

Impact of the “Sex, lies and the truth” video on attitudes towards sex before marriage among Japanese University students

– Survey of regional private University students

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『Sex, その嘘と真実』ビデオの印象、地方都市の私立大学生の、
結婚前のセックスの考え方について
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Introduction

A number of recent nationwide surveys on sexual conduct have shown disturbing trends amongst young people in Japan (Kihara, 1999). Specifically the age at which people are becoming sexually active continues to reduce and the average number of sexual partners continues to increase. Accordingly the incidents of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and HIV/AIDS are increasing. The need for education has been cited as being essential to counter a clearly quantified lack of knowledge regarding various facets of sexual conduct (Kihara 2000).

To understand how Japanese views towards sex have been influenced a nationwide survey entitled “Japanese Attitude of Sex and the Role of the Media – Analysis of a “Fact-Finding Survey on Sex”” was conducted (Makita, 2000 – specifically regarding sex positions). The survey categorized the main media used to obtain sex-related information. The groups were: “personal media”, “mass media” and “specific works that shaped my own image of sex”. Personal media resulted in an 8% response for friends, spouse, lover etc. 2% doctors/ nurses/ counselors, 1% brothers and sisters, 1% teachers and 1% parents. This contrasted with Mass Media as follows: Newspapers/ magazines- 71%, TV- 60%, Books-42%, Video-36%, Movies-32%, Comic books-29% and Internet-10%. Most cited specific works ranged from “Seikatsu no Chie” (Wisdom for Sex Life) for those in their 60s (a best-seller in the early 1960s) to current high-teens citing “Tonight 2”, a contemporary late-night program. The paper by Tetsuo Makita analyzed that sexual interest peaked in University students, further this age group showed the highest tendency to be influenced by Video Media.

Most mass media is of such a nature as to further encourage promiscuity (recent USA analysis 90% (Kaiser, 2000), Japanese data not on hand but would most likely at best equal this). Media being neutral “video media” could be used rather to encourage behavior that reduces promiscuity. Or more specifically increase the long term Quality of Life (QOL) particularly for the younger generation, based on promiscuity causing more long term human suffering and or regret than any other misconduct (Resnick, 1997).

Background

The “free sex” revolution began in America in the 1960’s. By the early 1970’s the negative impact of this revolution’s ideologies began to be felt. To counter the natural consequences (STDs, unwanted pregnancies etc) of the “free sex” revolution a sex philosophy was proposed and sold under the title of “Safe Sex”. However the result of the Safe Sex campaign has with rare exception accelerated sexual activity, promiscuity and STDs. In summary the approach taken was that “Young people will have sex anyway so the best thing that can be done is to provide them with protection”, the protection primarily being the condom. Much sex education began warning of the consequences of sexual promiscuity but ended in handing out condoms, and in some cases asked (required?) students to try them and report back. This approach was adopted without parental consent (Ziglar, 1990). The net results being sexual activity increased by magnitudes (CDCP, 1997 - US) caused an epidemic increase in the spread of STDs and unwanted pregnancies (~20% of Americans have an incurable STD or HIV/AIDS (Wald, 2000), ~1,365,730 abortions per year USA (AGI, 1998) cf. Japan 337,314 (MHWJ, 2000)). This approach has been likened to a program to reduce smoking by the following means: explain all the scientific evidence regarding the danger of smoking, then on

the assumption that a young person is unable to “control themselves” give every student a packet of filter cigarettes, without parental consent, explaining that filter cigarettes will provide a degree of protection from the consequences (family.org).

A very small number of sex education programs produced positive results, these cases became the focus of later studies. These cases occurred where a “moral framework” was provided (Ziglar, 1990). This moral framework is the basis for the “Sex, Lies & ...The Truth” video, which is the central focus of this paper. A key statement made by Zig Ziglar is that “sex education without a moral framework is sex invitation” (Ziglar 1990). The most controversial aspect of sex education (in the US) has been the degree to which program content handles condom usage compared with information about abstinence.

While STD/HIV levels are comparatively low in Japan compared to America unless the issue of promiscuity is effectively dealt with the spread of such is most likely to escalate based on the results of the recent Nationwide survey on attitudes regarding sexual behavior (Kihara 1999) (Kihara 2000).

