

# The great divide

## As trial draws to a close, schism in GOP is evidenced



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Hallelujah, it's all over. We in the media can close up shop and take a long-deserved rest. Reporters in one-year-wrinkled suits are leaving Washington and going home for a well-earned break. Cries of "just one more interview" are met with the battle-cry of world-weary journalists - "Hell NO!"

And that about wraps it up for Oralgate. It's been a little over a year now that things have been insane, and finally they're coming to a close.

On Friday, Feb. 12, William Jefferson Clinton was acquitted before the Senate. It culminated in a showdown that had been rising for longer than the investigation had even been going.

The question was simple in its makeup, if not in its answer: who do politicians represent, us or themselves?

It's supposed to be easy. Any politician, any citizen, anyone in America should say that they're our representatives. They're supposed to listen to us.

But they didn't. When the votes came down, they didn't represent America, no matter which way you look at it. America's divided, that much is obvious. Some people thought that Clinton should be removed, some people didn't - either way most people felt he should be punished.

Punished, but not removed. Instead of compromising and taking the route the majority of America wanted them to take, the Republicans decided to play all or nothing. There the ol' Elephantine party stood at the roulette wheel, chanting the mantra that's been

around as long as gambling has: "Let it ride." Surprise, it's 00.

In this case, it's lucky that the house they were gambling in belongs to us, because when they lose, we, as Americans, won.

America is for the people, of the people, by the people. We are the people. Us.

The polls are supposed to be our outcry. It hasn't been one poll, it's been several polls. And the numbers keep coming up similar.

Over half of America thought Bill Clinton should stay in office. Some polls put the number as high as 65 percent.

Yet almost half the Senate voted to convict Bill Clinton.

Debates still rage on the news channels and papers will still be talking about it for weeks, but the roar will slowly die to a murmur, and then, finally, to a whisper.

Very few people argued what Bill Clinton did was right - most of them argued what he did was his business.

Stalwarts of the moral high ground claimed that Clinton still broke the law, and deep down, I don't think anyone's really arguing that.

People just don't think the law, nor the situation, is right.

When Starr was just beginning his investigation into the whole Oralgate debacle, it wasn't something America heard much of, but soon everyone in America would know the key players in the scandal: Clinton, Lewinsky, Tripp, Starr.

Should Clinton have been forced to testify about his private life? Is the public need to know so great that every time the President blinks, we need to know about it?

Was it wrong for Clinton to have an affair? Morally, yes. But that means one-third of America is morally wrong.

Was it wrong for Starr to be looking into Clinton's bedroom? America doesn't need to know what goes on in our leader's private life. Not only do we not have that right, we shouldn't have that right.

If Bill Clinton wakes up one morning and decides that he's been living a lie and realizes he's gay, we, as Americans, have *no right* to be concerned with it.

Was it wrong for Clinton to lie about it to Starr? Yes, but the question wasn't one that should

have been asked in public anyway.

The people who have talked the loudest during this whole mess have been the self-proclaimed "moral majority."

Here's real news, folks: they're *not* the majority.

All their throwbacks and archaic beliefs have caused a rift in the GOP, and the Republicans are slowly coming to collapse.

So many people have been saying "the public will forget by 2000, the public will forget by 2000."

Maybe they would if the problem were resolved right now, but the issue isn't so much Oralgate as the repercussions of Oralgate.

The Republican party is at war with itself, and there are two sides - the mildly conservative and the very conservative.

Never the twain shall meet, and a split is coming. Maybe the so-called moral majority will leave and form their own party, or maybe they'll just drag the Republican party down so much, the GOP will destroy itself.

In either case, the big gamble paid off for only one group in particular - America.

We know where our politicians stand, be that for us or against us. We know who they represent, the people who voted them in, or the party who says they can help keep them there.

Next year, we'll know the answer.

Al Gore will be running against the Republican candidate, probably George W. Bush Jr., and the self-appointed moral majority will probably split the vote.

Some of those who voted to impeach or convict Clinton in the House and the Senate will find out if their constituents really agreed with their representative's decision.

Twenty-one months from now, we'll see if the American people really are as forgetful as the Republican party hopes they are. My money is on "no," but we already know the Republicans' bet. Let it ride.



SHAWN BALLARIN/DN

# See no evil

## Television ad conspiracy uncovered



**TODD MUNSON is a senior broadcasting major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.**

Karl Marx was an interesting fellow. Not only did he keep his beard neatly trimmed; he liked to share his opinions every now and again.

One time he gave his two cents about advertising. If I hadn't traded in my Marx-Engles Reader for burrito money I'd give you a direct quote but here's the gist of it: "Advertising creates a false desire for items you don't need."

Amen, brotha'. Leapin' Lanny Poffo (a really lame wrestler from the '80s) couldn't have said it any better.

