A look at my sophomore year
OR man I was a sanctimonious asshole!

So, apparently good things can come of not having the internet. In a bout of semi-listlessness last night, I started rummaging through some of my old high school papers. If one good thing comes of them, it's apparently the ability to look into my own mind. From the past.

It turns out that I'm a quite different person today than I was three years ago. Or at least I hold completely different opinions. Maybe that won't come as a surprise to those of you who know / knew me. But it sure comes as a shock to me. Imagine you think you know your own mind, only to come across strange thoughts written on paper. Thoughts that you now find silly, and in some cases abhorrent. Okay, maybe abhorrent is too strong a word. But at least very alien.

Weird. I don't know how anyone put up with me in those days. Maybe I kept to myself more. Well, I know I did. And for good reason. If I had gone out and said half the things I thought, I would have made enemies with half the world. Heck, if I did with the opinions I hold now, I probably would.

Which begs the interesting question: three years from now, what thoughts of mine will I find completely foolish. Completely wrong. Completely 'that couldn't have been me?????'

I guess only time will tell. Enjoy this look back into the mind of David Darmon, circa 2003.
Abortion
a problem in modern society

In modern society, abortion has become increasingly an issue. As the value of human life becomes nothing more than the sum of its physical parts, our society begins to regress into barbarism. Moral values in the Millennial Generation already stand on unstable ground, and as abortion slowly gains acceptance, this ground begins to crumble. Valuable lessons can be learned from abortion, but only if society forces the guilty to learn these lessons. Clearly, abortion should become the exception and not the rule, else our society fall into the grips of chaos and moral drought.

In today’s high-speed era, human values seem to be the only thing not improving. We, like our primitive ancestors, continue to believe that anything we create is ours; even a human child, according to pro-choicers, is nothing more than a clump of cells owned by the mother prior to birth. This inclination towards death shows how little value our society places on life; if unborn children are non-living, then what else could be considered so. This type of thinking leads to extremely dangerous thoughts, thoughts that should be repressed and completely eradicated if at all possible. We must view life from a different, pro-life perspective if our society, and our species, is to exist for another millennium.

Just as pro-choice ideas are dangerous, so are the shaky morals that they produce. Since the dawn of civilization, and synonymously the dawn of religion, sex has been viewed as a sacred right between man and woman to procure a child; only today, in our “enlightened” world, has sex become a social thing, something done to pass the time. When two individuals conceive an unplanned child, this clearly points to their lack of responsibility and ability to plan; these two qualities could easily be established by the duty of raising a child. Without this responsibility, our society merely propagates a carefree mentality that must be repressed. For the moral fibers of our society to remain intact in the strong cloth of civilization, abortion must be limited.

The only way to learn is by making mistakes; parents are making a huge mistake by having an unplanned child. Forcing the parents to go through with the process of childbirth, even if they only put the child up for adoption, teaches them the consequences of unprotected, indulgent sex. Allowing unplanned children into the world also convinces society that it must take responsibility for the ideas that is spreads; sex sells, but so do drugs, yet they remain illegal. If lessons are learned from unplanned childbirth, then these lessons can be applied later on in life; surely a mother will think much more about future life choices after experiencing the pain and pride of childbirth. The lessons learned from childbirth must not be ripped from the world as the child is unfairly ripped from its mother’s womb.

Abortion as an alternative to raising an unplanned child must be limited. Human lives must become worth more than the petty price of an abortion. Moral values must take on a new significance in this generation, else the world risk plunging into another dark age. Through lessons of life, hopefully people will save themselves and the world from repeating mistakes. The world may be an unforgiving place, but we should at least protect unborn children from its perils.
Intelligent Design
proof of a creator

Since the beginning of civilization, humans have known intuitively that a higher power exists, but it was not until recent years that scientific breakthroughs have given empirical evidence of the validity of this creator. Nearly all the major fields of science point to this transcendent being, from biology to physics, astronomy to cosmology. With all this evidence, it is truly folly to deny the existence of a creator.

The greatest scientific discovery of this century is also one of the greatest theological discoveries of all time: the Big Bang. This event, which occurred at the beginning of time as we know it, took an infinite singularity and turned it into all the matter and energy that we know today as the Universe. If one admits that the Universe began to exist, then one can use an ancient Islamic philosophical argument known as kalam. This line of reasoning states two simple premises that lead to one conclusion: first, that anything that began to exist must have a cause; second, that the universe began to exist; and therefore, that the universe must have a cause. This “cause” can most easily be explained as a creator imbued with the power to create something from nothing. Clearly, the kalam argument points to a creator.

In many biology textbooks, cells are often compared to machines; this comparison may not be too far off the mark. When one thinks of machines, one thinks of a careful, planned out design that eventually leads to seamless operation. Now, if naturalists are to be believed, this intricate, seemingly designed plan must have come out of complete randomness; in essence, you must receive order from disorder. This thought becomes even less logical when an idea known as irreducible complexity, presented by Michael J. Behe, comes into play. This idea states that at some point, a system cannot be broken down any further without completely eliminating the effectiveness of said system. Taken in the field of biology, this theory completely eliminates the idea of natural selection. For natural selection to function certain characteristics must be beneficial to be passed on to future generations. The problem with this argument is that these characteristics cannot slowly develop, or evolve, but must suddenly appear. For example, cilia, small, whip-like appendages used for locomotion in bacteria, are of no use unless fully developed; it would be impossible for them to slowly come into existence over time. Therefore, they must have been designed. Biology, therefore, also points towards design and a creator.