Methods

The “Sex, Lies & ..The Truth” video was shown to 10 classes of students studying English (1999 to 2001). The average class number was 30 students. 6 Classes all male, 4 Classes all female. After watching the video student’s anonymous comments were collected. A consistent positive response prompted a specific before and after video attitude survey regarding promiscuity. A simple and effective measure to gauge promiscuity was a single question, that single question was “What do you think about sex before marriage?”. This approach is also used by NHK with the statement “no sexual intercourse is permissible until the wedding ceremony is over” (NHK, 1973-1998), as part of a survey on Japanese attitudes, results to this specific question as a general population has changed from 58% in agreement in 1973 to 26% in 1998. The nationwide survey of Sexual attitudes (Kihara, 1999) showed the percentage drop with reducing age groups, to 10% amongst university students (Kihara, 1999).

Survey detail

Details of this survey are as follows:

Survey conducted Jan 2001.

Number of students 32 in before survey, 34 in after survey.

Student level 1st year female University students (1 adult student)

Survey before video (1 hour before).

Survey question (same question asked before and after video)

“What do you think about sex before marriage?”

Answers 1. Perfectly acceptable

2. Best to do so

3. Don’t care, doesn’t matter

4. Best not to do so

5. Definitely not acceptable

(The question and answers were written on the board and responses made anonymously, by writing 1 to 5 on a small piece of blank paper provided and folding it, the papers then being collected, same procedure after the video).

The question and responses were explained carefully in Japanese both before and after the video to ensure understanding. Student impressions regarding the video were requested also after the video and collected separately. These responses also remained anonymous.

The two most notable changes comparing before and after (shown in figure 3) are that the “Don’t care” category dropped by 45% from 53% to 6%, and that the acceptance of refraining from sex before marriage increased 63% from 13% to 76% (error due to 2 persons in after only survey – assumes “Best not to do so” and “Definitely not acceptable” as not acceptable). Another feature was 0% indicated “Definitely not acceptable” (abstinence/ 純潔を守る) before watching the video but 55% indicated acceptance of abstinence after watching the video, a change of 55% as a group.

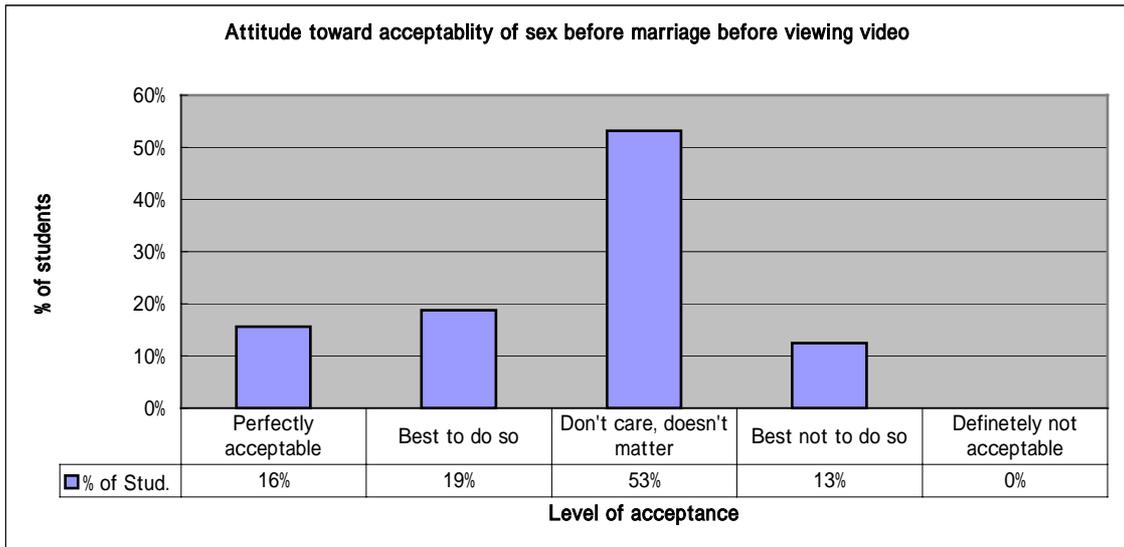


Figure 1. Attitude toward acceptability of sex before marriage before viewing the video