My homework's been rather scary lately and because I just can't bring myself to face the study demons I've turned to the solace of an old friend - Mr. Television.

But you know what? College really works! Now when I watch TV, my keen liberal arts education has given me the upper hand. Can you feel the thunder, Mr. Television? I'm smarter than you, sucka.

And being smarter than that cathode ray tube has made me aware that TV sucks so bad that the best thing going for the medium are its commercials.

Today I woke up feeling a bit analytical. Call me crazy, but I think the dream I had this morning about the Cubs showing off their new sweater vests at a Wrigley Field re-decorated in a Southwestern motif while Frank Zappa played

in the background has something to do with it.

Anyhoo, as I watched the telly this evening, the true messages behind the commercials were as obvious as that scene in "Top Gun" when Goose's wife hinted she wanted the hot butter lovin' when she declared "Take me to bed or lose me forever."

"Show me the way home, darlin'."

**The few, the proud, the Marines.**

Those marketing folks in the Marines put the sav in savvy. I saw this little gem during Monday Nitro.

This particular commercial features a young marine using his magical sword to slay a dragon high above a fiery pit, just like Super Mario Brothers.

The subtext of "join the Marines and exorcise your inner demons" is nice. But when I was watching this commercial, I couldn't help but think of that sorry chump out there who signs up for to become a leatherneck and *then* asks how long is it into basic training until they get to fight the dragons.

**The cute sport-ute.**

Just a stone's throw away on Lifetime. I chuckled at an ad catering to the chicks.

This celluloid minuet focused on the cute and quirky Toyota RAV4 and its cute and quirky driver trying to find a parking spot in a cute and quirky downtown setting. Finally, it comes to a halt in front of a hip-to-the-jive street mural, as the announcer lets every one know that this car is as unique as they are.

If it's a unique car, then why are thousands on the streets?

Hello, copy writers, buy a dictionary. Unique means one of a kind. But I guess if you're a 24-30 year-old female, driving a RAV4 makes you just as unique as every other chic sporting a "Rachel haircut" and an Ani DiFranco T-shirt.

**The Captain and the Crunch.**

Man, the chicks who watch Lifetime must be suckers because in this little ditty, the good Captain doesn't even try to corrupt the kiddies he just goes straight to their stay-at-home moms.

The scene begins with a ring of the door bell. Mom goes to answer it and lo and behold, Captain Crunch is there to let moms know that adults find Cap'n Crunch a most delicious cereal, not going door to door letting folks know he's a sex offender. That's Boo Berry's territory.

Here's the whacked-out part. Mom doesn't, even for a second, think it's odd that Captain Crunch is at the doorstep.

The only message to this commercial is housewives with too much time on their hands are prone to huffing way too much Pine-Sol.

**The Monsters are Coming.**

In the ad world, Super Bowl Sunday is Oscar night. During the 10 minutes I watched the Donkey dominance, there was one ad that should be held dearly in the hearts of all the folks who tried to get into override into an MIS class.

Monster.Com promoted its employment Web site by showing nice pictures of business people as kids.

"I want to be a yes man," says one. "I want to be forced into early retirement," says another.

This slice of grim reality goes on for the full 30 seconds, indicating one thing: Majoring in business is for turkeys.

**Just like someone needs a hole in their head ...**

The kind folks at MTV found sponsorship in the next gadget to rival the laser pointer in popularity contests among annoying junior high students.

It's called the C-Pen, and it's just like an ordinary writing utensil, save for one glaring difference: at the top is a Tamagotchi like creature that talks!

I take that back, it doesn't talk, it blurts out retarded phrases at random.

How retarded. A group of kids are studying and the pen blurts out to its female user, "Who's your boyfriend?"

Here's the rub to the whole gimmick. It blurts things out and randomly, so in the world of reality outside of TV, I can only vision a boy setting next a couple of homophobic meat-heads when the pen asks, "Who's your boyfriend?"

Gee, it's not too hard to see C-Pen scarring that poor chap for life, especially when those meat-heads shove it straight up his ...

**Why, Weezie, why?**

This final commercial is one I know you've all seen at least a hundred times over the holiday season. Two words sports fans: Performance Fleece.

Oooh it's fine and you can be there at 9 when all the cool kids invite you to their parties when you start kicking around in Performance Fleece.

Other than the keen rip-off of the classic Slinky ad, the underlying message in the jingle is mind control. Total mind control. All hail Old Navy!

I hate to say this, but that this ad actually made me feel compelled to check out Old Navy.

Three words, sports fans: Performance Fleece sucks.

But those cargo pants, ooh la la ... I never knew I could need so much stuff. Thanks to the handy cargo pockets, I can now comfortably carry not one but three tubes of lip balm.

One for sunny days, one for windy days, and who can live without the extra cold formula?