

The Human Sexuality Information and Counseling Service

Helping with everything you were afraid to ask

BY DEBORAH MOOSE
Staff Writer

A student's boyfriend is pressuring her to have sex, and she is not sure if she should. An unmarried woman discovers that she is pregnant, and she becomes despondent. A male student fears that he may have contracted a venereal disease. A young couple desires information on birth control.

The Human Sexuality Information and Counseling Service (HSICS) in Suite B of the Carolina Union deals with these problems, and more, daily. When the service began in October 1971, it was the first peer sex-counseling service in the nation.

The service was created with three primary objectives: to provide up-to-date information on the many aspects of sexuality, to refer students and others to the services offered in the community that deal with sexuality and to talk on a one-to-one basis with anyone who has problems in the area of sexuality and relationships. These purposes were outlined in a report edited by

the director of the service from 1973-1974, Robert A. Diamant, and the service still operates under the ideas presented in his report.

JACK SMITH, cochairperson of HSICS, said that there are four ways that the service contacts students: walk-in, telephone, the Outreach program and handbook distribution. Smith said that for the 1975-1976 school year, about 800 people visited the office or called in on the 24-hour phone line, 933-5505. Counselors are available at all times at this number. If students call after office hours, they are given the name and home phone number of a counselor.

At least two of the 25 counselors are usually in the office during posted hours, both males and females for anyone who would feel more comfortable speaking to a counselor of a particular sex. Free pamphlets are available on such subjects as birth control and venereal disease, and there is a small library of books on abortion, sex roles, sexual behavior and other matters. Students may check out the books with an ID.

Smith said that during the past year, 54 Outreach programs were conducted on-campus and 20 off-campus, reaching about 2,200 people. The expanding Outreach program involves a group of counselors who are invited by dorms, prisons and other organizations to give talks on any issue involving sexuality. The subjects most often touch upon included physiology, contraception, venereal disease, relationships and value clarification.

A POLL of students taken by the service during the last two months indicate that 70 per cent would like the Outreach program expanded with more campus-oriented lectures and films. In the past, there have been Outreach programs at Chapel Hill

High School, the UNC School of Nursing and a halfway house in Durham, N.C.

Smith said one of the better means of reaching people is through the distribution of handbooks. During the past school year, approximately 1,500 copies of each of two booklets were distributed in dorms, booths and other locations on campus. The booklets are on venereal disease and birth control.

"Information dissemination is one of the biggest and most important things we do," counselor Sam Hudson said. "If you're informed, it's easier to deal with things."

The counseling service was created, Hudson said, because there was an obvious need for it among the students. The available resources, such as professional counseling and physicians, were not being used because students did not feel they were accessible. The formation of this student-run liaison between sources and students improved the accessibility of information and resources. "We're non-judgmental, non-pressure oriented with no desire to track anyone down," Hudson said.

STUDENTS often distrust professionals and adults and receive moralizing and criticism concerning sexual problems, the Diamant report stated. The service is attractive to young people because of the informality and practicality of its help. The free services are available immediately upon request, anonymity can be preserved and there is more acceptance of different lifestyles.

"We fit between the students and the professional community," Smith said. The service very often refers people to places where they can receive professional answers and treatment.

