

**Editorial opinion**

## Reality check

### Female condom newest addition to safer sex options

A few decades ago, it would have been bizarre for newspaper readers to see an editorial cheering the arrival of a new type of condom.

But evolving attitudes toward sex and deadly sexually transmitted diseases demand that type of response to the new Reality female condom.

Preventing unwanted pregnancies and halting the spread of STDs are responsibilities that must be shared between men and women.

Aside from abstinence, condoms are among the most effective ways for couples to act responsibly when it comes to protecting themselves against STDs.

Reality provides another precaution during sexual activity.

But this newly dubbed chapter in the *Book of Love* does have a drawback when it comes to the issues of cost and dependability.

Reality costs about \$2.75 per condom, while male condoms are only about \$1 apiece. That price difference has prompted Ritenour Building to initially carry Reality in limited supply.

The extra cost for Reality is worthwhile because it is made of polyurethane, which is stronger

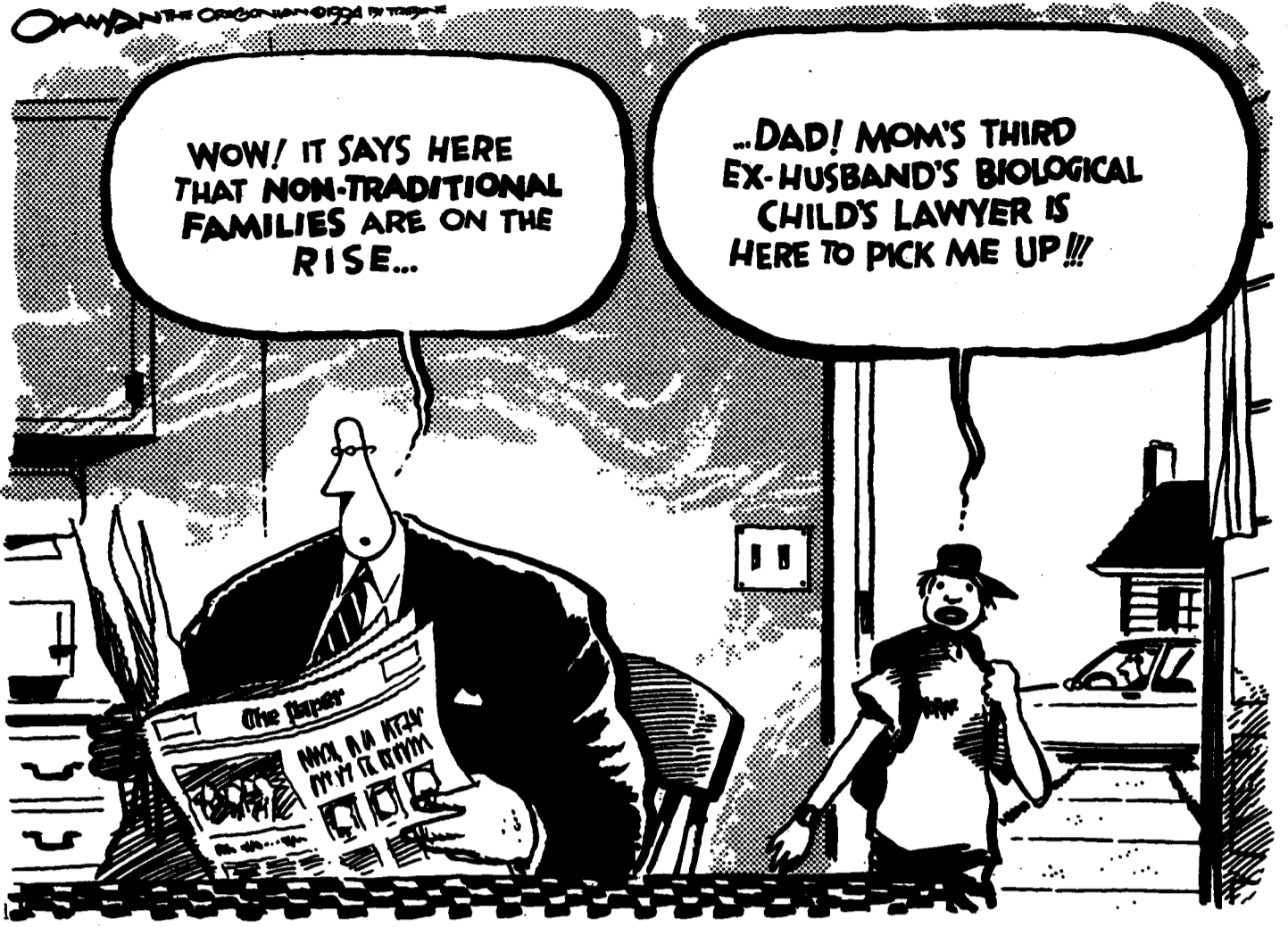
than standard male-condom material and is less likely to tear.

