

Morganton News Herald  
March 11, 2005

# Sorry to have stirred things up

Whew! It seems the column I wrote last week in defense of the premise of Sex and the City has stirred up a hornet's nest with so many people that I thought I'd offer an apology to those who I may have offended. I certainly didn't intend to offend anyone, and I appreciate and respect anyone who voices their opinion because that's what makes each one of us so unique.

And if it's any consolation to those who wrote to me, my biggest critic happens to be my own husband who disagreed with me when I said in my column that I admired Sex and the City in that, in my opinion, it taught young women to become nurturers and caring adults and, further, that its casual sex theme was secondary rather than the primary focus of the series.

I e-mailed copies of my column to family, friends and acquaintances in many parts of the U.S. and as far away as Canada. So, the view that many people expressed in e-mails back to me, that I certainly must condone casual sex to have written such rubbish or that my attitude is reflective of the disinterest towards our children in many parents today, really hit home.



As I see it

Peg DeMarco

Please believe that I in no way condone teenagers having casual sex. In fact, my heart breaks for any young woman who starts having sex at such a young age because she hasn't even had the opportunity to live. A greater fear that I have for our daughters today is the fact that even with birth control methods and teaching so prevalent and out in the open, there are still so

many children having babies. Even worse than in decades past, many young women have children with two or three different men who continue to run and hide at the prospect of becoming fathers.

I've always been a firm believer in providing birth control to a daughter when everything else has been exhausted, including intense counseling and intervention by the church or religious entity, the school and the family. When all else fails, a teenage girl straddled with a baby,

whose growing years have been cut short because she made a mistake, is a very sad sight indeed. Yes, I do feel for the baby, too, because his or her mother doesn't think like an adult and is a child herself. But my true compassion has always been for the young girl who has not had enough time to enjoy those very special teenage years.

What I was trying to convey in my column last week was that I believe teenagers are winning a power struggle with parents who choose to be cool rather than the disciplinarians they should be. Letting them dress the way they want, where girls openly flaunt their sexuality, is only one battle that must be won rather than ignored.

And I still stick by my guns when I say that the message that Sex and the City teaches young women that the importance of female friendship that I believe is fundamental to the female psyche is precious and negates any other titillating messages.

I don't think we give our young women enough credit. They already know about sex at age 13, shocking but true, and there is no hiding it anymore thanks to MTV and other forms of media communication. My feeling has always been that if it's out there already, we can't just stick our heads in the sand. And, frankly, it's been out there for decades, beginning with free love in the 1960's and intensifying during the wild disco era when every part of us as sexual beings was viewed as acceptable.

Unfortunately, the world our children live in these days is filled with sex, violence, drugs and other maladies that we just can't cover our eyes to. As parents, we have to deal with all this in different ways, not the way we were taught when we grew up. Frankly, as a mother, my main concern that resulted in frequent oratories was teaching my daughter to be fair and good to people while she was growing up. We had discussions about sex, the ills of smoking marijuana, the importance of an education, and there wasn't a night that went by when I didn't know exactly where she was (at least I thought I knew) and I always made her abide by a strict curfew.

I commend all the parents out there who struggle every day raising teenagers to become responsible adults. I wouldn't want to do the job all over again.

**PEG DEMARCO** is a local columnist for The News Herald.