

Our Bodies, Our Selves

American youth need to take responsibility for their sexual behavior

Liberty means responsibility. While American sexual culture often ignores this vital truism, the near 76 million 20-somethings of Generation X cannot afford to disregard personal responsibility any longer.

American youth cannot repeat the mistakes of others and carelessly abuse their bodies through frivolous sexual behavior.

Perhaps the one concrete idea Generation X can unite around is the message of sexual responsibility — an unswerving respect for their bodies.

Indeed, the self-destructive sexual habits of Americans just might be one of the most bizarre social phenomena of the late 20th century.

Freedom without intelligence only leads to tragic endings, even death.

Eros and Dionysus vs. Apollo
Contemporary American social mores are, for the most part, unstringent, unbinding and, in a word, lax. Americans live in a life of privacy, liberty and self-expression, ideas that any Cuban immigrant would cherish.

Yet, Americans often make the lethal mistake of combining liberty and indiscretion. Or, in terms of sexuality, a number of American youth combine highly libidinous activity with stupidity.

According to the National College Health Risk Behavior Survey from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 86 percent of students from America's public and private colleges have had a sexual encounter.

Among that 86 percent, 70 percent of the students surveyed did not use a condom at their last sexual encounter.

Why is this stupidity? — because last year the New England Medical Journal printed that one in every five Americans over the age of 12 has genital herpes.

That means that of the some 44,000 students attending Texas A&M, over 8,000 students could possibly be infected with herpes — this should be sobering as well as shocking.

A little history lesson seems in order.

Thousands of years ago, the Greeks worshiped and summoned a number of deities with opposing characteristics. Specifically, the gods Eros and Dionysus who represented seemingly antithetical natures to that of Apollo.

Apollo represents rationality while Dionysus, the god of wine and sensuality, and Eros, representing sexual eroticism, both symbolize irrationality.

Although these gods appear to be incompatible, the sexual climate of the '90s requires a summoning of Apollo the moment Eros appears.

In other words, sex requires thinking; otherwise, sex can equal death.

America will never thrive on death. Xers must be for



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life.

What is this violence?

Sex in America has become a lurid game of violent politics, disease and mortality.

With their savvy political agendas, groups ranging from the National Organization for Women to the Christian Coalition to Hollywood all send out propaganda that blurs the reality of sexual activity in America.

While ultra right-wing groups shout that AIDS is the disease of homosexuals and drug-addicts, the facts could not be farther from this stereotype.

In reality, the *Journal of American Medical Association* reported last year that the fastest growing group of AIDS victims is young females living in the south who acquired the disease from heterosexual males.

That means this is not happening to those damn yankees, but rather, it's coming home.

Then, off in the distance is the faint whining of NOW,

rallying for abortion as the bourgeois solution to a normal life. Continually, young women are told that their lives can be simplified through this legally-sanctioned medical procedure.

Currently, over 1.5 million abortions occur in America each year, and approximately 45 percent of these women had at least one previous abortion, as printed in *Family Planning Perspectives*.

Indeed, 76 percent of the respondents in a survey from the same source noted that her reason for having an abortion is she is concerned how having a baby could change her life — specifically, losing her job, 67 percent, or interfering with her education, 49 percent.

This is not about those fringe abortions with rape, incest and severe deformities, this is about selfish sexual living.

How sad and pathetic that NOW and other groups continue to rally for sexual irresponsibility.

Rather than encourage the use of birth control and

intelligent decisions about sex, these pseudo-feminist groups only encourage violence as a means of birth control. Violence to the reproductive powers of females.

All the while, Hollywood adds to the confusion with the negligent message that sex has no consequences. Dishing out trash like "Melrose Place" and L.L. Cool J. videos, sex looks like Frutopia.

It's our turn.

X-ers need to begin behaving responsibly — maybe exercising a little self-control, at times would not hurt, either.

While sex is not evil, the consequences of irresponsible sex can be.