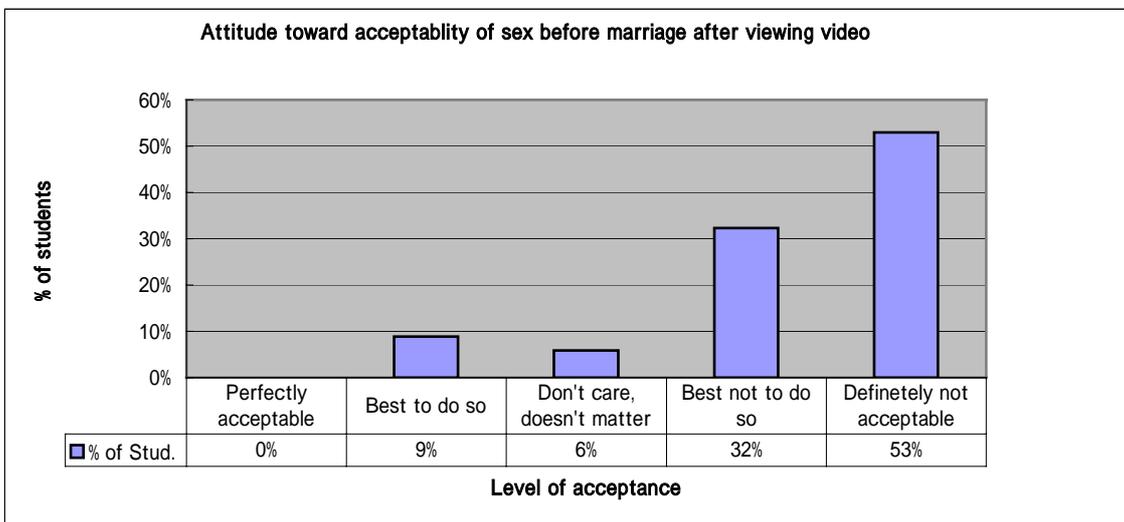


Figure 2. Attitude toward acceptability of sex before marriage after viewing the video

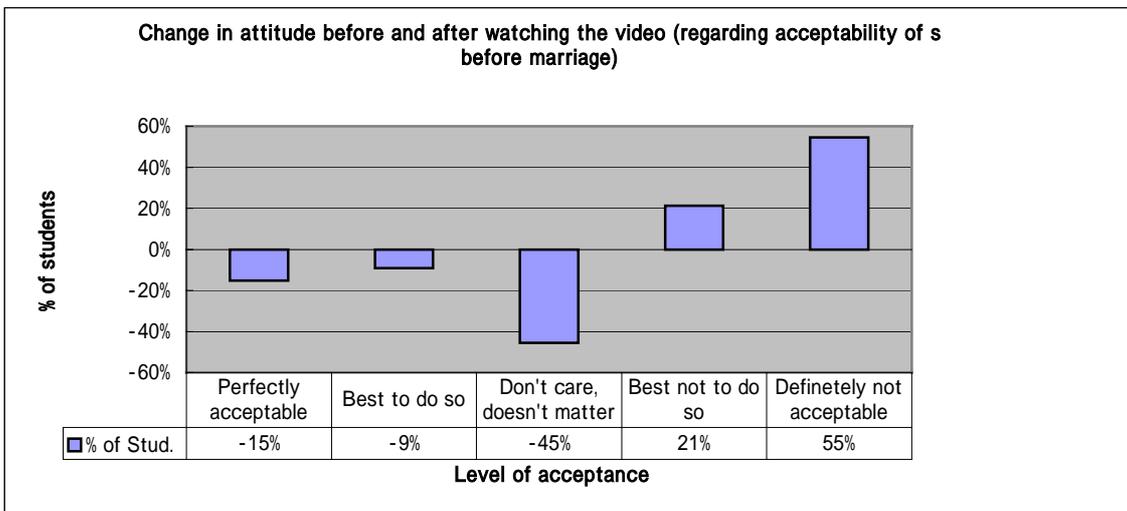


Figure 3. Change in attitudes regarding the acceptability of sex before marriage after viewing the video (percentages taken wrt. class)

Looking at overall averages the before survey indicated an average acceptance of sex before marriage of 87% on the assumption that “Don’t care” can be categorized as acceptance as “no values” typically result in default to the lowest common denominator (promiscuity). This 87% correlates closely with the results of a Nationwide survey of public Universities in Japan which indicated 90% acceptance of sex before marriage (Kihara 1999).

