

Safe-sex practices leave no room for modesty

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has slept with, and if you engage in sex with a person who has come into contact with the virus, you are doomed. The most ridiculous argument about AIDS, especially in the Midwest, is that only people in heavily populated coastal cities are at risk. Wrong. You have no way of knowing if the man or woman you pick up in a bar has been on a trip to, say, Los Angeles or Miami. And what about the nice little Midwestern girl who flies to Steamboat Springs over spring break and has sex with a bisexual man from Boston? Just because she lives in a city where AIDS is scarce does not mean she's disease-free. The AIDS virus has no geographic preference — it's just as deadly in Lincoln as it is in L.A.

In December, Reagan voted to increase federal funding for AIDS research 23 percent. Koop estimated that in 1987 alone, over \$1 billion will need to be spent on research and another \$1 billion will need to be spent on education and safe-sex campaigns. But right-wing factions and the Catholic Church have helped to extinguish support for education because they feel that immoral measures are being taken. The reason? The nature of safe sex and its educational practices.

The term safe sex connotes preventive measures that can help stop the transmission of the AIDS virus. Sexual intercourse with a condom, dry kissing and mutual masturbation have been labeled "safe" practices because no body fluids are transmitted. Sex without a condom, French kissing and oral/anal and oral/vaginal contact are considered high risk practices, according to experts. It is not currently known whether the virus can be passed through saliva, so some feel that kissing is possibly safe and sharing beverages is probably safe since the virus can only live for seconds outside the

body.

Koop said he feels that safe sex education should begin in elementary schools because children between the ages of 8 and 9 are often on the brink of discovering sexuality. By the time they enter junior high, they may already have had their first sexual experience and it may be too late to warn them about the dangers of unsafe sex.

That's something many cannot handle because they feel that AIDS and early sex education will introduce children to immoral practices. In the words of Paul Cameron, Lincoln's self-proclaimed sex expert, "Koop says we should be teaching young children about AIDS, and that means your kids are going to be learning about how homosexuals stick their tongues on their boyfriends' anuses."

Well, maybe so, Paul, but children would also be learning about how to prepare themselves for things their hormones will make them do in a few years, such as hopping in the backseat with cheerleaders.

The Catholic Church has vehemently protested the burgeoning use of condoms because it feels that sex is a sacred virtue reserved for marriage and birth control is a sin. But how many people actually save themselves for marriage?

The National AIDS Task Force recently made a commercial about AIDS that metaphorically shows how promiscuity and unsafe sex are modern forms of the game Russian roulette. However some feel that the commercial is too abrupt and will cause hysteria. Fear is in the air, but AIDS isn't. Maybe the American public needs to be scared into facing what is becoming a major tragedy.

Europe has already started national television campaigns about AIDS education. In England, primetime viewers are being shown commercials with this slogan: "Protect yourself from AIDS. Don't die of ignorance." France and

Norway have also started similar campaigns, but in Ireland the Catholic Church has prevented AIDS education because it doesn't want to endorse condoms. Many European governments have started handing out free disposable needles to heroin addicts because cities like Amsterdam and Glasgow are drug meccas loaded with AIDS victims, according to numerous news reports.

We must realize that AIDS is no longer an obscure illness that only strikes gays in San Francisco. By 1991, the number of AIDS fatalities will be in the millions, the Center for Disease Control predicted in July 1986.

A poll in a recent issue of the Wall Street Journal showed that 73 percent of those questioned did not feel that AIDS was a personal threat to them. That fact deeply disturbs doctors be-

cause they fear that many women thinking about having children will not engage in safe sex practices and may pass on the virus to their unborn children. Since 90 percent of AIDS carriers don't know the virus is in their body, many women will give birth to babies with AIDS. According to Koop, 70 percent of children born with AIDS die before they are 6 months old.

So what can be done? It's simple. Funding for AIDS research and education should become the government's top priority. Safe sex and condom commercials should be aired on national TV, and we should stop evading the issue and put things in perspective. There just isn't time to worry about how "moral" AIDS education is or how embarrassing safe sex is.

As Dr. Marie Crenshaw, a spokesper-

son for the National AIDS Task Force, eloquently put it: "We just don't have the luxury to be embarrassed anymore."

We are not immortal. AIDS has the potential to kill everyone on this campus and millions in this country if we don't wake up. The longer we wait to do something about AIDS, the more people are going to die as a result. This is more than a matter of politics; it's a matter of the way we value the preservation of life in society today.

The choice is entirely up to us. Would we rather change our behavior on the basis of intelligence, care and caution — or out of terror brought on by the corpses that may soon be falling around us?

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Night bus service not only proposal, RHA president says

A Jan. 20 article in the Daily Nebraskan, "ASUN fights for night bus," portrays the All-University Fund Board of Trustees as bearing the fault for that most-needed service not being funded. ASUN First Vice President Dan Hofmeister, as quoted in the article, seemed to feel: a) that the ASUN night-busing proposal "was by far the best proposal," and b) that the failure of AUF to fund the proposal was the result of personal bias by me against one of the ASUN proposers, specifically Hofmeister himself. In light of my position as direct representative of RHA, I would like to clarify the facts.

Guest Opinion

First of all, a little background: The \$20,000 that the AUF Board of Trustees was to distribute was not part of a constant flow of cash from some magical source. The funding was a one-time, one-chance proposition that the members of the board took very seriously. We wished to wisely place the money in projects where 1) the entire campus community would be at least indirectly benefited, and 2) where alternative funding was not likely. The ASUN proposal, while fully meeting the first requirement, was less than convincing on the second.

Hofmeister's statement about his proposal being "the best" is certainly debatable in the light of nearly three dozen other proposals for such things as remodeling of the Coliseum pool for handicapped users, minority-student scholarships, a transport to take the handicapped from their residences to classes on icy days, a seminar on the agricultural crisis, alcohol education, undergraduate advising awards, Morrill Hall exhibits, the recreation center, etc., etc., etc. The ASUN proposal was actually one of the least-researched of all the proposals. While other groups gave us page after page of carefully estimated figures, ASUN gave us a single page with a few statistics. The ASUN proposal asked for the entire

\$20,000, stating at the time that no lower amount would be acceptable. Night busing was certainly a worthy project, but was it worthy at the expense of everything else?

Hofmeister, in his second statement concerning my "personal bias," seems to forget that there were five members on the board, not just one. The board in its deliberations went through several phases of examination, eliminating a few proposals at each level for various reasons. During these examinations the ASUN proposal was trimmed from \$20,000 to \$7,000, an amount the board felt reasonable for one semester of funding.

Early support for the proposal came, predictably, from the two ASUN representatives on the board, who reasonably upheld the viability of the project. Early rejection came from not only myself, but also from the then-presidents of the Intrafraternity Council. The democratic manner in which the board was operated made it impossible for me, a single vote-holder, to dictate the decisions of the board. We felt, as Hofmeister states in the Jan. 20 article, that the "UNL administration should subsidize the night-busing service in the same way that they subsidize the day service." We felt that, with adequate research, ASUN might be able to convince the administration of this.

It wasn't until the last phase of examination that the night-busing proposal was eliminated. Prior to final elimination I proposed that AUF fund the busing for \$5,000 and challenge the administration to make up the rest. AUF had limited funding, and this was all that I felt could be reasonably spared. The proposal, while receiving some positive response, did not spur any action. So it was that the ASUN proposal to AUF for night-busing service was voted down, not by personal bias, but by sound decision-making. The members of the board were quite pleased with their decisions, and the visible benefits that they had made possible with limited funding.

Michael J. Baack
UNL-RHA president



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