Generation X owes it to themselves to think before sex — America's youth must reverse this cycle of death and disease.

America needs freedom with intelligence.

Michelle Voss is a junior English major.

Class Council strikes out with maroon T-shirt idea

The Class Councils are not useless. But, with the latest new tradition from the collective Class Councils, they really are making an effort. The new tradition of Maroon Out is a bad idea that needs to be nipped in the bud.

The Class Councils want every Aggie at the upcoming game with Nebraska, be they current or former student, to wear a maroon T-shirt.

These shirts will be sold by the Class Councils for just \$5. They will be identical. Maroon Out, thankfully, has not yet gained the approval of the administration, but the Class Councils are mounting a serious campaign to get that approval.

To gain this approval, the Class Councils are toting the benefits of Maroon Out, which are somewhat dubious.

The Class Councils say Maroon Out will be developing a new tradition, as well as gaining national publicity for the University. The Class Councils are also saying Maroon Out will develop more unity of the Student Body and the Former Students.

Finally, they believe Maroon Out will increase attendance at football games and provide publicity for various student organizations on campus.

All of these are benefits, and good ones, if they were actually going to occur and not some pipe-dream of the Class Councils.

First, the last time anyone checked, maroon is a dark color.

Dark colors absorb heat, especially while a 50-plus year-old former student is standing in the sun watching a football game in the middle of September in south Texas.

Even 20-something current students are going to start regretting the maroon shirt as the second quarter roasts along. The darned things are just going to be uncomfortable to wear.

Second, creating a tradition is not only arrogant, but it's also almost surely doomed to failure. Traditions are not created, they occur.

Bonfire started as a trash heap. It kept on through the years, and developed into the tradition Aggie-land enjoys today. No one just said to himself, "I think what Texas A&M needs is a semi-religious, burning fifty-some foot pile of meticulously engineered tree trunks." Bonfire happened, it was not invented.

The same could be said of all Old Army traditions, and most of the New Army ones.

This "tradition" of Maroon Out is doomed to failure, because it will not have slowly evolved into the greatness that all the other traditions at A&M have achieved.

Third, while national publicity for A&M is good, getting it for acting like the world's largest cult is not exactly the best way to go about getting it.

Maroon Out will take a large group of people, unite them in one purpose, start them speaking and singing in unison and dress them alike.

If students started castrating each other, it could become Heaven's Gate around Aggie-land.

Next, exactly how is wearing a T-shirt going to promote student unity? The Class Councils may think sweating together in

the hot sun is fun, but few students share that idea. Also, exactly how many Old Ags are going to be wearing these things? Thirty- and 40-year-olds are very much smarter than that. They may be old, but they do understand basic thermodynamics.

Not to throw salt in the wound, but also how is wearing a T-shirt going to increase attendance at the football games. Those who do not care enough to attend a game now are not going to buy the T-shirts.

If these T-shirts were a good idea, how would prostituting them out to various student organizations help promote student unity?

Every student organization on campus cannot be represented, nor can any few be singled out for the identical shirts.

The shirts will only be able to include a few sponsoring groups, which will not increase unity. If anything, that kind of advertising will help divide the student body.

Finally, does A&M really need another group of identically-dressed zealots at the football games? The Corps block is bad enough alone, but with Maroon Out, the Keepers of the Spirit of Tradition would be excluded from a new tradition.

