



10-20-2016

## Post-College Pride

Beau Charles  
*Gettysburg College*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/surge>

 Part of the [Civic and Community Engagement Commons](#), and the [Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Commons](#)

**Share feedback about the accessibility of this item.**

---

Charles, Beau, "Post-College Pride" (2016). *SURGE*. 286.  
<https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/surge/286>

This is the author's version of the work. This publication appears in Gettysburg College's institutional repository by permission of the copyright owner for personal use, not for redistribution. Cupola permanent link: <https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/surge/286>

This open access blog post is brought to you by The Cupola: Scholarship at Gettysburg College. It has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of The Cupola. For more information, please contact [cupola@gettysburg.edu](mailto:cupola@gettysburg.edu).

---

# Post-College Pride

## **Abstract**

So I was on this date, right, with a man I met in my hometown. In my hometown, except for a few friends, people don't really know that I'm trans, that I have a whole different name and person. I go by a nickname at home to lessen the cringing response to my birth name. I assume I radiate a queer energy, but not everyone picks up on that. So this man asked me about my dating life, astounded that a catch like me could possibly be single. I mentioned off-hand that I'd had a girlfriend and didn't want to date for awhile.

[*excerpt*]

## **Keywords**

career, dating, Gender, Gettysburg College, Homecoming, Identity, LGBTQ, Love, Sexuality, Transgender, work, Surge, Surge Gettysburg, Center for Public Service

## **Disciplines**

Civic and Community Engagement | Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

## **Comments**

Surge is a student blog at [Gettysburg College](https://www.gettysburg.edu/) where systemic issues of justice matter. Posts are originally published at [surgegettysburg.wordpress.com](https://surgegettysburg.wordpress.com) Through stories and reflection, these blog entries relate personal experiences to larger issues of equity, demonstrating that -isms are structural problems, not actions defined by individual prejudice. We intend to popularize justice, helping each other to recognize our biases and unlearn the untruths.

# SURGE

**[ VERB ] : to move suddenly or powerfully forward or upward**

## POST-COLLEGE PRIDE

October 20, 2016



So I was on this date, right, with a man I met in my hometown. In my hometown, except for a few friends, people don't really know that I'm trans, that I have a whole different name and person. I go by a nickname at home to lessen the cringing response to my birth name. I assume I radiate a queer energy, but not everyone picks up on that. So this man asked me about my dating life, astounded that a catch like me could possibly be single. I mentioned off-hand that I'd had a girlfriend and didn't want to date for awhile.

There was a long silence where he looked at me, drank deeply from his beer, and then asked: "You had a girlfriend...you date girls?"

And I thought "in for a penny, in for a pound," and tried to explain that not only do I date people of many genders but that I am nonbinary. Not a girl or a boy.

This prompted more confusion and then he stumbled through asking me that, if we were to have sex, what kind of parts I'd have.

We didn't go on another date.

That's more or less what a lot of my dating life will be. Here at Gettysburg, people know me; they might not know exactly that I'm nonbinary, but they know I'm some kind of queer *something*. I don't have to come out to my peers on campus. This is the double-edged privileged of a small community; we all operate in a relatively static performance of identity, known by simple attributes.

Weirdly enough, a week before this date, Homecoming weekend brought back a handful of LGBT+ alums. One, an "out" and popular lesbian on campus, related her experiences being gay after graduation. No one knows until she speaks out that she's a lesbian. She has to keep coming out. While she works in an accepting place and the situations are sort-of humorous, they reek of compulsive heteronormativity where we're all assumed assumed straight and cisgender until proven otherwise.

As my early graduation date approaches, I'm struggling with how the big wide world will eat away at the tough queer exterior I've worn the past four years at college. If applications don't have a 'preferred name' section, what name do I write? How do I pronounce Mx. when I've only seen it in my emails? Do I wait more than one date for someone to be interested in me enough to know they're getting into bed with a queer or should I axe away everyone ten minutes into dinner? How firmly do I insist upon my pronouns at that job interview when I can't afford not to get the job?

What about the ER? My transmale friend got held there for nine hours and treated poorly and threateningly misdiagnosed with horrors before he even had a doctor look at him because it *must be* his [testosterone treatments](#) causing this pain but there's no Title IX to protect him, no bias incident report to file, no administrators up in arms at his defense ready to promise some sort of retribution or even pretend like they're going to get at the source of this bias. Instead, he defaults to becoming calloused and removed from his own mistreatment. It's a coping mechanism I'm ready to adopt. Rolling with the punches is too often the only thing an oppressed people can do to get by on the regular; that and be grateful it wasn't worse, that it was the ER jerking you around and [not the cops, or the court, or people on the street.](#)

At my nice job for a nice company, I wear my nametag at customer service, and every other customer looks too hard at my masculine name, and then at me, and demands me to verbally confirm this identity, and they squint and stare, trying to figure out *what* I am; this hasn't killed me yet. Ending the imposed illusion of cisgender heteronormativity that people have misplaced upon me hasn't cost me my job yet. A date has only even been awkward or ignorant but not cruel. So I'm panicking, just a bit. I'll never not be queer, but as people are so ready to remind me, [the world isn't safe or welcoming for me or my people.](#) I know I've already gotten off easier than other queer folk because I'm [white](#), because my gender expression hasn't crossed some invisible and intolerable [line of hatred.](#) Even still, the #realworld looks like a big threat; once my tassel moves from one corner to the other, I'll find myself waiting for what's around the next corner.

*Beau Charles '17*  
*Contributing Writer*

<https://surgegettysburg.wordpress.com/2016/10/20/post-college-pride/>