Discussion

The reasoning behind the change in student attitudes can be understood by reading their anonymous comments a random sample of these comments is provided in appendix C. Many comments made reference to two central statements made in the video by Dr James Dobson which are as follows; Japanese subtitles bracketed (),

“...you know some people say well, if you just use a condom you’ll be protected from sickness and death. (Dr. James Dobson ジェームズ・ドブソン「心理学者」コンドームは不完全です) Well that’s a false sense of security for this reason condoms fail 15% of the time when attempting to prevent pregnancy (15%は避妊に失敗します) although a woman can only get pregnant a few days a month. (妊娠可能日は1ヶ月に3日でも) But you can contract a disease 31 days a month, (病気はいつでも感染します) how high do you think the condom failure rate is in preventing diseases that you can get 365 days a year, (コンドームの失敗率は高いです) see just one slippage, (一回の失敗がいのち取りです) one breakage, one failure to wear the thing properly and your nailed. (ウイルスは年中うつります) Right now according to the United States Center for Disease Control 43 million Americans have an incurable sexually transmitted virus. (全米で4300万人が不治の性病です) They will suffer from it for the rest of their lives and some are going to die of it. (直る希望はなく死ぬ人もいます) That’s one in five (米国人の五分の一) and the number is rising every year (その数は増え続けています).... what a tragedy that is and it’s all so unnecessary, (これらは本当は避けられた悲劇です) you’ve probably heard it said that we are all at risk for AIDS, and that anyone can contract HIV. Not true. There’s an effort out there to make it appear that everyone is equally likely to come down with this disease (「誰でも HIV やエイズになる」というのは嘘です) but there are certain behaviors that spread HIV, (HIV 感染経路は明らかで) primarily vaginal and anal intercourse (膣性交、あるいは肛門性交) and the sharing of dirty needles in drug abuse (薬物注射の針と薬物乱用が原因です) now if you avoid those behaviors and remain sexually abstinent before marriage and that you marry an uninfected person (結婚前に純潔を守り互いに感染せずに結婚して) and you stay faithful for life you can reduce the risk of AIDS to almost zero. (誠実をつらぬくならエイズになる確率はほぼゼロです) You see abstinence which is a choice, (婚前行為を差し控える選択が) it’s a choice to refrain from sexual activity, is the only truly protected sex. (本当に安全なセックスなのです)”.

The Japanese subtitles are noted to be very lacking in detail, this particular problem has been largely overcome in the new series “Life on the Edge – Focus on the Family”, (Dr. ドブソンのユース・セミナー、ファミリー・フォーカス・ジャパン) by replacing the audio track with a Japanese audio track (direct replacement for the “Sex, Lies & the Truth” video is “No Apologies: The Truth About Life, Love and Sex” part of the “Life on the edge” series – public school version). The synopsis of the book “Sex, Lies & the Truth : A message from Focus on the Family”, reads as follows (amazon.com) “Based on the Focus on the Family video, this book presents true stories of unwanted pregnancies, STDs, and AIDS, along with statements from athletes and celebrities who present today’s teens with a powerful case for abstinence.”(Zettersten, 1994). Refer to Appendix A and B for detail. This video was made around 1993 despite this the content remains current, only the gravity of the situation has increased. The “lies” of the “safe sex” campaign have largely been exposed since 1993, at least in the United States (Smith, 1998) and split into “safer sex” a support group mainly for the homosexual (MSM) community and the previously mentioned “comprehensive sex” referred to earlier although appears to have retained the “safe sex” ideology (appendix D). With regard to the US as part of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Congress authorized \$50 million a year in federal funds for the next five years to enable

states to provide the idea of abstinence-until-marriage to teenagers (appendix D). The turnaround in the US regarding the attitude towards “abstinence” is largely attributed to the “True Love Waits” movement where ~2.4 million American teenagers (13% of 15-19 age group) pledged themselves to abstinence (Resnick, 1997). The impact of this video has been world wide, for example in Latin America a Spanish-speaking version of the “Sex, Lies & the Truth” video has been backed by six governments and is used widely in Schools and Churches (Dobson, 1998). “Good – Quality sex education” programs, that is programs that reduce promiscuity have been reported, however the negative impact of sex education programs of the past continues largely to deter the adoption of any sex education (8th Workshop on Epidemiology and control of AIDS).