But convincing sexually active students to kick in a few extra bucks may prove to be a tough task. Efforts should be made by both University Health Services and Reality's producers to keep female condoms available to students at a reasonable, practical price. And if enough students respond favorably to the contraceptive, then Ritenour and downtown businesses should keep them in stock.

And despite early praise from the medical community about Reality's potential to prevent unwanted pregnancies or STDs, those people who use female condoms should approach them with some caution.

Sometimes contraceptives don't turn out to be what everyone expected. Past horror stories — most notably the problems that surrounded intrauterine devices — have taught us that the world of safe sex isn't always black and white.

But female condoms used along with other contraceptives may prove to be what couples need to give their *Book of Love* a happy ending.



**Letters to the editor**

**Copy wrongs**

I loved Melanie Cox's column about fighting any system that is unjust or attempts to squash one's individuality and creativity. I think it is great that she calls for action and change.

But because I admired her column so much, I feel compelled to point out one misconception Ms. Cox apparently has. She laments the costs of reading packets, claiming that "instructor(s) could just photocopy everything anyway."

Instructors simply can't just photocopy the material anyway, unless their last names are Kennedy or Rockefeller.

Our departments do not provide unlimited free copies to instructors.

My department, for instance, limits me to 10 copies per student or 400 per course. I can barely run off syllabi, assignment sheets and exams.

Yet, the more important question here is why the packets are so expensive and there is another issue Ms. Cox can tackle (I'll gladly help!).

Most instructors originally used reading packets to keep costs down for their students.

Instead of buying \$100 worth of books, students could get a few samples of each book for around \$12 in a packet.

Needless to say, the publishing companies didn't like that idea and pushed for even stricter interpretations of the copyright law.

So now we instructors are faced with an almost impossible dilemma.

Do we really want to make our students pay \$50 or \$60 for a flimsy package, simply because copy centers are so nervous that they insist on expensive copyright clearance of even a few lines of a poem?

If not, what should we do? Have the students go back to buying all those books? Students, instructors and maybe even the overly cautious copy centers should unite in fighting these new draconian interpretations of the law.

Don't fight each other. Fight the real reason for the sudden absence or preposterous price of those packets!

To quote one of my colleagues: this is not about copyrights, but about copy wrongs.

So do something; don't blame the instructors.

Meggi Schongen  
graduate-English

**Calling all seniors**

Hey seniors! This is your chance to have your voice heard at Penn State! Do you have an idea for the Senior Class Gift of 1995? Would you like to see that dream become a reality? Well, now is your chance. Between Sept. 6 and Sept. 12 there will be suggestion boxes for the 1995 Senior Class Gift located on the HUB Desk, Pattee and the Career Placement Center. Please drop any suggestions that you may have in one of these boxes. Who knows, maybe your suggestion will follow the legacy which dates back over 100 years.

The tradition of the Senior Class Gift began with the class of 1861, Penn State's first graduating class, when they presented a portrait of Evan Pugh to the University.

Other classes followed with such noticeable gifts as the Clock for the Tower of Old Main (Class of 1904) and the Nittany Lion Shrine (Class of 1940). The most recent gifts include the Ritenour Urgent Care Unit (Class of 1993) and the Extended Hours Room at Pattee (Class of 1994) that generated a record collection of \$115,000 to serve the future students of Penn State. Construction for the 1994 gift will begin in January.

It is now our turn, the Class of 1995, to plan our gift. Do not forget, if you plan to graduate in May, August, or January of 1995, you are a member of the Class of 1995. Also, if you are interested in helping out with the Senior Class Gift Campaign Committee, please drop your name and phone number in one of the suggestion boxes or call the Senior Class Gift Campaign Office at 863-2052. Be a part of the tradition!

April Campbell  
1995 Senior Class Gift Campaign chair

**All grown up**

Melanie Cox, I understand that your column on Aug. 31 was supposed to be your opinion, but what exactly was it? I'm confused. From what I gathered from the column, you would wish total anarchy on the University, and all would be well? Maybe here in central Pennsylvania, it takes a bit longer to vent the youthful feelings of angst and oppression. From my short

tenure here, I've found Pennsylvania to be quite a bit behind the times. But the point of the matter is: you probably should have outgrown that stage, at least by now. Every adolescent feels "the system" is going to suffocate them, but really, it passes. You realize that not everyone is working day and night to remove any unique thought from your mind: they generally could care less about your thoughts! Not to show them, but for your own personal sense of pride.

OK, so I'm Mr. Conservative Bad Guy here, squashing all your wonderful free thoughts, right? No. Back in my day I was rehashing revolutionary ideals from the '60s. Everyone was out to get me. I may have even written an underground newspaper or two (and when the statute of limitations is up . . .) Again my point: I realized that in order to change a system one doesn't have to yell, scream and whine. In fact those tactics are usually pulled by those insecure, unsure, or just clueless about their positions. Working within the system to achieve change, though, will.

