

ANU students angry over Arndt sex lecture

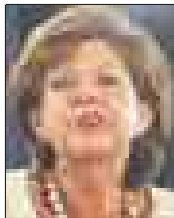
By Henrietta Cook

Students will take to the halls of the Australian National University next week to oppose a lecture on male desire by controversial sex therapist and writer Bettina Arndt.

The protest is being organised on Facebook by the ANU Women's Department and will be held next Wednesday outside Manning Clark Foyer where Bettina Arndt will deliver a lecture that takes the title of her book, *What Men Want*.

Women's officer Kate McMurtrie said Arndt's views were damaging to young people and her attitudes should not be invited or heralded at the ANU.

"The department does not believe



CHORE: Sex therapist Bettina Arndt whose controversial views are under fire from students.

sex should be an 'obligation' by either party in a relationship. The idea that it's a woman's responsibility to have sex with their partner is more akin to notions of proprietary interests or a chore like doing the dishes," she said.

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Ms McMurtie said students had expressed concern about what they saw as Arndt's lack of concern for laws in regard to sexual assault.

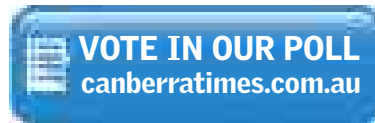
"There are also some concerns about the appropriateness of the ANU's endorsement of the event. The department has not contacted ANU about cancelling the event, although some members of the department have advocated for the department to adopt this position."

Arndt said her views were not

about sexual consent and she looked forward to meeting the protesters before her lecture.

"I've always said women have a right to say no, but men and women should think about the impact of rejection on their partners, and some may choose to say yes a little more often," she said.

"My message is that some women can enjoy sex without desire and perhaps they should explore that as an option. This is an emerging area of research. Men should also make love to their partners if they are persistently rejecting them, which



often happens when older men become nervous about performance."

She said students who thought her views were about sexual consent had obviously not read her books.

Arndt described herself as a "card-carrying feminist" and said the focus of her lecture would be on new research about male sexuality.

"I will be speaking about new research on men and issues about male sexuality, how men cope with their strong sex drive, why men take such risks for sex, why men use pornography and particularly the age of Viagra and the use of the new erection treatments," she said.

The sex therapist said she had a long association with the ANU and was on the council for 15 years. She also attended the university in the late 1960s where her father was a professor for more than 50 years.

The ANU declined to comment about the event.