The laws and constants of physics also demonstrate signs of design. Some 30 constants govern the universe, all 30 working together to make this universe habitable to life. Most, if not all of these constants are set to a precision so fine, it baffles the mind. For example, gravity is set to a precision of one over 1053; if it were just slightly shifted either direction, life as we know it would not exist. The idea that these 30 constants would all somehow randomly match the values needed for life seems extremely irrational. The best explanation for this is a creator that set these values to allow our existence.

Clearly, from the meager amount of evidence presented here, the case for a creator seems more than plausible. It becomes necessary part of our existence.
Position Paper

abstinence

As a human being, we have a duty to further our species through procreation; this duty, however, does not go so far as to legitimize unregulated, casual, recreational sex. Such sex can easily lead to the contraction of sexually transmitted diseases, or STDs. Sex is meant for mentally mature adults, not just those that have all the working parts. Unnecessary sex can easily lead to emotional difficulties in an already arduous life. Procreation is meant as a means to create more humans, not as a means to pass a few free minutes. Finally, and most importantly to me, the Bible condemns sex before marriage as a sin that should be avoided at all costs. Clearly, due to the grave dangers posed by pre-marital sex, abstinence from sex until married is the only way avoid any and all of the problems listed above.

The first and most obvious reason to abstain from sex until marriage is STDs. The gamut of these diseases can be found on the handout from TeensHealth. These diseases, ranging from the less serious Chlamydia and Gonorrhea to the extremely serious AIDS, can all result from pre-marital sex. Clearly, a small case of Chlamydia or Gonorrhea can be cleared up by antibiotics, but the embarrassment can linger; AIDS, on the other hand, is a lifelong disease that has implications ranging from ones health to the health of ones partner. Plainly, the only way to avoid painful and possibly life threatening STDs is to know your partner well; someone that switches from partner to partner is almost assured contraction of one or more of these venereal diseases within their lifetime.

Yet another reason to abstain from pre-marital sex is maturity. Most teenagers are too immature for sex. Tony effectively explained this with the illustration of the hill: teens just are unable to put on the brakes at the top once they have started. Sex, taken by some teenagers to mean “love”, indeed means so much more; most adolescents tend to neglect this fact; as Melissa stated, the word love means a big deal. Despite this, teens feel that just because they have all the plumbing that they can partake in this adult activity. Such an attitude paired with the carefree outlook of youth can lead to many complications ranging from teen pregnancy to death from STDs. Young people from the age of twelve to 21 are not ready to experiment with sex.

As stated by Melissa and Tony several times, emotional baggage is yet another reason to abstain from pre-marital sex. Most people feel for certain that “they are in love” at least once in their teenage years. Pain from an end to a relationship of this manner can be tough, but it only becomes worse when one incorporates the complications of sex. Sex, as Melissa said, is like giving a part of yourself to another person; it is meant to be contained within a vow, protecting both people. When one of the partners decides to end such a relationship, the pain can be very much like tape ripped from ones arm, as demonstrated by Tony. This act is extremely painful and also leads to a large amount of emotional baggage, something no teenager needs more of in their life. Plainly, the emotional baggage of a breakup involving sex is not worth the physical pleasure of sex.

Procreation is another, I feel better, name for sex. Procreation, according to Dictionary.com, means just what its etymology states, that being “before creation” (pro being a prefix meaning before). Clearly, even the etymology points to its valuable use in creating life. Nowhere, however, does the name imply that sex should be had casually or just to pass the time. Clearly, as seen above, sexual intercourse can create many problems in life, but this only tends to happen when it is used outside its means. As seen just by its name, procreation is best to be avoided before marriage through abstinence.

The final, and I feel most important, reason to abstain from sex is my religion. For this example, I will speak of Roman Catholicism, but I am sure that most major world religions agree on this point. Melissa explained that sex is meant to be within a sacred vow; what she failed to mention was the religious side of this aspect. According to the Catholic Church, sex before marriage is a horrible sin against God. A marriage is a bond between two people, meant to protect them from scarring caused by a more variable relationship. Only within this medium can sex truly thrive and be a beautiful thing, performing its intended purpose of creating another life. All these ideas can be found in The Holy Bible, but as I said, are not limited to Catholicism or even Christianity.

Clearly, everything that I said above is appealing to the idealist and seems to be the right answers to this problem in an ideal world; but, despite of this, I feel I am obligated to add caveat. In the real world, people make mistakes and unwise decisions. Not all people are equally moral or ethical. Therefore, in the real, dirty, revolting world, contraceptives are the best choice for protection from all the negatives associated with pre-marital sex. That warning
out of the way, abstinence from sex until married is, and will always be, the best policy.

In conclusion, abstinence from pre-marital sex is the only way to avoid such problems as pregnancy, STDs, emotional baggage, and death. Lessons learned throughout the generations have proven that sex can only be viewed in the context of marriage. The teenage years are already one of the most trying times in one's life; one most certainly does not need sex to complicate things.