

New male contraceptive developed in Norway

Andy Freedman

Staff Writer

On Jan. 31, University Of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS) researchers announced that they had found a way to halt sperm from swimming. This discovery is making a clear path toward the longtime medical goal of producing a male birth control pill.

They also announced that they had reached an agreement with a Norwegian company, SpermaTech, in an attempt to develop this contraceptive. However, even if their theories are right, it could still take up to a decade of lab testing in order to fully develop this new contraceptive.

"The existence of alternative methods of birth control is exceedingly important, particularly methods men can use and where the responsibility for contraception becomes more of a shared responsibility," said Dr. Karen Loeb Lifford, medical director of Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts, *The Boston Globe* reports.

This development comes five decades after the development of the female birth control pill, an invention that revolutionized sexuality in the 1960s and contributed greatly to the women's liberation movement. This new form of birth control is expected to revolutionize all contraception.

"We support this research on a number of levels," said UMMS spokesman Dr. Michael Cohen for the UMass Boston student newspaper *The Daily*

Collegian. "We very much support alternate forms of contraception ... I think there are many men who will find this to be a good option,"

Interestingly enough, researchers used pond scum to do the majority of their research. Algae in pond scum travel through water using flagella, which are basically small, microscopic engines. These algae have a structure similar to that of sperm.

Researchers found a way to shut down the algae flagella and wondered if they could do the same thing to sperm. Using ram's sperm, which is very close in structure to human sperm, researchers were successful in their attempts to halt the sperm from swimming through semen.

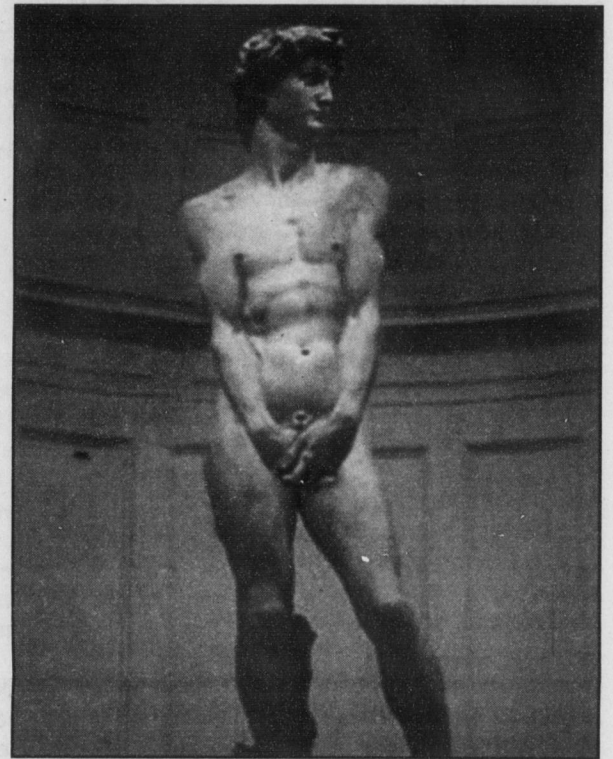
In his research, George B. Witman III, a cell biologist at UMass, discovered that the essential protein affected by this can be found nowhere else in the human body, thus suggesting that this pill will likely have no side effects.

"This is an important discovery because we have something that is unique to sperm and also we know it's essential to the sperm," said Dr. Jerome F. Strauss III, director of the Center for Research on Reproduction and Women's Health at the University of Pennsylvania, *The Boston Globe* reports.

This contraceptive could come in multiple forms, such as pills, gel, or a patch, and part of the challenge will be to decide what the best one is, *The Daily Collegian* reports.

As for its potential success, it seems like this con-

traceptive will catch on. "I'd rather have that than to have to pay for some expensive surgery," said first-year Pete Rey. ☼



KEVIN BRYAN/PHOTO ILLUSTRATION

Casualties in Iraq mounting

Shane Jacobs

Staff Writer

March 20 will mark the two-year anniversary of the war in Iraq.

"I though violence in Iraq was toning down quite a bit until that election on Jan.30. Since that election violence has been a daily routine in Iraq," said Sergeant First Class

Scott Sculley, in an interview with *The Guilfordian*.



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On Feb.7 a suicide bomber detonated a bomb killing 12 and wounding four outside of Jumhuriya Hospital located in Mosul.

"I heard and explosion. When I went to check, I saw bodies everywhere" said

Tahseen

Ali Mahmoud al-Obeidi according to CNN.

Around 4 a.m., half and hour after the hospital explosion in a taxi full of explosives blew up killing 15 people.

"The dead were civilians looking for work, either as police officers or in civilian posts available at the station," said Col. Dana Pitard, Commander of the 3rd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, to CNN.

According to *The New York Times*, Mosul has

been the scene of daily rebel attacks and clashes with American troops and Iraqi security forces. Violence has increased since an insurgent uprising in Nov. drove out nearly all of the city's police force.

The deadliest attack since last week's election happened in Baghdad. A suicide bomber blew up a group of Iraqis outside of an army recruitment center. The bomb killed 21 people and injured 27 more, according to CBS News.

Explosions sounded over the Baghdad as militants battled Iraqi security troops leaving five Iraqis dead.

Mithal al-Alusi, a politician who heads the Nation Party, was shot at while driving in his car with his two sons. Mithal al-Alusi wasn't hit by the assailants, but his two sons were killed.

Mithal al-Alusi was the former leading figure in the Iraqi National Congress Party.

Last year he was expelled from the party after attending a conference on terrorism in Israel. Al-Alusi was one of the candidates who ran in the Jan. 30 elections.

"It's just an on-going attempt to drive the United States out of Iraq; we are a foreign occupying power and there are a lot of people in Iraq who want to settle their

own differences their own way," said Barton Parks, Professor of Justice and Policy Studies.

"These people want the United States out," said Parks. ☼

Alert Notice!

From Feb. 7 thru Feb. 20, 2005 there have been over a dozen reports of vehicle break-ins and thefts.

The area targeted the most is Bryan Lot. Please help us help you prevent these heinous crimes by:



Locking your vehicle

Securing or hiding valuables such as:

CD's, laptop computers, Palm Pilots, calculators, iPods, mp3 players, purses, wallets, and cash.

The Department of Public Safety has increased staffing and patrol rounds in all parking lots. If anyone witnesses these crimes committed, please notify your RA, Hall Director, or call 2911 ASAP. Be sure to give a description of the suspect and the location of his/her whereabouts.

This is a community effort to make our campus safe.