

Op-Ed

# Condom machines in college dorms

## AIDS threat demands attention, not just during health service hours

by David Hibbard  
JC 426-A

"I need change for the drink machines," could soon change to "I need change for the condom machines," at UNC campuses across the state. That is, if a recent proposal made by the N.C. Student Legislature is adopted. The Student Legislature, comprised of students from 30 public and private colleges in the state, proposed that condom machines be

Although some schools provide condoms, students don't seem to know about it.

placed in dormitories throughout the UNC system. The chairman of the UNC Board of Governors called the proposal, "a shocker," but said board members could not be closed-minded about the issue. And they certainly can't. AIDS is a real threat in today's society,

and anyone who doesn't believe it is just plain naive. And people who believe college students aren't engaging in sex are in the same boat.

For years, college and universities have considered it their responsibility to see that their students have had required vaccina-

tions, and are generally healthy. Health services on campus provide a doctor, medicine, and a wide range of counseling and health in-

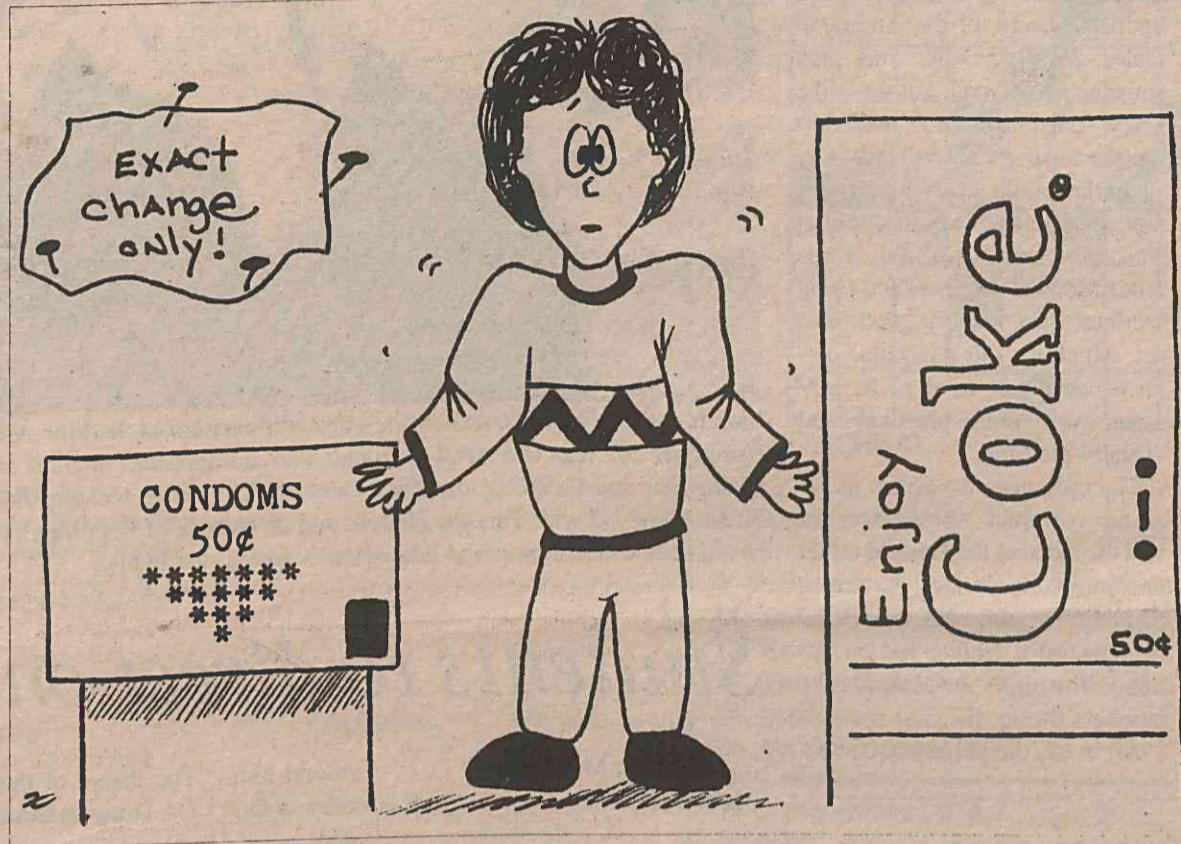
formation. Many schools have provided condoms for years, but for some reason, the students just don't seem to know it.

