

S.W.A.T. (Sex Without Aids Today)

The Swat program is designed to help students acquire the knowledge, attitudes and skills to practice safer sex if they choose to be sexually active. It also helps students feel confident about their ability to make informed sexual decisions, including whether they wish to engage in sexual interactions and what other options there are, including 'outercourse' activities. The program consists of games and exercises designed to ensure that students' knowledge about AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases is accurate, that they know the risk of different sexual activities for infection and that they have the skills to use condoms correctly and feel confident in this skill. Students who participate in this program will have a good time as the subject is approached in a humorous manner. All questions are welcomed. The evaluation of this program demonstrated that students significantly increased their use of condoms when sexually active, after participating on the SWAT program.

The students who are peer educators have participated in a training program designed to

give them extensive knowledge about HIV and other STDs and safer sex and how to carry out the program. This program is available as a voluntary training program, for one weekend, or can be taken with more extensive content, as a credit course, N3154. This course is open to students from any faculty, who wish to learn the teaching skills associated with an interactive program about sexual issues. Anyone who is interested in this training or course should call Grace Getty at 4534642. Information about AIDS, and other STDs, coadoms and other sexual health issues is also available for students who are writing a paper or presentation for other courses.

Free condoms are provided at each SWAT program. They are also available in the hall, outside Room 120B, MacLaggan Hall. Students who have questions or concerns about their sexual health, or need to discuss their personal concerns about sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy, friend or family with AIDS are encouraged to drop in to talk to Grace Getty in Room 120, MacLaggan Hall.

Yes To Good Sex

JOHN VALK

SPECIAL TO THE BRUNSWICKAN

Ah, sex! How much does it not preoccupy our thoughts! And our actions?

Hormones work actively at university. Mix them at any time with a little alcohol and they go into overdrive. Passion burns hot, and bodies unite. Ah, the pleasures of sex! But what makes sex really good sex?

Sex is all around us. No denying it. People are doing it. Books are written about it. Movies centre on it. Advertising revolves around it. Babies are born because of it.

Sex is a powerful drive. It impacts us. It pressures us. It can even consume us. Who can resist it? Who would want to?

Sex is good! It is beautiful, fulfilling, and pleasurable. It can strongly unite two people in passionate ecstasy and enduring conventional commitment. Such is affirmed, without hesitation, in the Biblical book, "The Song of Songs."

But alas, sex can also do, and become, the very opposite. It can just as easily unleash resentment, pain and sorrow. It can lead to exploitation, aggression, and destructive behaviour. This too we see around us. A moment of physical engagement, forced or otherwise, can bring regret, hurt, misery and hardship. Perhaps we have experienced this, in ourselves, in friends, in parents. How do we come to recognize and affirm good meaningful sex, and distinguish it from lustful exploitation? How do we ensure that what was intended to be good and pleasurable indeed becomes such? Perhaps we need to be honest with ourselves. Is much of what we have seen, read, and been told about sex simply false: that "everyone is doing it"; if it feels good it must be OK; there is no harm in it" and "abstinence is boring and impossible"?

Today, sex is too often reduced to something merely physical. It becomes a glorified commodity. Sex sells, and women become objects. That's the stuff of current advertising, and Playboy centre-folds on dorm walls. Yes, sex is physical. No doubt. But no person should be an object for

another's pleasure and gratification.

Humans are sexual beings. Our sexuality touches all aspects of who we are: our spiritual, emotional, moral, and physical selves. Our sexuality is part of our intimate self. That intimate self can be shared with someone, but not just anyone.

Being physically intimate with someone is to stand naked before them; it is to be vulnerable. And what is done with that vulnerability? Is it used for self-satisfaction? Or, is it treated preciously?

What is often forgotten is that, the desire for physical intimacy is at the same time a desire for emotional intimacy, a longing for emotional togetherness. Humans have deep emotional needs.

Relationships form because two people recognize the potential for emotional sharing and caring, for being there for each other.

