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Brisben talks sex toys, lube, vibrators

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Kate Hawkins/Contributing Photographer
Patty Brisben, founder and CEO of Pure Romance, speaks at Davies Auditorium on Tuesday night. Brisben's team, with pink feathers and vibrators on hand, discussed the power of "intimacy-enhancing products."

Vibrators, lubricants and dildos — Yale's Becton Center for Engineering had never seen so much action in one night.

On Tuesday night, Patty Brisben, founder and CEO of the adult retailer Pure Romance, spoke to a full auditorium of about 250 in Davies Auditorium at a Sex Week at Yale event titled "Everything You've Always Wanted to Know about Sex (but were too afraid to ask)."

With the help of assistant Erin Lapham and a handful of enthusiastic student volunteers, Brisben talked through the variety of sex toys that she sells through her company, which is sponsoring Sex Week at Yale, taking place throughout this week. Her products, which include arousal creams, lubricants, clitoral vibrators, male stimulators and extras that she calls "foreplay items," were spread out behind her in a vast array of colored bottles, pink feathers and glittery powder.

The Pure Romance team came to "educate men and women on sexuality, sexual discretion and how an 'intimacy-enhancing product' can be key to any relationship," Brisben said. Yalies no longer have reason to complain about not having enough sex — according to Brisben, "everyone should take control of their own orgasm" through sex toys.

Brisben focused much of her advice, which was given with a cheeky tone and a knowing look, on the women in the audience.

“If you don’t know what you like, you can’t communicate to a man what you like,” she said.

Some of the more extensive discussions of the evening were on the various types of lubricants and vibrators. Brisben stressed the point that there is nothing wrong with a woman who needs to use a lubricant.

“Are any of you taking anti-histamines in here for a cold? Do you think that those only dry up this orifice?” she quipped, pointing to her nose. “No, no — those dry up a lot of other things.”

The catalogues of Pure Romance adult products that were passed around during the event display two full pages of vibrators, and Brisben spent ample time showing how both male and female Yalies can take control of their orgasms.

One lucky volunteer walked away with a vibrator named Bob.

“He is named after an ex-husband — but if he was built like that, he wouldn’t be an ex,” Brisben joked.

Colin Adamo ’10, one of the students coordinating Sex Week, said he thought the speech targeted a demographic that could benefit from the additional advice.

“Ladies at Yale are all really stressed,” he said. “Sometimes the guys are just going to disappoint you, and you need to figure out how to please yourself first. Women who masturbate are more orgasmic by themselves.”

Overall, Brisben’s presentation was very well received by both men and women in the audience.

Ian Marpuri ’11 participated in a demonstration of Dreamsicle arousal lubricants that are for both men and women.

“I really enjoy my new versatile toy,” said Marpuri with a grin. “I think this was a good demonstration — they’re giving awareness about alternate ways of exploring our sexuality — and it was really fun.”

Other Yalies agreed, but some were a bit more hesitant about getting down and dirty with the new toys.

“All the products were really great, and it was informative,” said one girl who wishes to remain anonymous. “But personally, I don’t masturbate, so this stuff seems really funny to me.”

A lottery of students who attended the event last night will take place this week, and the 100 winners will get tickets to Friday’s “Great Porn Debate” featuring porn star Ron Jeremy. But for many students, the new info and free giveaways were enough of a draw.

Lian Walden ’09 left the speech grinning: “I got a sex toy.”

The eight-day biannual Sex Week at Yale series of events continues today with appearances from stars of VH1's show "The Pick-Up Artist."