

Cervical cap commits spermicide

by M.L. Hendry

The cervical cap, a contraceptive device once popular in Great Britain, is now making an appearance in North America. Dubbed "Anastasia, the Lost Princess of Birth Control" by Dr. Barbara Seaman, author of "The Doctor's Case Against the Pill", the cervical cap is similar in both design and usage to a diaphragm.

When properly positioned over the cervix, both cervical caps and diaphragms present a physical barrier to sperm trying to reach and fertilize an egg. To be effective, either device must be inserted before intercourse

and must be left in place for six hours afterward. There the resemblance ends.

Diaphragms are essentially soft rubber cups designed to hold spermicidal cream or jelly up against the cervical opening. Insertion closely precedes intercourse, and more spermicide must be inserted before subsequent intercourse. A diaphragm ranges in diameter from two to four inches, and locks into place behind the pubic bone.

By contrast, the thimble-shaped cervical cap is made of lucite, is much smaller, and is held directly over the cervix by suction. A small amount of

spermicide is placed in the cap, which can then be left in place for up to five days. This is the important difference between the two methods.

Women who choose not to use birth control pills or intrauterine devices (IUDs) because of side effects or dangerous complications may dislike diaphragms because their use precludes spontaneity. For these women the cervical cap, effective for several days, may present the ideal method of birth control.

Several American and at least three Canadian clinics are now fitting women for cervical caps.

One is the Bay Centre for Birth Control in Toronto, Ontario, which has fitted 150 women since April. The clinic is compiling information on the use of the caps and so far the results are encouraging.

However, Dr. Pamela Brown of Halifax Planned Parenthood, who recently visited the Bay Centre, has some misgivings.

"We're not about to embark on using cervical caps here," she said. "People have to know it's still experimental."

Physicians at Planned Parenthood feel there are still too many unknowns about the caps, including the failure rate and

possible effects on the cervix.

"We need a properly controlled trial," Brown said. Planned Parenthood will wait for the results of the Bay Centre study and then take a closer look at cervical caps, she said.

The Bay Centre is advising women to use the caps as they would a diaphragm for the first month, after which they can leave them in for four or five days at a time.

Demand for the caps is high, with the clinic booked for fittings until next July.

Government approval for cervical caps has not yet been granted in Canada.

Council questions students: results are surprising

by Cathy McDonald

Of the many student council committees, two have been recently undertaken some research. The Entertainment and Communications committees undertook a fairly well-organized survey, peering into student's entertainment tastes, and some of their habits, and came up with a few surprising answers.

Why do people go to SUB events? Not so much because of the kind of entertainment: only 26 per cent ticked off 'special band or film' as the drawing card. A full 70 and 69 per cent respectively chose 'to be with friends, get drunk and have a good time' and 'to take in entertainment, see who is there, have a few laughs' as their reasons for attending.

Spice was the most popular band, and Midnight Express the

most popular movie so far this year.

71 per cent said they attend SUB events, so one may conclude that this is definitely a well-used service.

How well utilized are the campus media services? Dal Dispatch, the new campus newsletter, has had some success in attaining readership. Twelve per cent of students read it all the time, 35 per cent read it 'often' and 34 per cent 'rarely' read it. The Gazette is the strongest communications force on campus, with 35 per cent reading it 'always', 43 per cent 'often' and 18 per cent 'most of the time.' Only one per cent, according to this survey, never read the Gazette. CKDU did not fare too well, with 47 per cent never listening to it, probably because of its limited access to student ears. Banners are also effective communicators,

with 62 per cent of respondents using this source of information often, and 22 per cent always.

What concerns students these days? Beer prices? Nuclear disarmament? No, 45 per cent of respondents put 'cutbacks' as their number one concern. Next on the list of priorities was 'academic affairs.' Tied with seven per cent were course evaluation, NUS discounts (International student ID card) and security. 'Grants not loans', the Canadian Federation of Students' campaign, was a priority with six per cent. Insignificant issues,

according to the survey, were Dal's joining of CFS, Grawood renovations, library servicing and nuclear disarmament.

Only 32 per cent felt they are a part of the Dal community, 41 per cent 'sometimes' feel this attachment, and 25 per cent definitely felt they are not a part of the community. So it looks like the communication committee has its work cut out.