So you're bored in class. Fine, leave. Don't make an ass of yourself by bashing desks around and proclaiming your oh-so-elite boredom.

Better yet, raise your hand and pose this question, "Is this topic really relevant to us?"

If it's so boring that you don't even care about the subject, boy, what in the hell are you doing there in the first place?

Try a different major before dropping out. Become a forest ranger in Oregon before taking a firebomb to the lion. An interviewer asked me where I'd be in 20 years, and I said it was either Oregon or running a bar in Maine.

The fact of the matter is this: Penn State is a huge impersonal conglomerate. It's a city. If you even had thought that a school, 20 times larger than your already imprisoning high school, would be any more personal, you were mistaken. Deal with it. Take up a club: the canoe division of the Penn State Outing Club does some of the roughest white water rivers on the East Coast. Get out of the house and get some fresh air into them lungs.

There have been some bad My Opinion columns, especially this past summer. But here we're talking pure nonsense.

Daniel C. Richardson  
graduate-industrial engineering

## the Collegian

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# Student apathy as rampant as drunks on College Ave.

When I first came to the University two years ago, I was shocked at how conservative the campus actually was.

Not politically conservative — we all pretty much know the campus is full of liberals — but not concerned enough to take a stand on anything. I imagined a campus with more than 38,000 students would take a stand on every issue — international, national, state and local.

But the reality is that student apathy is something that seems to run as rampant as drunk people on College Avenue on Friday and Saturday nights.

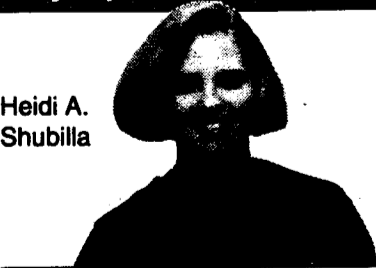
I thought that students would be up in arms when the State College Borough Council received a proposal from the Coalition of State College Neighborhood Associations this summer.

The proposal requests that an amendment be added to the zoning ordinance that would limit student density in residential areas in an effort to curb annoyances.

I figured the student masses would go wild with such news. But

**My opinion**

Heidi A. Shubilla



the coalition strategically presented the proposal to the council in the summer, when most University students are away from State College. And the students who were here didn't make much noise either.

Undergraduate Student Government President Mike King did counter the coalition's proposal. King's counterproposal suggested a square-footage plan that would base the allowed number of residents on area rather than a set number. King also wants to delete the three unrelated person occupancy amendment, which prevents more than three unrelated people from living in a residential home.

The timing of the proposal was unfair — I couldn't cry student apathy because most students were away from Penn State. The State College/University Park area was the furthest thing from their minds. I thought when all the students returned for the fall semester it would be a different story. Or so I thought.

Now it's September and students are officially apathetic in my book — and my faith in the student body is slowly wearing thinner and thinner each day. King seems to be in this fight alone.

I don't think it's a matter of people not caring. I just think that, in general, Penn State students are too lazy to care — a fact that really sucks. We are letting the coalition get away with saying all sorts of horrible things about us, which may or may not be true.

The coalition listed several complaints about students in its proposal. We make too much noise, party around-the-clock, drive drunk, litter, urinate and vomit in public.

Personally, I do not fall under any of those categories. Those

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complaints unfairly lump all University students into a rowdy, inconsiderate bunch. Stereotyping is not the way to go about proposing a solution to a problem that seems to be never ending.

Yes, there are students who fall under the coalition's categories. But can they say that all students fit this mold? Should all students be forced to live in Beaver Hill apartments or other such downtown apartment complexes?

I hate the fact that some students find it acceptable to puke on somebody's lawn — hell, I get furious when people throw up in my apartment building. But not all students do this — some of us actually wait until we get home to vomit.

And one council member, Jerry Wettstone, said he believes

amending the zoning ordinance is important for the preservation of single-family homes.

Students cannot be blamed for occupying so many residential homes. Talk to the landlords who convert such dwellings into apartments for students. I'm sure they'll tell you having students as tenants is much more profitable than other residents.

A student wants to have a nice place to live just as much as any townie wants to. Students should be allowed to pick and choose where they want to hang their collective hat.

I consider State College my home, too. And there are many people who say that if it weren't for the students, State College would just be a hick farm town on the way to Altoona. We have rights

and we deserve the privilege to live wherever we want. We should not be afraid to stand up for something we believe in.

I'm not asking for the protests that universities like Berkeley or Kent State had during the late 1960s and early '70s. Begin by talking about the issue before class with your classmates. Question those in power positions — the mayor, council members and University administrators.

Quite frankly, I would be happy enough to see a handful of students attend borough council meetings or write a letter to the Planning Commission.

I don't think my requests are extreme. We need to let them know that we do care about State College and that we won't tolerate being pushed around any more.

And in case you were wondering, the State College Borough Council meets at 7:30 tonight in the municipal building.

Heidi A. Shubilla is a junior majoring in journalism and political science and is the Collegian's assistant metro editor.