Male students

The data in this study relates to female students, most of the 10 classes however were male students. For 9 of the classes anonymous comments only were collected after viewing the video. The comments differ significantly between male and female and could be the subject of a further paper, the acceptance with male students appeared lower based on the comments collected (estimated comparative effectiveness ~50%). A tendency to question various aspects of the video was higher. For example one male student quoted a condom failure rate lower than one percent in Japan, compared to the US 15% average failure rate. The most common comment by male students apart from similar comments to the female students was “America has a problem doesn’t it.. no such problem exists in Japan though” – while STD/HIV levels are in fact low on a world wide scale Japan currently represents the only industrialized nation where STD/HIV levels continue to increase (Kamakura, 1998) (Wald, 2000 wrt US).. The aspect that females have a lot more to lose (pregnancy etc.) and less to gain (less pleasure etc.) by promiscuity was clearly evident from the male comments in general Aspects requiring further research are the longitudinal effects of such sex education media, particularly in light of students living in an environment of media/ world that largely encourages promiscuity (appendix C s & x) (Resnick, 1997).

Intentions vs peer pressure?

Central questions raised by a short video screening is “what will be the long term impact?” and will these expressed “good intentions” materialize based on peer pressure reality? This problem is touched on in student comment, appendix C. n “My boyfriend is not virgin. I am very very shock, and I was cry. I have been thought almost high school student is virgin. I want to watch this video with my boyfriend, and we must respect each other.” Unless the culture or society as a whole (ie. Including her boyfriend) can also be reached with ongoing effective programs encouraging abstinence any change will be slow and very difficult. This aspect is true to some degree in any culture but particularly true in Japan based on the “group culture”, or put more colloquially the tendency to “hit the nail that sticks out”. In the current Japanese youth culture a commitment to abstinence will be the nail that sticks out, consequently sex education that does not address long term and wide ranging issues affecting every area of the culture will most likely tend to result in transitory commitment (Kalichman, 1998).

Conclusion

Disturbing trends have come to light regarding Japanese youth in regard to promiscuity, and lack of understanding regarding STD/HIV. Surveys in Japan have shown most information regarding sex is gained through magazine, Video and TV media for young people. A video “Sex, Lies & the Truth” was shown to a class of first year female University students, a before and after attitude test indicated a 63% increase of student intentions to refrain from sex till after marriage after viewing the video. The provision of “Good – Quality sex education”, namely sex education sex within a moral framework that provides ongoing support at every level of society to bring about a change of culture is considered key to counter the negative trends towards promiscuity and associated consequences observed in the Japanese youth.

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Appendix A

Excerpts from the “Sex, Lies & ...The Truth” (Japanese) video discussion guide.

上映をされる前にこのビデオを上映れる方は、以下の点をよく説明されてから上映されることを希望します。

- **エイズ感染について** このビデオの中ではエイズの感染経路は夫婦関係以外の性交渉によるものと限定していますが、日本ではこれとは別に薬害エイズの問題もあることをつけ加えておきます。
- **セーフ・セックス**・・・このビデオには「セーフ・セックス」という用語が何度も登場します。簡単に言うと「安全なセックスをしましょう。そのために避妊用具を正しく使いましょう。」というマスコミを通じた宣伝のことをさしています。これは1970年代に始まり今も米国では支配的な性教育です。「セーフ・セックス」は、真っ赤な嘘であるというのがこのビデオが主張している一つのポイントです。
- **純潔**・・・もうひとつのキーワードは「純潔」です。このことばは「結婚前にはセックスしない事」を意味します。米国でも日本でも、学校など公の場での性教育や一般の出版物などを見ると、この「純潔」という選択ができることさえ教えず、ティーンズはほぼもれなく性的にふしだらな生活をしているという前提に立った教え方をしています。

Appendix B Comments on the back of “Sex, Lies & ...The Truth” video

青少年向け性教育ビデオ教材

字幕スーパー/32分

Sex, Lies & ...The Truth

性に関する知識と、それから生じる危険について、これほどまで赤裸々に話題提起したビデオは日本にはないと思う。「日本にこのビデオが必要だろうか？」という疑問も、見た後には必ずと解ける。日本で起こっている他の問題、それによって生ずる多くの若者、無知というには、あまりにも大きな犠牲。その重さのゆえに、人生をうめきながら暮らしている多くの人に、私は出会った。キリスト教会とて例外ではない。もう少し早く、このビデオが教えてくれる誓前に出会っていたら、犠牲者はずっと減っていたであろうに...

