



UNL students Lisa Taylor and Lise Johnston share an intimate moment.

Travis Heying/DN

Sexual opinions

Bisexual coming out carries risk of ostracism from homosexuals

Bisexuality — Caught in the Crossfire of Sexual Identity

When I was 16 I sat shaking in a mud-splattered school bus, listening to my peers jeer and laugh at homosexuality.

They had just been formally introduced, via a poorly taught human sexuality class, to the words "homosexual" and "lesbian." The words "gay" and "bisexual" were not part of the lexicon of the class.

Taunting the gay lifestyle wasn't new to my classmates. It was a behavior taught to them by community standards, family values and church doctrine.

The human sexuality class further endorsed my classmates' homophobia by labeling homosexuality a "deviance."

I, a bisexual, was terrified. I was sure that I would be found out and

raped. I was young. It was 1974.

The Gay Rights Movement had only been alive and kicking for approximately six years. There was no mention of bisexuals in the movement — I was sure I was alone.

I came out of the closet five years ago. Before then, my social life pretty much revolved around the gay lifestyle. I was afraid that if I came out as a bisexual, I would be ostracized by the gay community. I didn't much care what heterosexuals thought.

Heterosexuals were, and still are, the enforcers of a hypocritical morality that often tacitly condones incest and molestation of children, rape of women and general brutality among men. I didn't feel I needed their brand of ethics. I did care what the gay community thought of me.

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A lot of myths abound, both within the gay community and the heterosexual majority, concerning bisexuality.

Many lesbians and gays hold the view that bisexuality is a stage in

the development of a true homosexual identity.

Heterosexuals often view bisexuals as oversexed individuals who don't discriminate in their sexual liaisons.

Heterosexual men frequently think that bisexual (and lesbian) women just need a "real man" to show them that heterosexual is the only way to be.

The Kinsey Report, a comprehensive study conducted in the 1940s investigating the sexual practices of Americans, stated that sexuality is rarely an all-or-nothing issue.

Few people are purely heterosexual or homosexual. In fact, only 10 percent of the population is strictly one or the other. So bisexuality exists on a continuum of expe-

rience. Most people are bisexual in some way.

My need for a sense of balance within my sexual and social experience has led me to be an open bisexual. I love my female partner as well as my male partner. I believe love is something a person celebrates, not hides.

I have found that the gay community still lives under the illusion that sexuality is bounded by absolutes. But the gay community is, by and large, tolerant and willing to learn about the differences between people.

I wish I could say the same about heterosexuals.

— Barbara A. Baier writes for the Women's Journal Advocate and is a Diversions contributor.