

# College Sex Mores: The Codes

The formal sexual standard professed by our society is one of abstinence; no sex outside of marriage. This code is upheld by religious institutions, and particularly emphasized for the women of our society. This view of sex is expressed by Ira Reiss in his book **Premarital Sexual Standards in America**. Reiss says, "People who accept abstinence believe that sexual intercourse is too important an act, too valuable and intimate to be performed with anyone besides one's own marriage partner. They thus want to save sexual intercourse for marriage, which, they feel, is the most secure setting for sexual relations."

The informal codes practiced by our society allow some activity outside of marriage. The most restrictive of these is

**This is the second in a series of four articles related to the changing sexual mores in the college environment. Monday's article dealt with means of forming attitudes toward codes. Codes governing sexual conduct are considered in today's article.**

the double standard, which allows premarital sex for men, but not for women. Men are permitted sexual relations with women below their class (e.g. prostitutes) while women who have relations with men of their class are condemned by these men. A man may attempt intercourse with a woman of his social class, but, if successful, he immediately "loses respect" for the woman. A further consequence of such premarital sexual relations is that the girl generally becomes a social outcast if the man's success is communicated to others.

Women operate under this double standard at a great disadvantage. The rules say they should resist attempts at being seduced, although their natural inclinations and/or affection for the person involved may conflict. Girls are expected by the society to establish male-female relationships with their peers, and this may require some permissiveness to hold male attention. Too much permissiveness results in her losing his respect, and too little results in her losing him. The girl in such circumstances has to walk a very narrow line and her family training, ignorance, curiosity, as well as her own passions all complicate the picture.

The most liberal of these informal codes is the "permissiveness without affection" code. Members of this school would hold that since intercourse is a pleasurable experience, physical attraction is the sole requisite for its use, as long as precautions

against pregnancy and venereal disease are taken. Of this Reiss says, "Permissiveness without affection is also not well-knit with our marriage institution, since it encourages casual, temporary, body-centered relationships. It is probable that such relationships will usually not lead to marriage."

"The notion of romantic love, as it has grown in American culture, is diametrically opposed to such a casual view of sexual intercourse or of one's sexual partner. Romantic love stresses the importance of the individual and places great value on individual personality traits. It is reasoned that if love is so valuable then so must be the love objects, and if people are so highly valued, one cannot treat them as casual sex objects. Sexual intercourse is associated with love both after marriage and before marriage. Our more tolerant attitude towards sexual intercourse between two people in love is a reflection of the association we make between love and sexual behavior. Love justifies sexual intercourse to many people—to some only in marriage, to others at all times. But love is strongly associated with sex, and permissiveness without affection violates this connection."

The last of these informal codes is that of "permissiveness with affection." Its adherents would argue that people have emotions as well as drives, and that the sex act is most meaningful when there is affection between the partners, as well as physical attraction. This code is characterized by person-centered relationships of relative permanence and stability. These relationships are more likely to end in marriage than body-centered relationships.

Proponents of all of these codes would require that only "mature" people be per-

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mitted to participate, for fear of emotional damage to not yet fully-developed personalities.

Historically the informal double standard has to some extent always flourished alongside of the formal abstinence standard; its injustice of unequal treatment of the sexes is based on notions of relative strengths of the sex drive which have not been shown to have any basis in fact. The other two informal codes seem more reasonable to many because they treat the sexes as equal.

## Counterpart for NSA

Those schools whose membership in the National Student Association has been conducted on an "in-out-in again" basis now have an alternative. A week ago an organization which calls itself ASGUSA (Associated Student Governments of the United States of America) was organized in St. Louis. The group, which claims to be non-political, is made up mostly of Southern schools. In defeating a motion calling for a civil rights committee, the new conference made it clear that it will offer the American student community an alternative on the civil rights question.

ASUO President Phil Sherburne, who attended the St. Louis meeting, said the new student group is financed by wealthy Southern businessmen and is in all actual-

ity a political organization. But whether the group is of a political or non-political vein is not the most important consideration. We applaud Sherburne for not committing the University to membership in this organization. We feel that as a national student organization NSA best represents our needs. However, ASGUSA ought to be welcomed into the national student community. Student governments that do not agree with NSA's objectives should have an alternative. We are hopeful that ASGUSA becomes more than a sounding board for Southern schools. It should be an active organization. Two active student groups in the collegiate community will work toward developing a healthy atmosphere for free discussion.



## Letters to the Editor

### LETTERS POLICY

It is the policy of The Emerald not to run letters endorsing or discussing the relative merits of ASUO candidates on the day of the primary or general election.

### Liked Convention

**Emerald Editor:**

Having participated in the Mock Republican Convention this past weekend, we would like to commend the University, all participating University students, and the faculty and sponsors, for making available this fine opportunity to develop an interest in national politics. For those of us of voting age and those who are nearing their majority, we feel that the Convention was an invaluable experience for increasing our knowledge of major issues, clarifying the stands taken by the candidates in the coming elections, and aiding in our understanding of parliamentary procedure. We only wish that more students had availed themselves of this educational opportunity.

We highly recommend that the University and other sponsors continue to have this Convention in the coming years in order to increase the political awareness of the future voters and coming leaders of this great nation.

**Susan Yarbrough**  
Junior in political science  
(Minnesota delegate)

**Lizz Johnson**  
Junior in political science  
(Minnesota delegate)

**Charlie McKinney**  
Junior in business administration  
(Hawaii delegate)

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**Vote**

**Emerald Editor:**

There seems to be a dangerous atmosphere of election apathy on this campus before an election that concerns the entire student body. Student government is only as good as the students desire because they have the power to determine its effectiveness.

The all-important privilege of voting should be utilized by many more students. It really does not take much effort to study the candidates and the issues involved. Perhaps the easiest way to become acquainted with these issues is to attend public speeches or debates by the candidates (the Luvaas-Cowin debates were tremendously helpful in deter-

ining and clarifying the major issues in this campaign).

The effort it takes to educate oneself on election issues is minimal, and the result might provide better representation and all-around performance by student body officers. Remember, the primary election is in some ways more important than the final because if any incapable candidates are allowed to stay in the race—they may win.

**Don Powell**  
Freshman, Political Science

**Do It Now!**

**Emerald Editor:**

How long are we students at Oregon going to lay down and take the sort of treatment being dealt out to us under the guise of the Conduct Code? How long are we going to be subject to President Fleming's puppet university and this so-called "Conduct Code?"

No longer do the deans have power to deal with disciplinary matters. No longer are counsellors helpful advisers; rather they have become cheap cops, forced to send all disciplinary cases to student court.

No longer do students have the courage to rebel and speak out in their own defense. And no longer (if it ever did) does The Emerald take a stand on controversial issues. Is this also a puppet being controlled by a higher force?

Recent cases in the "Supreme" Court and ones to be heard soon prove that students on this campus are being mistreated and forced to prove themselves innocent of charges preferred against them.

I plead not only for the students to rise up and demand that measures be taken, but also for the alumni to do the same.

United we can retain our rights, so let's go students! Start talking this issue up and let's do something about it, NOW!

**Ed Wells,**  
Freshman-Pre-Med

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