医学的には、HIV感染も、その結果起こるエイズも、その他の多くの性病も、正確に説明されている。また、「セーフ・セックス」という欺まんにも、強く攻撃している。「コンドームをすれば安全で、エイズにも感染せず、妊娠も避けられる」というのは偽りの宣伝である。このビデオは、婚前交渉と、その結果負わねばならぬ妊娠、人口流産、産する子との別れなども痛々出す。深い心の痛にも裏及する。誰にも見えぬが、誰も人格を破壊する心の痛。ある人はその痛で一生悩むのだ。「からだは聖霊の宮である」という本質的な苦しみ、また聖霊の光輝も明確に提示される。痛を持つた人にも、そうでない人にも、希望と勇気を与えてくれる教材だ。

(埼玉県本市・南埼玉郡所長兼、医師・石原平樹)

FOCUS ON THE FAMILY FILMS

●米国におけるあの有名なビデオはもうご存知ですか。そして「セーフセックス」、避孕コンドームを正しいとすれば大丈夫ということばに騙されて、多くの若者たちが、後悔先に及ばず、そして聖地に集わけています。日本でもこうした傾向が日々高まってきていると聞いています。このビデオが日本の若者たちにとって大きな助けとなることを祈っています。 (映画フォーカス・オン・ザ・ファミリー 代表、D.L.ジェームズ・アパノ)

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●このビデオは、各州で法的に認められている。無知に力をつける、悪化を助長することによって生じられています。

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Appendix C

Anonymous student comments made after viewing the video (original comments were hand written, spelling etc. mistakes have not been corrected). Author's comments are written in square brackets [].

- I can't accept sex before marriage, Because If I have a child, I will retire from College, And On video, a women is crying. So I'm saving my body myself.
- I think about sex before marriage is best not, Because all of the people are regreted. In the video of the English class, a little boy was puzzled [specifically the boy's parents died of HIV and the boy died at age ~5 after much suffering] because of the HIV. It's very sad. I think if his parents had known about correct knowledge, he could have avoided pain.
- I think that Sex is very scared. That is not problem myself. Not beautiful, not smart. I thought sex before marriage is disagree. Love and sex is not ecal (=). I must think about sex.
- I was surprised that watched the Video. I believed that AIDS is kept condom only. My opinions was mistake. I wasn't eager think... About sex before marriage... I think definitely not acceptable...
- I thought we must think about sex hard. And we must learn AIDS, etc.. very hard. All of people must know these. These are very important. I need to Strong heart.

