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More than Birds and Bees

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More than Birds and Bees

Abstract

Conversations about sex start as early as middle school, with preteens learning about “the birds and the bees,” sexually transmitted infections, and (hopefully) contraception and safe sex. These conversations continue into high school sex education, which has proven to be crucial in decreasing rates of unwanted pregnancies and STI’s. But something important is missing. These programs never mention, and certainly don’t include, LGBT/Q people. LGBT/Q teens are not taught how to have sex, and how to have safe sex. This leaves us to explore our sexuality on our own terms, which is both awkward and dangerous. If you’re a heterosexually active person who never received comprehensive sex education due to religious or political reasons, you might have experienced this yourself. [*excerpt*]

Keywords

Gettysburg, Gettysburg College, heteronormativity, inclusion, LGBTQA, LGBTQIA, safe sex, Sex, Sexuality, Valentine's Day

Disciplines

Civic and Community Engagement

Comments

Surge is a student blog at Gettysburg College where systemic issues of justice matter. Posts are originally published at 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

MORE THAN BIRDS AND BEES

February 20, 2019

It's that time of the year –Valentine's Day just passed, love is in the air, and the Vagina Monologues and Our Voices are this weekend. Let's talk about sex!

Conversations about sex start as early as middle school, with preteens learning about “the birds and the bees,” sexually transmitted infections, and (hopefully) contraception and safe sex. These conversations continue into high school sex education, which has proven to be crucial in decreasing rates of unwanted pregnancies and STI's. But something important is missing. These programs never mention, and certainly don't include, LGBT/Q people. LGBT/Q teens are not taught how to have sex, and how to have safe sex. This leaves us to explore our sexuality on our own terms, which is both awkward and dangerous. If you're a heterosexually active person who never received comprehensive sex education due to religious or political reasons, you might have experienced this yourself.

My friends who are exploring their sexuality gush about their experiences over dinner at Servo, and then pause, and admit that they don't know if what they did is considered sex. Turns out, there's many more exciting ways to express sexual intimacy than what we're taught in high school.

Some dictionaries are more progressive than others, but most definitions of sex are based on penetration. Despite this, many couples experience and enjoy intimacy without penetration. Is that not sex?

How do we, as a campus that is working to include LGBT/Q people, rethink our definition of sex? No one person has the answer, but like another crucial (anatomical) component, we'll never find it if we don't talk about it.

Many students on our campus still have little-to-no understanding about sex beyond penetration, so I appreciate the people who have the courage to admit this and ask me how lesbians have sex (Hint: it's not a hand game played best two out of three). LGBT/Q couples are just as eager to share our good, bad, embarrassing, and awkward sex stories as our straight classmates, and it's important that we are included in the conversation

So, I invite you to revisit “the talk” with your roommates, friends, or partners. What does sex mean to you?

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