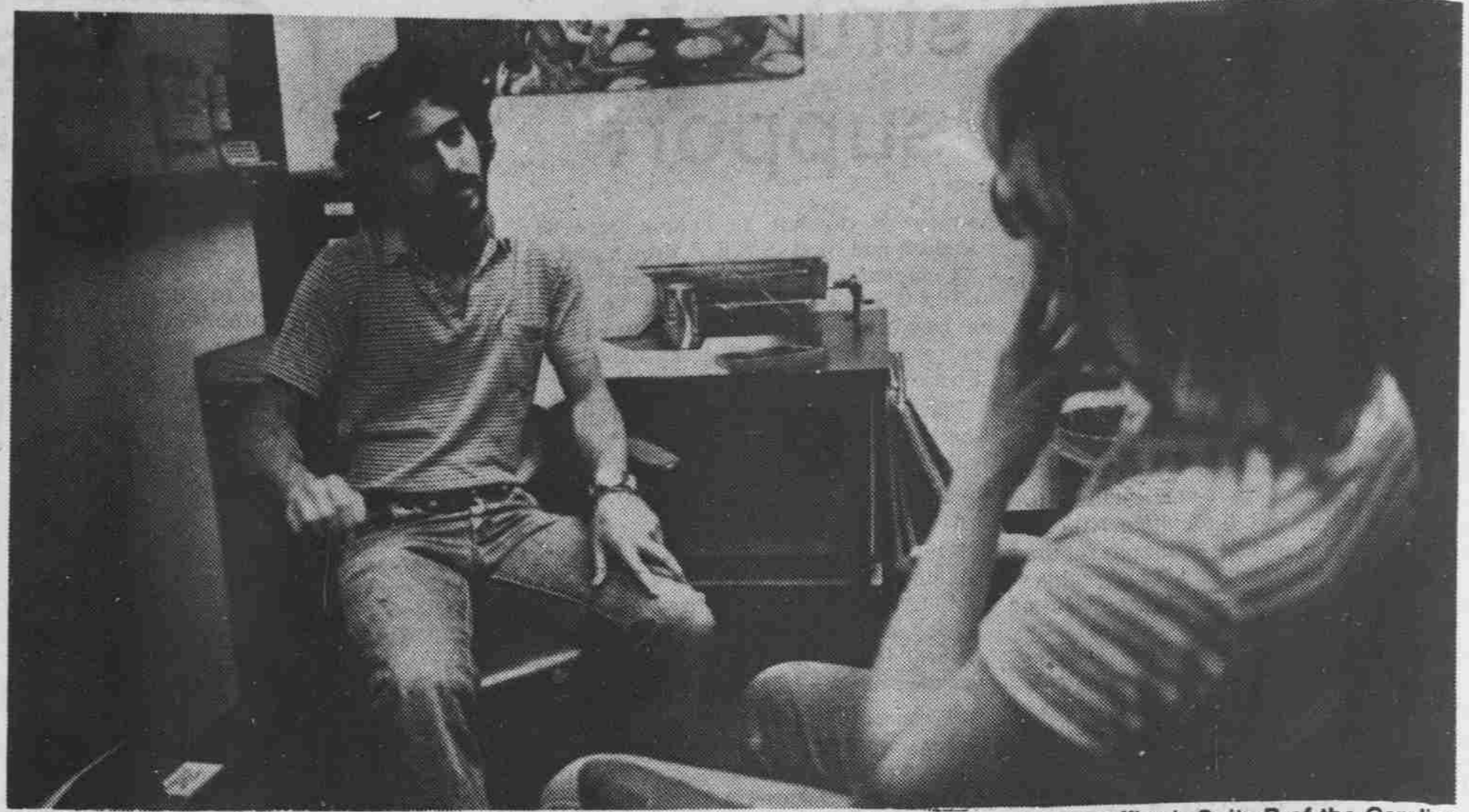
The concern of the Human Sexuality Information and Counseling Service is in the area of sexual problems. In a university environment, Smith said, "Freedom—the more liberated atmosphere—is a pressure."

"In our so-called 'liberated age,' people use images of sexuality projected by the media as norms and feel inadequate."

Smith said the HSICS offers general counseling, too. "We're trying to get that across. It's a place to talk or learn something."

"Sexuality is not unrelated to everything else," Hudson said. Counselors will speak with anyone who has a problem in any area, such as drugs, but they will often refer the caller to a counseling service designed for their specific problem.

Counselors come from many fields and join the service for different reasons. Smith,



Bruce Levin is one of the counselors at the Human Sexuality Information and Counseling Service office in Suite B of the Carolina Union. Staff photo by Bill Russ.

a junior religion major, said that he finds the area fascinating because he is interested in health and can gain experience in working with people. "It brings in physical, psychological and religious aspects," he said. Hudson said that he saw it as a good opportunity to meet people, and the caring, supportive aspects appealed to him.

Although the service is run jointly by all 25 counselors, Smith and Tamara Truitt serve as codirectors, trying to coordinate activities. There is also a management board, made up of members of the service, which meets to discuss such business matters as finances and publicity. The counseling service is funded totally by the student government.

THE SERVICE has had few problems, Truitt said. But, publicity is one of the areas HSICS is going to emphasize in the future. In a poll conducted over the last two months, 45 per cent of UNC students did not know what HSICS is, but about 99 per cent felt there is a need for such a service.

The predominance of upperclassmen in the service has been one of its limitations. Truitt said that they are interested in recruiting freshmen and sophomores who have no experience in counseling.

The most common problems that people bring to HSICS concern contraception, pregnancy and relationships. However, the service also provides counseling in other areas. If they do not know the answer to a question, or if a professional opinion is needed, the counselors will refer the person to another source. The Human Sexuality Information and Counseling Service is not an oracle of wisdom that will provide the solution to every problem. But as Hudson said, "People expect to find the answer in this office. The answer is within the person."

unicycles

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"It's a real chore at first," Amaya said. He has been riding since December. Neither he nor Manieri can move backwards yet. They are still working on smoothing their forward motion.



Unicyclist Roger Sharrett gives staff photographer Bill Russ a ride in the Pit. Staff photo by Rouse Wilson.

"Once you feel the motion you'll want to do it for sure," Manieri said. "It's pretty hard to fall once you get the hang of it." By riding the unicycle, Manieri has overcome many fears and gained some confidence.