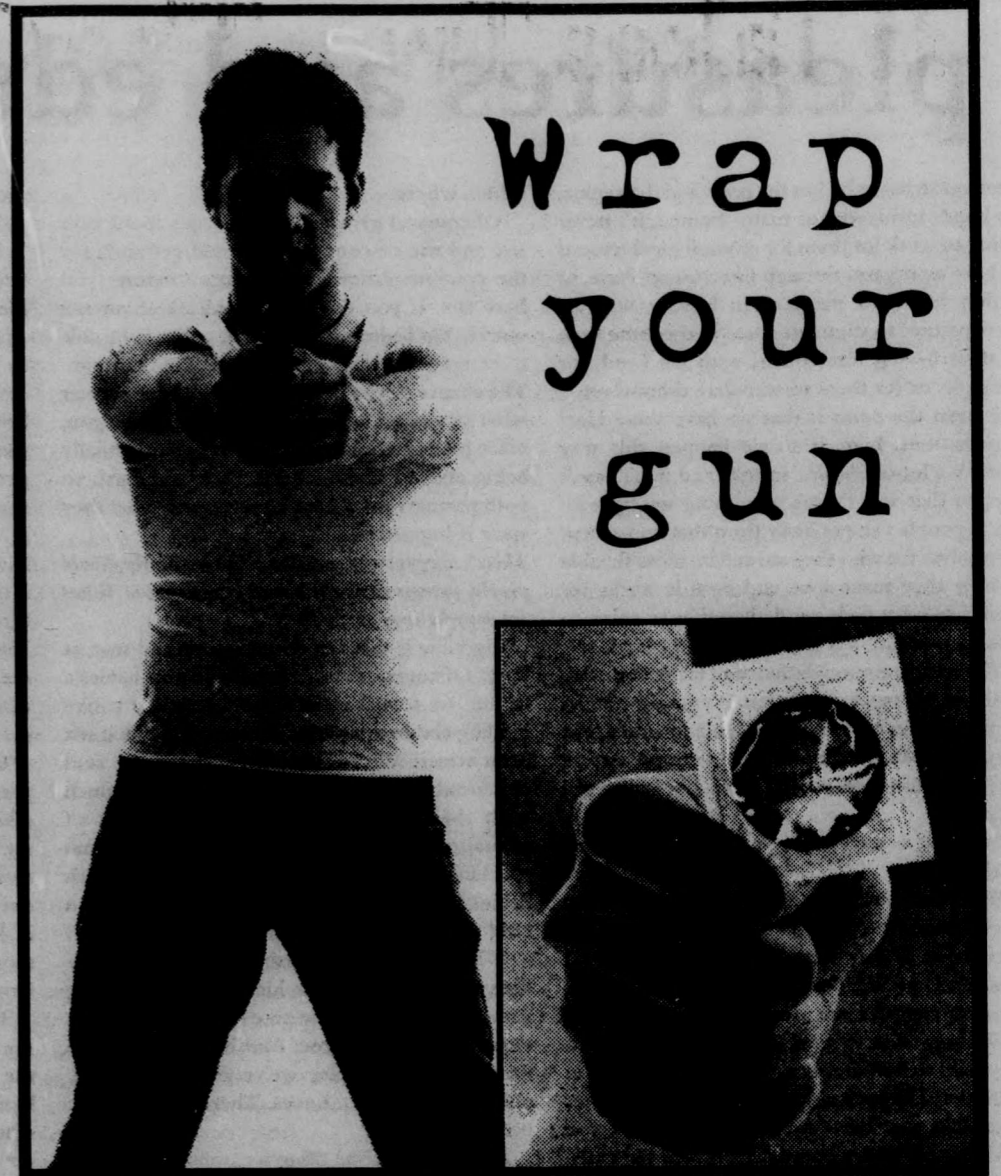
Emotional intimacy finally long for spiritual intimacy. Our spirituality touches the essence of who we are. From our spirit springs our heart's desires and longings, our aspirations, dreams. Are these intimacies also shared and respected?

Emotional and spiritual intimacy is not instant. It takes considerable time, commitment and trust. It is easy enough to become physically intimate. It is more difficult to be emotionally and spiritually intimate, to encourage one's partner in his/her emotional growth and spiritual journey. For sex to be really good, to be what it was meant to be, emotional and spiritual trust and commitment must first be established.

Some argue that emotional and spiritual intimacy can grow from physical intimacy. Perhaps, but there is no guarantee, as statistics clearly indicate. Regret, even betrayal, is common following the breakup of that involved physical intimacy but little emotional and spiritual intimacy.

Regret and betrayal are absent when partners first establish deep emotional and spiritual intimacy and long-term conventional commitment, before engaging in sexual intimacy. When a covenant of trust is first established, both partners are protected by the promise of loving and lasting

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DREW GILBERT PHOTOS

faithfulness. They control and discipline themselves, and encourage each other to anticipate the moment when their physical intimacy will be most meaningful, when their sexual union will bind, seal and celebrate the covenant they have established in a way that nothing else can. Here and only here is sex really good sex. To this one should say yes!

Sounds ideal, you say. But we do not live in an ideal world. No doubt. But why not strive for the ideal, as we do in other areas of life, where discipline and control is also demanded? It may be difficult to resist the pressure, especially when a passionate partner whispers, "if you really loved me you would want to make love to me." But control is not impossible.

What do we risk in lowering our standards, or giving in too soon? The risk, it would seem, is in succumbing. A few years ago, I read the following in the classified section of

The Brunswickan:
Dear Peter - You probably don't remember me but we met Fresh night. We did the big thing. I am now 4 1/2 months pregnant. I need some support. If you are still as nice as you were fresh night I know you will help. - Desperately needing help.

Desperate indeed! Foolish it is to throw caution, and consequence, to the wind. Better to be wise, and take note of the consequences, of which pregnancy today may be the least.

Sex is for the purpose of intimately binding two people together, physically, emotionally and spiritually. Biologically, it is for producing children. Isn't it odd that sex has all of these seemingly different functions? And, why is conception so

linked to the most intimate and pleasurable moments two people can share?

Perhaps for this reason: babies are born extremely vulnerable. They enter the world requiring a safe, protected and attentive environment. What better environment than a deeply committed and long-term relationship between two people?

Sexual intimacy expresses, and deepens, a long-term committed relationship. It is the ideal context for children to grow and mature. Little wonder that the church has consistently affirmed that genital sexual union and the begetting of children belongs exclusively within the bonds of marriage, where two people have committed themselves to lasting faithfulness.

Why is it that humans are made with such powerful sexual urges—urges that require discipline

and control. It has been argued that humans have, through some evolutionary process, become so gendered, motivated and equipped. Our survival as a species depends on it. Perhaps. But such

explanation seems rather cold and bland. I prefer another. I prefer to affirm the existence of a loving God who created humans as an expression of love. Humans too can experience and express that love, on a number of different levels. Love can be experienced between two committed people in a heightened way through sexual intimacy. Sexual intimacy, and the ecstasy it produces, is a gift of God. It is meant for humans, not in brief, chance encounters, but in long-term committed relationships. This is wisdom that one ignores at a price.

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