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# Trends. Clinton/Lewinsky, Star Chambers, The Starr Report: E Pluribus Unum or E Uno Plures?

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So the report is finally out. As of this writing there are 11 alleged offenses that may be impeachable. 11! Until one reads the offenses one might believe that horrendous new allegations are being made. 11 women? 11 alleged crimes--e.g., murder, treason, bribery (two of the three explicitly mentioned by the United States (U.S.) Founding Fathers in Article II, Section 4, of the U.S. Constitution as "high Crimes and Misdemeanors")--of which the Lewinsky matter comprises but one? But no, the 11 appears to be 11 versions of the same matter.

The matter? The President engaging in sexual acts with a woman not his wife and then trying to cover it up. The 11 alleged offenses? Lying four times under oath about it, trying once to prevent information about it from reaching legal authorities, trying twice to influence the woman to also lie and prevent information about it from reaching legal authorities, lying once about what he told a friend about it, trying once to influence an employee about how to testify about it, lying once (this once apparently being a compendium of many onces) to numerous others about it so that they would relay the lies to legal authorities, committing acts (accreted as once) about it inconsistent with the President's constitutional duty to....(not lie about it, not attempt to prevent information from getting out about it, not influence others to lie and prevent information from getting out about it, not to commit acts about it inconsistent with the President's constitutional duty to ....(not lie about it,...)).

Two immediate IBPP reactions to the Starr Report. (1) Does a study of the Founding Fathers' lives, deliberations, the Federalist Papers, etc., suggest the 11 are what they had in mind when they supported impeachment based on "high Crimes and Misdemeanors"? And does it matter what they had in mind? And if not, are the President's opponents about this matter postmodernists? (2) The 11 could as easily be expanded to 16, 92, 10,003, 1, or 0. In a perversion of a Churchillian exhortation to fight a horrible foe here, there, and everywhere, it seems that the Starr constitution fights and exhorts to slice up the Gorgon of illicit sex... here, there, and everywhere. In the process, however, if Starr has looked at the Gorgon, he may become Lot's wife. (See Full Text of Starr's Report. (September 11, 1998). <http://www.nytimes.com/specials/Starr/2toc.html>.) (Keywords: Bill Clinton, Impeachment, Lying, Monica Lewinsky, Presidency, Sex, Starr Report.)