

AIDS Talk

by Carl Dabler

He reaches over and brushes her hair away from her face, letting his hand trail down her back as he whispers in her ear. She giggles, casting a self-conscious glance around the bar.

Looking up again, they're walking out the door, hand in hand. "Can you believe that?" asks Mark, his eyes following them out, then darting back to the table. He lowers his voice: "Two hours ago they didn't even know each other."

Two years ago nobody would have noticed.

But with everybody from the Surgeon General on down talking about AIDS and condoms and safe sex, some people are being more careful about with whom they share their beds.

Mark is. "There's just no sense in taking a chance when your life is at stake," says the 26-year-old engineer, who has long, blond hair and a nice tan.

He has a nice smile, too, but he's not smiling now. Not while we're on this topic.

He has a friend -- a heterosexual -- who was tested for AIDS not long ago. The test was negative, but the point was made: It could happen to anybody.

So he hasn't had sex since he came to Erie a couple of months ago to work on a construction project. And he probably won't, until he goes back to Atlanta, where he knows with whom he's sleeping.

"I don't know what the chances are of getting it here in Erie, but with

my luck I'd run into the person who had it. It's just not worth the risk."

A few feet away, a woman with shoulder-length hair sips her drink and surveys the scene. She likes what she sees -- there are lots of attractive men here at The Brown Derby -- but she says she's not looking. She's got a boyfriend.

Not that she hasn't cheated on him before.

"But I'm a lot more careful now," says Amanda, a 23-year-old schoolteacher.

"You know, I went back and visited some college friends not too long ago, and two of them ended up having one-night stands while I was there."

"They didn't seem concerned about whether they might have gotten AIDS, or anything else for that matter. I couldn't believe it. Nobody said a word."

Amanda says she and her boyfriend recently agreed to tell each other if they sleep with someone else, so that they're aware of the risks they may be taking.

But she doesn't plan on having sex with anyone other than her boyfriend for quite a while -- not unless she gets to know him very well first.

"I don't go much for that safe-sex stuff. It's too boring. And you can't tell just by looking at a person whether he might have AIDS or not. I mean, I may have it and not know it."

She might. While only a small percentage of the AIDS cases resulted from heterosexual contact, it's possible she has slept with a bisexual -- or someone who received an infected blood transfusion -- at some point during the past few years.

And even though she's certain she's never slept with an intravenous drug user, who's to say her past sex partners haven't?

Not surprisingly, most young singles are worried about catching the AIDS virus, according to a national survey conducted this year by the Westport, Conn., research firm of Yankelovich Clancy Shulman. And with good reason. The estimated number of new cases by 1992, the year this freshman class graduates, is 365,000 in this country alone and at least 1 million worldwide. The biggest increase will be among heterosexuals.

They also believe, says another survey of sexually active young singles, that it is OK for women to ask their partners to use condoms to help prevent the spread of AIDS.

Nonetheless, only 48 percent of the men and 38 percent of the women who responded to the poll, conducted by Research and Forecasts Inc. of New York, reported they have used condoms within the past year.

They should. It's hard to know how many people might be carrying the virus. People who say, "it can't happen to me," are just kidding themselves.

Randy, a 26-year-old salesman with thinning brown hair and brown eyes, says he uses condoms as a means of birth control, not as protection against disease.

He's never quizzed the women he sleeps with about their sex histories, either: he usually just kind of "feels the situation out."

"I don't think I'm going to get AIDS," he says. "But I do wish there was more information available...How are you supposed to know what to believe?"

He shakes his head, and picks up his Bud longneck. "What about oral sex?" he asks his cousin Mike, who's accompanied him to the Brookside.

"Well," says Randy, "I saw on TV where some call girls are asking their clients to use condoms for that, too."

"But what about oral sex with women? What are you supposed to do about that?"

"Boy, I don't know," says Randy. "That's a good question. This whole thing is pretty scary."

It's getting late. Back at The Brown Derby, Mark's drinking buddy has left him alone with the waitress, who's playfully dropping popcorn in his hair.

Mark agrees to buy her a shot, but when she comes back he hands her \$2 and stands up.

She's not bad looking: got a big nose, maybe, but still kind of cute, and maybe some other time he would wait for her to get off work.

But tonight, Mark leaves alone.

EDITORS NOTE: The people and events in this article are fictitious. The situation it depicts, however, is real and important.

This Breakfast in Review by Our Man With Vision

Brett Taylor
Collegian Staff Writer



I believe it was Voltaire who declared, "Breakfast is the opium of the people." Or was it, "Opium is the breakfast of the people." Regardless, several revolutions in Western attitudes and technology have afforded the modern consumer a far healthier and diversified field of breakfast food options than those offered to our friend Voltaire. The unprepared shopper of today is easy prey to choice anxiety each time he stumbles into the cereal aisle of his favorite store. With new offerings arriving on the supermarket shelves each week, it becomes more and more difficult to make the right choice.

