the sensational trials of Alger Hiss and the Rosenbergs and the Kefauver hearings on organized crime. Mrs. Virginia Hauser, believed to be a courier for the underworld, appeared before the Kefauver Committee in New York, dressed in a silver mink stole and matching gray gloves. Thirty million television viewers witnessed her outburst at the photographers who impeded her path: "You bastards, I hope a goddamn atom bomb falls on every goddamn one of you!"

Senator Joe McCarthy, a firm believer in conspicuous shows of excess documentation who would have heartily approved Kenneth Starr's delivery of 36 boxes of evidence to Congress before a host of TV cameras, managed to feed and bully all the media at once—playing press and radio off against their new rival, television. Yet the accusation-happy 1950s look restrained next to the 1990s. Despite the fact that McCarthy brought lawsuits as well as charges of Communism against them, newspapers adapted their coverage policies to circumvent him. In 1954, Edward R. Murrow exposed him on his CBS show "See It Now," and the three major networks stopped granting him free air time to answer his opponents. The most shocking word, the loudest voice, the most flamboyant image, did not automatically win.

Last January when Linda Tripp's tapes of Monica Lewinsky's telephone conversations about her affair with the president were leaked by Kenneth Starr's office to the news media, the media made a momentous decision, namely to grant a story founded at that moment in rumors and ill-gotten second or third hand information, soft news by any previous definition, the kind of saturation coverage usually accorded, at least by the media elite, only to hard news. An undeclared war between the news media and their audience began. The media insisted that they determined what was real news, that this was information which should change public views about Clinton's fitness for office.

With equal tenacity, however, a majority of the public has continued to maintain via the polls, their only weapon in this uneven contest, that while their view of Clinton the man has suffered, their view of Clinton the president has not. By way of self-justification, the media point to the fact that Americans turn in droves to just the coverage they say they don't wish to see. Because people invariably slow down to look at car accidents on the highway, are we to conclude that they want accidents to happen or that it is the business of highway authorities to intensify their impact and incidence? Extracting a presidential apology by sanctimonious editorializing and outright harassment became ever more important. If Clinton apologized, the news media did not have to.

African Americans have been particularly loyal to Clinton. Congresswoman Maxine Waters, a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, explained last week that blacks sympathize with Clinton because they, too, know what it feels like to be treated unfairly, to be publicly humiliated by prosecutors abusing their powers. Self-righteous moralizing is best practiced, in other words, by those who know themselves to be well protected from retaliation, those whose glass houses are least likely to attract stones. With online added to the family, the

media today constitute a weapon of previously unimaginable, quasi-nuclear proportions, and weapons are seldom turned on those who control them.

The West has never renounced its technological advances, nor should it. But the imperative of the 21st century will be to devise genuinely global methods of economic regulation and ethical control for the global systems, from the Internet to transnational capital, it has inherited from the 20th. The older media's mindless emulation of its youngest, fastest online competitor is no more the answer to the problems of the information age than the IMF's case by case method is the solution to today's global economic crisis—a crisis that not even the congressional and media globalization of the presidential scandal can camouflage indefinitely.

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