

One-night stand

We asked Debra Haffner, president of the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS), a major promoter of sex education in schools, to give us her take on the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal.

"SIECUS has five criteria for a 'moral' sexual relationship," says Ms. Haffner, "and Lewinsky-Clinton fail on four of them."

In fact, she says, the only criteria Bill and Monica have met is that their kinky affair was consensual; in other words, no cigars or anything else forced on anyone.

And while the relationship between president and intern was certainly adulterous, it could have worked, by SIECUS' definitions, had it been:

- Nonexploitive ("One can

hardly think of a better example of people using each other," says Ms. Haffner).

- Honest ("Certainly not according to Miss Lewinsky," she says).
- Mutually pleasurable ("Not according to the president," says

Ms. Haffner).

- Protected, e.g., against pregnancy or disease. ("And there I would say, not according to the dress," she notes).

Ms. Haffner was a Capitol Hill intern when she was 21. She says it's not unusual for young women like Miss Lewinsky to trade their youth or beauty for access into power circles.

"I don't in any way believe that Monica Lewinsky was a victim," says Ms. Haffner, who has just published "What I've Learned About Sex."

"This is a young woman who knew exactly what she wanted and she went for it."

She just didn't understand that getting "presidential kneepads" was not the same thing as getting a real relationship, as she asked for on one of her visits, Ms. Haffner notes.

"In some ways, she got caught up in not understanding the difference between an affair and a one-night stand."