The survey achieved a fair representation of students, perhaps biased towards upper campus respondents. There

were no respondents from medicine or dentistry students, but a fair number from physiotherapy and nursing. The bulk of replies came from arts and science and commerce faculties. First, second, third and fourth year students were fairly evenly represented.

The questionnaires were distributed in particular classes, in lobbies, in the cafeteria and other places by members of the communication and entertainment committees. A total of 363 students filled them out.

Women's Committee in a bad period

by Heather Roseveare

The Women's Committee at Dal has come to a stand-still. Since its establishment last May, the original chairperson has resigned and the present chairperson, fourth year Biology student Lynn Sheppard, says she is "too busy with studies to actively promote the committee's aims."

A meeting hasn't been held since October when the Student Council voted in favour of the strippers at the Engineers' bash. Sheppard said the committee lobbied against the idea and was "quite upset" when council agreed to support the engineering society's idea of a good time.

Council originally approved of the committee's suggestion to have a referendum on the issue in the spring. However, there is now a motion before council to rescind this decision.

Kevin Feindel, cashman of the Student Union, doesn't like the idea of the referendum as "they are pretty binding on council ... we don't want to stand for something we really don't believe in."

The Gazette has agreed to distribute a survey dealing with sexual harassment on campus

to all female students in January. "This will determine whether or not there is a problem on campus that we're not aware of," says Cathy McDonald, editor of the Gazette.

Sheppard feels the situation of female safety is "bad, and getting worse" as retiring security personnel are not being replaced. "There are fewer people to protect you out there."

Membership on the committee is a problem too. In September, graduate student Peter Rans appealed to all members of council to sit on the Women's Committee. Many agreed but Sheppard says "most councillors don't show up."

An attempt was made to get help from the Student Union of Nova Scotia (SUNS) to organize a network of women's organizations in Nova Scotia. Sandy Spencer, chairperson of SUNS, would rather see the women's committee at Dalhousie prove itself worthy before SUNS sets out to promote the establishment of committees.

"Dal is too conservative," says Sheppard. She is off to Quebec next year where "things are more liberal. There I hope to set up a network of women's groups."

Christmas Dalhorrea

by K. and O. Pectate

-A-
These people can open two presents at once - 13
Christmas Lady of Soul - 8

-B-
Ken wants her for Christmas - 6
"Baby Alive" would be dead without these - 9
"Black Magic" - 6

-C-
Lick on a stick, guaranteed to make you sick - 9
Christmas "Ditties" - 6
Christmas shopping, C.O.D. - 9

-D-
Most of us don't have any after Christmas - 5
John Logan's favorite part of the Turkey (No, Jim, we don't mean you) - 9
Maybe Jim Logan will mix his triple rums with this - 6
Santa's Liliputian's - 5

-F-
Bite, a cake, a glass, Jack - 5
They come out of the closet at Christmas-time - 9

-G-
He steals Christmas ratings - 6

-H-
The holidays are one big... - 8

-K-
He wants Barbie for Christmas - 3

-M-
Stay away from Perverts when it's hanging - 9
Creamy Christmas concoction - 9

T S L O R A C A T A L O G U E
N G R I N C H M M E S K C O S
E H A N G O V E R T R R T K S
S N W I S H B O N E T E Y E U
E E R R E G G N O G L Y C N O
R W E H E R D F O T I S N R R
P Y A L T T R M S B A R B I E
R E T A V O U I H G U O D B T
E A H S S E M R A N E D A B X
E R A T H A S I N P M P Y O E
D S E I R E T T A B U N E N D
N E K A C T I U R F F U T S I
I C A N D Y C A N E R W Y E B
E Y K O O N K L I M E S O O M
R A R S R E T F I L P O H S A

-N-
Eve of Destruction - 8
Get yours, under the Mistletoe - 5

-P-
A scents-less gift - 7
Only good little boys and girls gets - 7

-R-
I don't care who you are FATSO, just get them off my roof - 8
What you do to some of your gifts on Dec. 27th - 6
Tie one on - 6
Christmas is one, Easter is another - 6

-S-
They always get the best bargains at Christmas-time - 11
How many pairs do you get every year? - 5
A stocking or a Turkey (No, really, Jim, not YOU)

-T-
Scrooge's Herbert Khaury - 7

-W-
Everyone fights over this part of the Turkey (For the last TIME, JIM, we're NOT talking about YOU) - 8