Confusing the issue even more is the latest entry from Ralston Purina, a concoction called Dinersaurs. The motif is, obviously, dinosaurs who operate a diner. Judging from the front panel illustration, these pastel-colored reptiles specialize in a cereal designed in their own image. The obligatory giant-spoon photograph appears to contain several melted gumdrops. Don't let this dissuade you: Dinersaurs are a crunchy, four-grain compound. To be honest, they are nothing but Froot Loops twisted into more interesting shapes -- if I were a certain toucan, I'd be following my nose straight to my lawyer.

Close inspection shows that the cereal comes in five distinct shapes,

each of which corresponds in both color and anatomy to one of the dinosaurs illustrated on the box. The attention to detail is quite amazing, right down to the plates on the back of the stegosaurus. In my opinion, Dinersaurs is the finest example of representative molding in a cereal ever.

But how does it taste? The packaging claims that the fruit flavoring is all natural. Although I usually consider this a drawback, in this case the sporadic, chancy quality of natural flavoring lends the little reptiles a certain palatability lacking from other fruit cereals. The porous texture helps the cereal to stay crunchy in milk for up to twenty minutes as well. In a dry test, the five fruit flavors blended well, although I noticed a slightly

antiseptic aftertaste. This effect is quite subtle, though, and shouldn't bother anyone who brushes his

"Dinersaurs.... are nothing but Froot Loops twisted into more interesting shapes--if I were a certain toucan, I'd be following my nose straight to a lawyer."

teeth after every meal. The bonus prize on the review box was four free dinosaur trading cards. Actually, these were just printed on the back panel and required careful removal with an X-acto knife. Though the illustrations are quite striking, I am disturbed by the industry-wide proliferation of "back-panel prizes." It should be obvious to the manufacturers that anyone who eats a cereal with this much sugar does not plan on living forever. Discriminating cereal connoisseurs demand instant gratification -- something tangible that they may have to dig for, not a cheap, superficial thrill pasted on the box.

I have only two complaints. First, though the flavors are all natural, the fruit colors are not of this world. The intense hues, particularly the lemon yellows, may

Poll Finds Next Generation Of Collegians Will Be More Liberal

(CPS) -- The next generation of college freshmen appears to be more liberal than its predecessors.

Fifty-one percent of the 600 high school student leaders attending the annual conference of the National Association of School Councils (NASC) in Albuquerque, N.M., last month said they supported Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis for president.

Forty-eight percent, on the other hand, favored Vice President George Bush.

Perhaps most significantly, only 21 percent of the students at the conference -- all of them were elected leaders at their school -- described themselves as "conservative."

Four years ago, 60 percent of the student leaders called themselves conservative.

The majority of student leaders -- 54 percent -- this year say they're "liberal."

"These student leaders represent a real important segment of our country," said Lew Armstead, NASC's director of public information. "It is important to pay

attention to what they say, because 10 years from now they will be our state legislators and senators."

The survey findings aren't surprising to Kevin Harris of the United States Student Association, which represents elected college student leaders.

The Reagan administration's economic policies, he said, have hurt more than they helped young people, spurring them to reject conservative philosophy.

Students suffering from poorly funded schools and social programs, Harris said, are again embracing more liberal politics as a solution to social problems.

"The conservative label has been blurred," countered Greg Rothman of the College Republican Committee. Students, he added, may not label themselves as conservatives, but still support conservative solutions to most issues.

Dukakis's lead in the NASC poll, he said, is "not surprising. As we get closer to the election, people will see more of Bush."

And young people will like what they see, he predicts. "Dukakis pales in comparison on education. Bush plans to be the elected president."

Apathy Cancels a Class on Activism

New York, N.Y. (CPS) A course designed to explore the increase in student activism during the past two years has been cancelled on account of apathy.

No one registered for the class, offered by the Adult Division of the New School for Social Research, Dean Gerald A. Heeger said last week.

Heeger saw little irony in the cancellation. "I wouldn't draw the conclusion that students are apathetic. There are a lot of students interested in activism, but we just didn't reach them."

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CAMPUS VOICE

by Nanette Quatchak and Vail Weller
Entertainment Editors

Welcome back to school. For those of you who have been reading the Collegian in the past, you will notice that the Student Voice is now called Campus Voice. This year we will not only be talking to the students on campus but also faculty and staff. We hope that this will show a more broad view of opinion at Behrend.

The question that we asked in this issue involved other ways that the Collegian can be improved. Here are the answers we received:

Dr. Louanne Barton
3 years
Personal Counselor

"I don't see that any improvements are needed. I like the new format a lot and I like the fact that you can include controversial subjects. It is very important to be able to say what you want to say without being censored."

Bill Gallenz
9th semester
Management

"...more interaction with students to get their opinions. I like the idea of Campus Voice but I think there should be more things like it."

Ellie Richardson
2nd semester
General Arts

"I'd like to see more for non-traditional students, like myself, because they are increasing so much."

Chris White
9th semester
MIS

"I like to stay informed about local and campus news but I wouldn't mind seeing more international news and sports. I would like to see a format similar to the one used in USA Today."

Deedee Zupal
6th semester
Management

"I just transferred here and I would like to see more about campus activities and student life. I'm not interested in local things and world events because I can get that in other ways."



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