Even if they did know it, would it help? How many college infirmaries are open at 11 or 12 o'clock on Friday and Saturday nights, when students are most likely to need condoms?

The point is that the majority of students and adults put off getting protection for safe sex until minutes before they need it. Often, those minutes don't fall into the hours that your local campus health service is open to distribute condoms.

Condom machines do not promote promiscuous sex. Students have made up their minds by the time they get to college whether or not they're going to have sex.

The presence of condom machines is not going to encourage someone to engage in sex. But their presence may encourage safe sex for those who do.



## Protection from AIDS should rest in hands of health care services

by Margaret Allen  
JC 426-A

With the heightened awareness of the AIDS virus and its connections with having casual sex, many colleges are considering placing condom machines in dormitories. The N.C. Student Legislature, feels that making condoms easily accessible to students, the risk of catching AIDS would be reduced if not prevented.

The question is not, whether condoms reduce the risk of catching AIDS, because they are the best way to protect both the male and female who decide to engage in casual sex, but where the condoms should be provided for the students. The condoms should be placed, not in the dorms, but in the student health center, where students can get them discreetly in a tasteful manner.

The purpose of having a health center on college campuses is to

provide a service for the betterment of the student's health. With the risk of AIDS spreading among sexually active college students, the burden should lie with the health center to sufficiently supply students with condoms and other protection.

Any students who would feel apprehensive about getting condoms from the health center would feel even more uncomfortable buying them out of a machine in public where their peers would be more likely to see them. The health center would be providing a service to the college and the students, but at the same time they would be doing so in a discreet manner.

This way, both needs would be met. Students would be able to get condoms easily and the college would be spared any embarrassment that would come from college officials, alumni, or state legislators who disapprove of the condom machines being placed in the dormitories.

by Mickey Powell  
JC 426-A

There has been much discussion on the possibility of placing condom vending machines in dormitories throughout the University of North Carolina system.

Some people believe that the machines will make condoms easily obtainable to students, resulting in increased sexual responsibility. However, other factors must be taken into consideration before making this decision.

The N.C. Student Legislature has recommended to the UNC system that they install these machines. In recent years, society has become more open in discussing sexual issues. Each year, many new cases of AIDS are reported, and the public is becoming more aware of the dangers of sexually-transmitted diseases.

School officials do not find the idea of installing the machines too appealing, but recognize that if statistics are found showing college

students to be at a high risk, the issue should be considered.

Many college students are experiencing sexual relations for the first time. It is something that, for

*If a student is able to be on his own, he should be able to take on the responsibility for his sexual actions.*

many, is part of the experience of being on their own. If a student is responsible enough to be on his own, he should be able to take responsibility for his sexual actions.

Pharmacies as well as some infirmaries provide condoms to those that want them. If a student feels uncomfortable asking for or purchasing them, it should tell him that maybe he is not ready for sex. If the machines are installed in dorms, that is no guarantee that students will use them.

Schools must also consider the feelings of those who contribute funds to the school. Some parents may not want to send their child to

a school that seems to support the idea of its students having sex. Many students have parents who grew up in an era of different sexual attitudes, and they may not fully

understand that the college is simply trying to stop the spread of disease. Because they are at a vulnerable age, some students may also get the notion that the college is encouraging sexual relations.

Colleges should be concerned about preventing the spread of sexually-transmitted diseases, but they should also try to maintain an atmosphere that encourages sexual responsibility.

Condoms are available through other sources for students who want them. Installing condom vending machines may pose too many problems to the school in terms of the public's attitude.