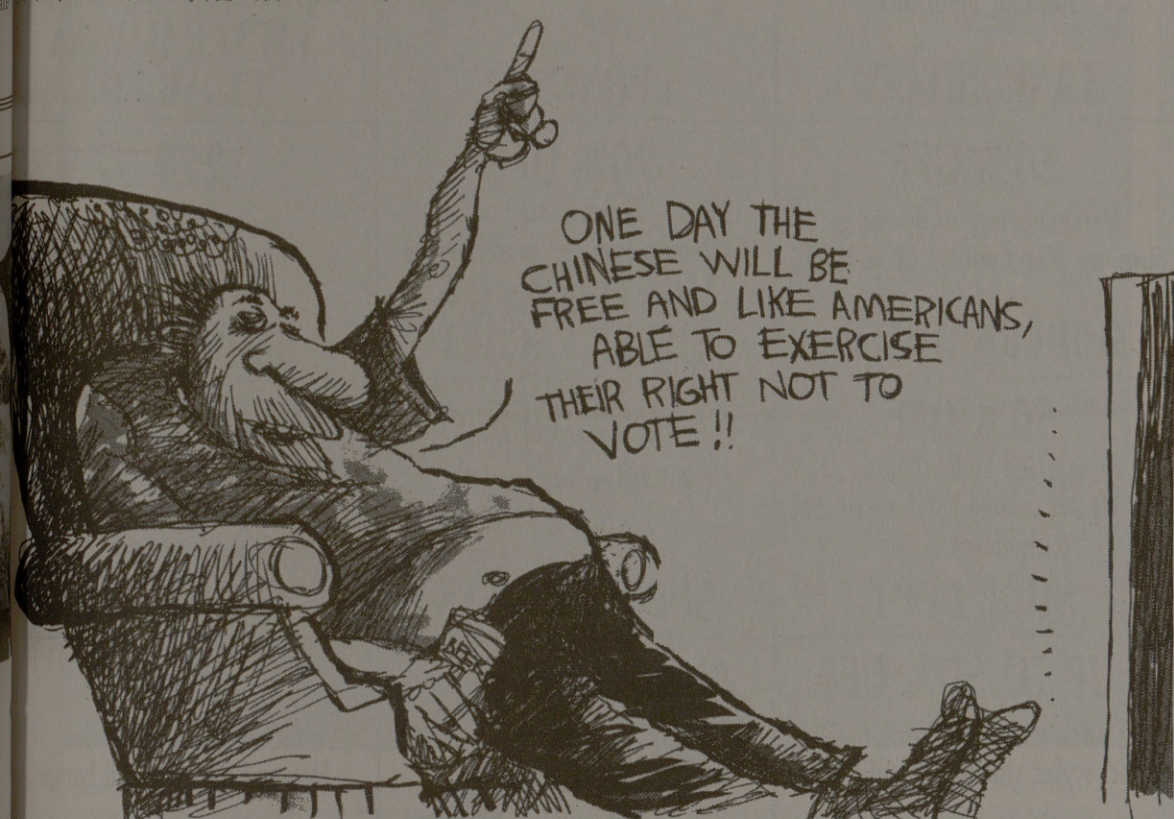
Competition would break out, and that just wouldn't sit well with the Corps. Or the Old Ags who were in the Corps. Again, Maroon Out will only divide the student body.

Maroon Out is a well-meaning idea, much like Pet Rocks or the Macarena.

Unlike those, Maroon Out should be buried quietly before it does its damage on society.

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MAIL CALL

Athletes receive undeserved hype

In response to Len Callaway's July 8, "Scoring an Education" column:

I have to say for an opinion column, Len Callaway's is pretty weak. First, I think that Callaway might be missing the premise of his own argument. He states more than once in this column,

"Life does not offer any guarantees, and it very seldom offers second chances — make the most of it while you can." This statement does not really support his conclusion that athletes should not leave school without a degree.

Apart from general logistical problems of this argument, quite frankly, I'm tired of this "holier than thou" attitude we impose on athletes. Society likes to stereotype them all as jocks looking for the easiest way out and just "wanting to play some ball."

Most of the time, playing is the passion of athletes much in the same way writing is the passion of authors. Mostly, athletes are just trying to take the best opportunities to do what they want in life like anyone else.

I don't see anyone saying they think Michael Jordan should have finished school before he went pro. And on the level of non-athletes, who tells Bill Gates he should have finished school

first? Really, if you asked Reggie Brown today, do you think he'd say he wished he had stayed? I bet he's just thankful for his life and for the opportunity to do something he loves — play football — both in the pros and at A&M.

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