- f. I feel terrible when I watch the video. I think terrible sex before marriage. If we 感染したら、we can't さげることができない。Kind of disease (病気) are 広がっている。We must think about sex before marriage. I am afraid of when I think kind of disease (病気). If we 感染して、then we think about sex before marriage, but it is too late.
- g. I thought that sex before marriage is definitely not acceptable. Before I were 大学生, I thought that sex is not doing before marry. But, I loved a man. So I were sex. 私は一瞬後悔した But, I didn't say to him that "I don't wish sex, Sex is No." And I were sex sometimes, But now, I think that sex before marriage is definitely not acceptable. たとえ相手がどんなに好きな人でも。それが、将来の自分のためになる。
- h. My friend was abortion. She was hurted. I think pregnancy is very fearful. I want to born my children, but If I born, I want to born after marriage. So I want to avoid pregnancy. I think it should not do befor marriage.
- i. I think sex is very very fearful. There will be will be future dream and hope. Sex is take. We need to patience. Patience is very very important! After marriage, sex will be really necessity.
- j. 「Sex lies & Truth.」 I didn't know コンドーム is danger. When I knew it, I am surprised. I thought sex is ok, but after I looked this video my thinking is changed. Sex should not before marriage. Sex should do with husband.
- k. I think sex is definetery not acceptable. I know that コンドーム is very useful. If women were pregnancy, the child is very miserable. Before marriage, playing sex don't necessary.
- l. I watched the video. I think sex is terrible. What is safety sex? It is danger. It will cause to become a sick and conception. Female is broken her heart rather than male. Female and male are going to becom HIV. Someday, HIV patient will die. Everybody is afraid of HIV. But we don't think true terrible of HIV, But it is difficult to keep innocence.
- m. I think after watching video that sex is important probrem. Because it may cause a lot of disease(病気)and die. 病気になったり死んでしまうのはとてもおそろしいです。I think that we had better not sex before marriage. If I had a disease, 私は立ち直ることができない。後で後悔しないように、しっかり考えるべき問題だと思う。So. I think that many people should watch this video. And they should think about this probrem.
- n. I think about sex befor marrige is best not. My friend say "愛があればいいじゃないか".しかし、私はその意見には賛成できなかった。なぜなら私はSexを「尊いもの、結婚するまではしないこと」だと考えていたからだ。My boyfriend is not virgin. I am very very shock, and I was cry. I have been thought almost high school student is virgin. I want to watch this video with my boyfriend, and we must respect each other.
- o. I thought that AIDS is very terrible today. I would not like to sex easily. All the people should think much harder. Schools should teach students to sex education.
- p. I think difinetely not acceptable sex before marriage. Until now, I don't think about sex. But, I changed one's mind. Hereafter, I think that keep my chastity. I grown up that watch a video.
- q. Anyway. I was very surprised. I was not find out. 私は今まで、このことについて深く考えたことがなかった。このビデオを見て、現実を知り、すごく怖いと思ったし。本当に気をつけなければならないと思った。
- r. I didn't thought sex even, seriousness. But I see the video. My thinking is change. Sex is important. Everybody should be think. This is the best video I've ever seen. A video about seks. I think wonderful "pure"
- s. I have had sex with a person, but I think that I am afraid of sex now, I don't want to have sex now. There's too much sex in TV programs these days. Young people are thinking easy of sex. This is bad, We must not do sex before marriage.
- t. Sex before marriage is very importance. It is cut off in one's prime. It is a grievous mistake. I think very awful. It is not easy issue. 避妊しているから大丈夫なんて思うのは間違いだと思う。絶対に確実なことではないのだから。エイズなど病気になった時には、もう自分の将来はないんだから、しっかりと考えて行動すべきだと思う、私は守るべきだと思う。
- u. I had a shock by watched video "sex lies & true". Because I thought safety "safe sex". When

I lived in Kyoto my job was nurse, And I was active enlightenment about HIV/AIDS. There is advance "safe sex" to anyone. So I believed. But I had a little doubt. This video is say 「safe sex is sheer nonsense」 my an opinion is change. 今後、若い世代に誤りを伝えない活動をしていきたい。

- v. I think about sex is free before to see the movie. But, I watch the movie, so sex is very dangerous. If, I play sex and get AIDS or conceive. I can't bring up my child now, I have not money because I'm student, So, if I got a child. My life is big change. More awful is get AIDS, I want to not become so. I don't sex before marriage,
- w. My friend sexed before marriage. The result, She was pregnant, She gave up her school life. After that she married and gave birth to a baby. She said to me, "I'm happy". So I shouldn't say in a way "Don't sex before marriage". If I say it, I deny her life and her baby. To tell the truth, I think Definitely not acceptable. Because it's protect by myself.
- x. Nowadays there's too much sex on televstion, magazine and film. I had sex with my boyfriend. At first, we were out of mere curiosity. But, I think that be afraid of now. We were simply had sex. But, we must not sex before marriage.

Appendix D

A Case for Abstinence Education by Peter Brandt

The Congressional Investment in Abstinence Education

The national debate over sex education has reached new levels of intensity during the past year. At the center of the debate is a bold, new federal program that challenges the 25 year monopoly that Planned Parenthood and the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SIECUS) have held on our nation's classrooms. As part of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Congress authorized \$50 million a year in federal funds for the next five years to enable states to provide the idea of abstinence-until-marriage to teenagers. When combined with the required \$3 in state matching funds for each \$4 in federal money, \$437 million will be available to promote abstinence as the healthy, life-affirming choice for adolescents....
<http://www.family.org/cforum/research/papers/a0002822.html>