
National Campus News

Council President Offers Tips To Pick Up Women

The Ubysey, University of British Columbia

by Nadene Rehnby

VANCOUVER (CUP) -- A student council president who offered tips on picking up women in a local daily newspaper is under fire for his "sexist" attitude.

In the Vancouver Province's relationships column Sept. 6, University of British Columbia student council president Kurt Preinsperg offered "31 hints to get you off to a better start with the woman of your choice."

Rule 14 reads: "Don't persist when a woman says no. Generally, do not ask twice." Another advises, "When you've made love, don't run to your buddies, gossiping about intimate details."

Linda Shout, coordinator of UBC's women's centre, said she was appalled by Preinsperg's comments.

"To have the president of the students' society start putting forward views that promote unequal power relationships is simply very dangerous," Shout said.

"(Preinsperg's) premise here seems to be that everything that you do in a relationship with a woman is some sort of a pretense in order to let you get into bed with her. It sets sex up as the ultimate goal."

For his part, Preinsperg said he stands by his comments.

"People may not agree with my ideas, but I do try to make the world a better place for women," he said. "There will always be people who feel threatened by this sort of honesty."

Preinsperg said he would like women to speak to him in person about the article. "I doubt that many women who have actually read what I've written would construe it in this utterly absurd way," he said.

But Shout said the views expressed by Preinsperg are threatening to women.

"Women (come to the women's centre) because they often find that the university community is not very friendly to women -- both in an academic and a social environment," she said.

"When this sort of stuff starts coming out...it makes it even more difficult for women to go out there into that community and feel safe."

She said there has been an overwhelming response from women at the centre. "Women here are certainly going to take this up with the Ombudsoffice," she said.

Some formal complaints have been filed against Preinsperg, according to ombudsperson Carole Forsythe.

Kathy Tait, the relationships columnist who printed the hints, introduced the column by saying, "How can I get a date with a woman? men continually ask me. Often they're men in one of the best hunting grounds in the world -- college or university."

In an interview, Tait said there was nothing sexist about the column.