

# Love can be experienced without sex

For some students, abstaining from sex until marriage helps form a tight emotional bond

**Roman Gokhman**  
Campus/City Culture Reporter

An old campus legend says the Pioneer Mother — the statue of a female Oregon Trail pioneer next to Gerlinger Hall — stands up every time a virgin walks by. While most students have never seen the Pioneer Mother leave her chair, they must all confront the decision of whether to have sex.

Ramah Leith, a councilor at the Health Education Program at the University Health Center, said that even though it is difficult to determine how many college students have had sexual relationships, students are more likely to be sexually active because of the intimacy a tight-knit community creates.

However, some University students say love can exist without sex in today's world.

University senior Stephanie Garber and her boyfriend Daniel Hemmerich have been dating exclusively for more than a year and have not had sex.

They said that while some college-age people avoid sex because they fear accidental pregnancy or disease, their Christian faith guided their choice.

"(Sex) is a very real and symbolic union between a man and a woman that was designed by God to reflect the relationship between (God) and the world," Hemmerich said. He said sex is a commitment for a permanent relationship — marriage.

Like other couples, Hemmerich and Garber "do all the normal things," like seeing concerts, watching movies, going on walks together and cuddling.

In a relationship, it is important to meet challenges, like sex, up front, the couple said.

"Nobody said it would be easy, but that's okay," Garber said. "Most things that are good are not easy."

Hemmerich added this is what makes abstinence worthwhile.

Leith said the best way for couples to make choices about their sexual lives is to talk about it.

"The key is communication — depending on how committed they are to each other and how emotionally ready they are," she said.

Garber agrees talking about emotions is important in a relationship.

"(Sex) is not a subject we shy away from," she said.

University students Eric Baker and Amy Farris, who have also dated for more than a year and are now engaged, agree that communication is necessary for a relationship to work without sex.

"We're open with each other — we talk about everything," Baker said.

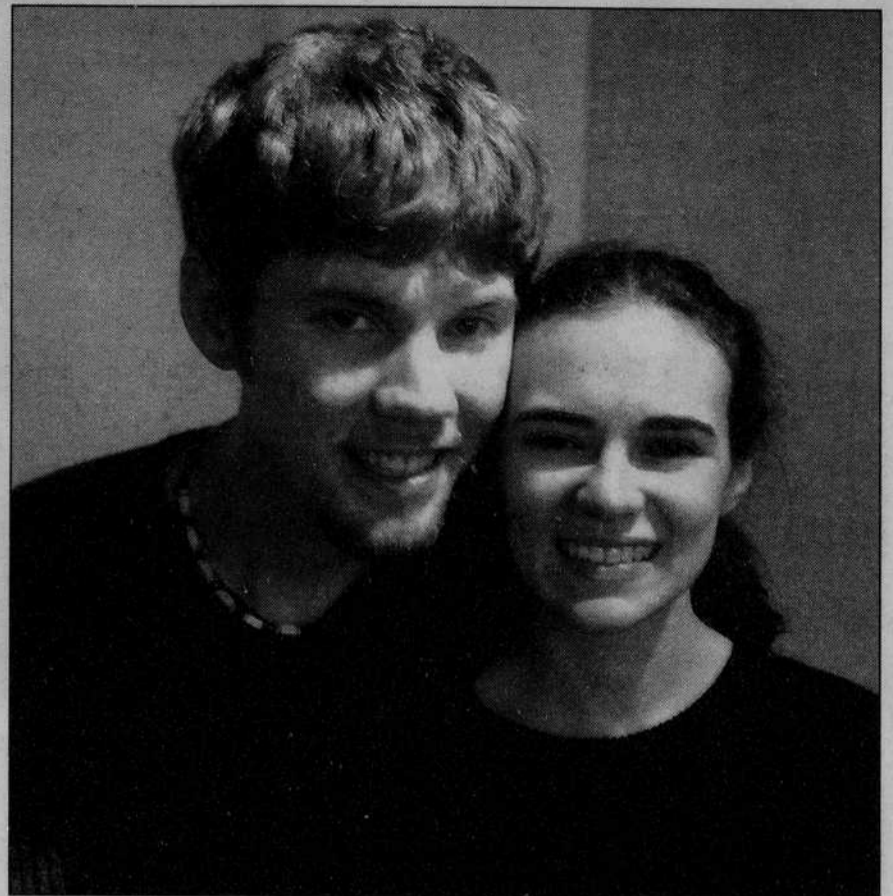
Baker and Farris said they adhere to a relationship without sex also because of their Christian faith, and because they owe it to each other.

"Sometimes it's hard, but it's not that hard when you think about why you're doing it," Farris said.

While some students are committed to abstinence, they do have to deal with peer pressure.

"(Abstinence) is not exactly a popular thing," Garber said. "It ... holds this aura that you should be embarrassed, but I think that's dumb. I think there are a lot more virgins out there than would like to admit it."

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Danielle Hickey Emerald

Couple Daniel Hemmerich and Stephanie Garber, who have been dating for more than a year, have pledged to each other to be abstinent until marriage.

# Singles celebrate freedom, gather with friends

Activities abound for those who find themselves dateless on Valentine's Day

**Athena Ehnott**  
Freelance Reporter

Valentine's Day is coming up once again, and for those without a special someone, it can come without welcome. Yet not everyone hates being single. In fact, many single people take this day as an opportunity to celebrate their freedom and spend time with those close to them.

Some students say the single life is

one of fun, freedom and friendship.

Sophomore Meghan Madden, a double major in political science and romance languages, said she is single by choice and doesn't feel she will be missing out on Valentine's Day.

"I don't have plans yet, but usually I get together with other single friends, order pizza and watch chick flicks," said Madden. She said she gets lonely at times, but school is a priority and the attention relationships need can be very time consuming. Madden said she still thinks Valentine's Day is a good hol-

iday because "she likes to see happy people."

James Jacobsen said he feels the same way about the single life in college.

"I don't have to worry about always making someone else happy," he said. "I can dress crappy everyday, because I don't have to impress anyone."

Jacobsen, a journalism major, plans to dress up with a friend and go to a nice dinner at McDonald's to celebrate the "Hallmark Holiday."

These single students said there

are still a lot of rewarding things to do on Valentine's Day, even if one isn't in a relationship. They suggest meeting friends for dinner, going to the movies or finally gathering up the courage to ask someone they like out on a date.

Still, not everyone views Valentine's Day as a chance to celebrate.

"I don't like Valentine's Day — when I am single it is like all the happy couples are rubbing it in my face," sophomore Carolyn Rodgers said. She might not like Valentine's Day, but Rodgers said she likes be-

ing single because nothing holds her back and she can do whatever she wants. Rodgers and her friends are going to all get together and celebrate being single.

Sophomore Heather Endrizzi said she also loves being single and celebrates it every day. She said she thinks Valentine's Day is overrated.

"I don't see why we only celebrate on Valentine's Day; we should just love each other every day."

Athena Ehnott is a freelance writer for the Emerald.

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