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'Can I kiss you' teaches students dating responsibilities

By Lois Brunnert

Staff Writer

"Can I kiss you?" is not normally a question heard from a date or a speaker for that matter.

However, Mike Domitrz wasn't afraid to ask it or even center his entire program around it.

Domitrz, author of the book "May I Kiss You?," spoke twice to students Monday night in the Frey Conference Suite. For the first workshop, roughly seven people made up the audience, but that didn't stop him from wanting to know what they thought about mistakes made in dating, and their general definition of sexual assault.

The interactive question and answer session helped Domitrz relate to what the students would do on a date, and it also helped them relate to what his program was focused on: asking and consent.

"Asking makes the moment," Domitrz said. "If you think asking ruins the moment, then you never had a moment to start with."

Domitrz told the audience that television and movies skew the reality of the dating world. He said that many times, women expect me to be in control and make the first move, according to what is shown on television.

He said that making it someone's job to make the first move, gives the actor "responsibility, power and control." However, asking, he said, not only gives your partner the chance to say no, but also to say yes.

He tried to convince students that there is nothing wrong with both men and women asking for consent.

Domitrz then gave an analogy of asking. He told the audience if he wanted to borrow \$5 from someone, he would have to ask. His point was not to assume the other person would consent to just taking the money. He then said, "But I don't have to ask to touch your body?"

No one knew how to answer that.

"I need to knock out their excuse."

In 1989, he received a call that his sister had been brutally raped.

"You don't ever expect one of those calls," he said.

All he could think about was, "How am I going to kill him? What can I do?"

When his sister came on the phone, he was amazed to hear her ask him how he was, and if she could do anything to help him.

"This was not about me, how much revenge I wanted," he said.

If someone confides in you about being raped, Domitrz says the worst emotion to show is pity.

Thank them for coming to you, and ask what you can do to help. Many victims will have fears questioning if they are at fault, if the experience was actually rape and if anyone will believe them. However, do not assume those fears; let the victim tell you.

"Dignity. Respect. That's what survivors deserve," Domitrz said.

SAB President Lindy Flear booked Domitrz at NACA (National Association for Campus Activities). He gave a short version of his program at the conference.

"In that 20 minutes," she said, "I was convinced to bring him here."

Flear enjoyed the issues he addressed. She encouraged people to attend, "because I know he's good, not because I have to."

"If I really speak out about it, students know I care."

There are many stereotypes regarding rape and sexual assault, and Domitrz knows how much each gender dislikes it.

"Regardless of background," he said, "sexual assault has no bias. The spotlight is on you. If you hate that stereotype, what are you going to do to change that?"

For anyone who has been a victim or knows a victim of sexual assault, there are several places to contact:

The SAVE Program and WSC Counseling Center (375-7321),

Haven House (375-4633),

Campus Security (375-7216),

Providence Medical Center Sexual Assault Response Team (375-3800) or the

Wayne Police Department (375-2626).

Domitrz will also answer emails within 24 hours on his website www.canikissyou.com. He encourages friends to give those resources to victims.



Speaker Mike Domitrz presented a “Can I kiss you?” forum at the Student Center on Valentine’s Day. Photo By Nicole Rabe.