

ask the sexpert

This column, a weekly feature of the Emerald, is sponsored by Planned Parenthood of Lane County as a community education service. The writer is Carole Kirkpatrick, PhD., a local clinical psychologist. Questions can be referred to Planned Parenthood, 344-2632.

Q. I don't understand women. I mean, around campus there are a

lot of chicks who dress real foxy and come on strong but if you make any serious moves, they act uptight. What gives?

A. As long as people treat sex as a game, the situation you describe above will exist. To understand the female better, you should realize that women are taught to be sexually attractive but not sexually active. This is an important distinction in the culture.

Females are taught to allure a male — not necessarily for sex — but maybe for security, status, money, conformity, etc. In this role, then, a woman doesn't realize she is sending a message that might be contradictory — she has learned sex is an entirely appropriate "bait." Please understand that I am talking purely about stereotypes and such extremes rarely exist.

I might also suggest that it sounds like sex is a game to you, too. You seem to regard women as sex objects who have "the goods" if only you could figure out the rules. Your over-riding sexual interest is probably obvious to the women you meet and may account for your unsuccessful results.

Q. What do women think of condoms? Should I carry one or is this passe?

A. (Seems like this is "figuring out the female psyche week.") Actually I'm glad you asked because your concern is refreshing. As the self-appointed spokesperson for the fairer sex, I would venture to say that most women would be very pleased to see a man acknowledge his half of birth control responsibility.

However, since sex is a mutual encounter I don't think a man should just go ahead and slip on a rubber at some magical moment. If a couple knows each other well enough to sleep together, they should be able to discuss contraception. Thus you could say "What should we do about birth control? I have a condom with me if you'd like..." Then you can both figure out what is best.

I might also add some pointers about condoms or rubbers:

1. Don't carry them in your pocket or wallet. They won't last long. Buy them "fresh."
2. Use the type with a receptacle in the tip — they are less likely to break.
3. Always hold the rim as you withdraw. A "lost" condom affords no protection.

Q. I've seen kits in the drug store for running your own pregnancy test. Are they accurate?

A. Home pregnancy test kits became available in Lane County last fall. They cost \$8 to \$10 and can be used only once. (Pregnancy tests at Planned Parenthood are \$5.) With home tests positive results are more often accurate than negative results.

A drop of urine is mixed with chemicals and the solution is allowed to sit in a glass tube for two hours. If a brown ring is present on the bottom of the tube after two hours, the test is positive. The test measures HCG (Human Chorionic Gonadotropin), a hormone secreted by the fertilized egg.

The essential points to remember are that:

1. If the test is run too early there is a high risk of getting a false negative. In one study of home pregnancy tests performed 38 days after the beginning of the last menstrual period (LMP) the negatives were only 79 percent accurate but the positives were 97 percent accurate. Then tests were run 45 days LMP, the negatives were 91 percent accurate.
2. Certain drugs can cause false positives. All drugs (especially marijuana, aspirin and hayfever medication) should be avoided 12 hours before taking the urine sample. Birth control pills will not interfere with the test.
3. A pelvic exam is necessary to confirm the test results, determine the length of pregnancy, and rule out the possibility of an ectopic pregnancy (pregnancy developing in the fallopian tubes).

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Jail

attorneys in Boston present their case (over closed circuit TV) and the courts in New York are seeing and hearing them, as do the attorneys, and then the attorneys do not have to travel to New York City," Bailey says. "There is a fantastic cost savings there."

Stevie Remington, executive secretary for the American Civil Liberties Union in Portland, says that attorneys use both the cost of commuting to a trial as well as the time needed to research a case to determine the total fee to charge a client. She says that closed circuit TV for arraignments could possibly save the defendant money.

Remington adds that she has not seen any cases concerning closed circuit TV and that the ACLU does not have an official position on the issue.

Bailey says Portland-area officials are now experimenting with the system. He says that both California and Arizona are experimenting with closed circuit TV in courtrooms. "We wanted to be prepared for the day that Oregon may or may not catch up."

Remington says there is something to be said for closed circuit TV speeding up trials.

"One of the things that happens to crowded dockets today is that people are denied their right to a speedy trial," she says.

"And if you had to wait two years to get your civil case heard in court, that's a considerable denial of a right there. So there is reason to argue that some time saving devices would enhance certain rights. It's a balancing kind of thing."

"One of the frequent problems in getting a case to trial is getting all of the witnesses together," she continues. "If you can do it without causing them to travel and wait out in the courtroom for two or three days before they are called, you might be able to speed up things," she says.

Rodman says that any use of closed circuit TV in a courtroom would require the consent of the judge in question.

"I would have reservations about a system of routine arraignments without at least seeing some cases that it's constitutionally permissible and seeing that the deprivation of a personal appearance is justified in terms of economy and time saving," he says.

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