The unicycle is balanced from the legs and torso by leaning the upper part of the body forwards, backwards or to either side. To spin, the rider must get torque by fanning his arms out in the desired direction. For turns, he twists his hips, leans to the inside and uses a tightly controlled fling of the arms. To go down hills, the rider, leans forward to inhibit the natural speed of the wheel so that the wheel does not shoot out in front.

Unicycles can be purchased at any bicycle shop in Chapel Hill and Carrboro. However, since bike dealers sell very few of the machines—only three to five in a year per shop—most don't stock unicycles. They order them especially for a customer. The Chapel Hill Cycle Shop and Clean Machine have a few in stock. The price for the 24" models ranges from \$50-\$60.

When the riders go out, they encounter a variety of onlookers on their trips around town. Some of the remarks they receive are like these: "Where's the other wheel?" or "Why don't you join the circus?"

Riders especially like little children who are amazed by their one-wheeled contraptions. Sharrett said that he feels like the Pied Piper when kids watch him. Adults tend to think unicycles as rather childish and immature. But he enjoys riding on his free-flowing unicycle.

You may see him glide by one day, effortlessly and silently under the shade of oaks and wheel are of one motion. As Sharrett said, "Unicyclists symbolize a spirit that won't allow their youth to be lost."

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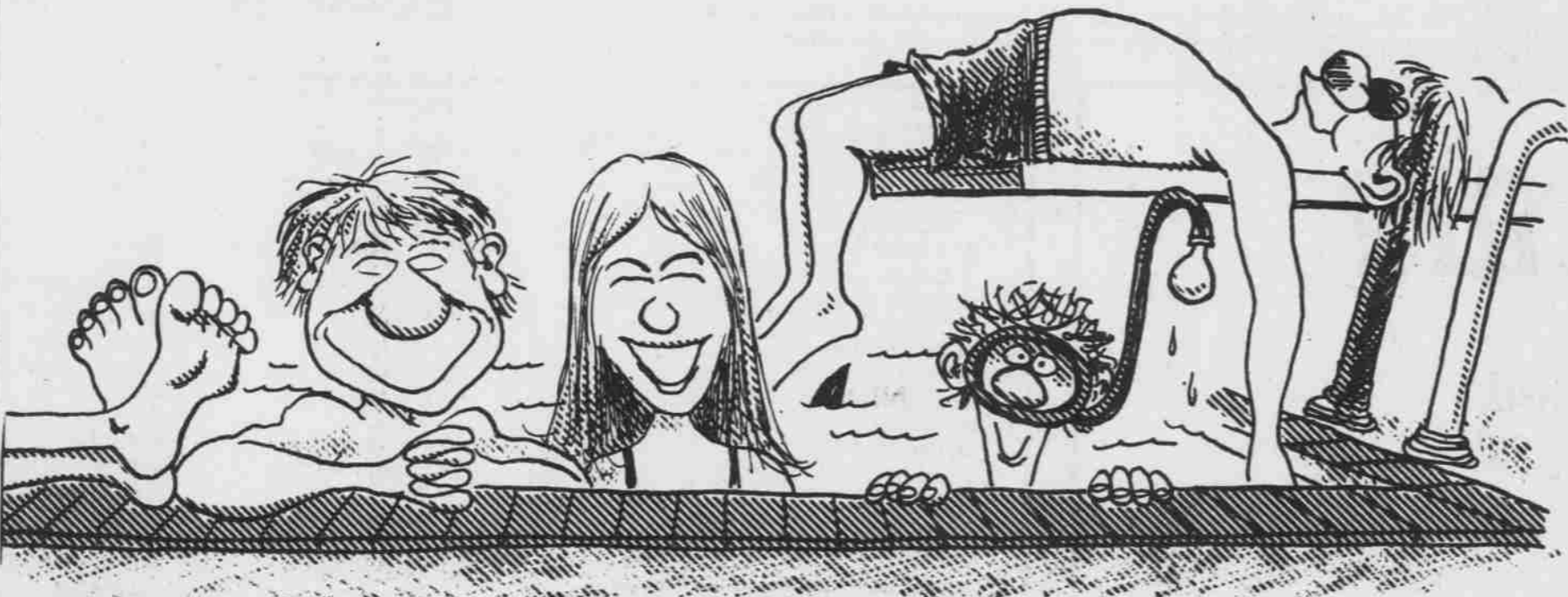
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Register by 5:00 P.M. Friday, April 29 at the Granville Towers South reception desk. The winner of the free room and meal accommodations for the first summer school session will be announced Monday, May 2nd on WCHL's Wayne Pond show between 7:00 and 9:00 A.M. The prize is not redeemable in cash and is nontransferable.

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