

Because I Could
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Bill Clinton stated that he had his affair with Monica for "the worst possible reason, because I could." I think that is a rather profound statement. The underlying point being that it is the feeling of power that we gain, rather than the direct gratification, that leads us astray. We like, even need, to feel control and power. Consider the playground bully, who often is not in control of other aspects of their life. I think Enron and Martha Stewart were similar, it wasn't really about money, it was about control and power: controlling the energy market and controlling the stock market. After 9/11, we all felt a deep sense of powerlessness. Have our national policies been directed (perhaps unconsciously) at regaining a sense of power? Are we doing things simply "because we can?" It is so easy to blame Bush or Rumsfeld, but many - indeed most - Americans were enthusiastically in support of the war in Iraq. It gave us a sense of "doing something" and we knew-even if we didn't admit it - that "we could." No one could stop us. It gave us a sense of power. A sense of control. In the end though, the Lewinsky affair was the downfall of Clinton. The playground bully eventually finds himself a loner, with no friends and no control. The Enron executives and Martha are in jail and have lost much more money than they gained. As a country, we find ourselves mired in an occupation that is draining on our military and economic base. Ultimately, it seems, that the wielding of power "because we can" leads to the loss of that power.